**SOUTHWESTERN REGIONAL HOMELESS COALITION MEETING**

**JUNE 20, 2013**

**In attendance: Kristi Case, Smoky Mountain Center; Ashley Freeman, Macon County Reach; Monica Sieffert, Reach of Cherokee County; Andrew Romines, Mountain Projects; Debra Clarke, Friendship House; Brenda Cormack, New Life Women’s Center; Rhonda Blanton, Open Door; Lynne DeLuca, Smoky Mountain Center; Sonya Gunnin, Macon County Senior Services; Barbara Taylor, Open Door; Bebeie McClure, Cherokee County DSS; Linda Mathias, Open Door.**

**The meeting was held in Franklin at the Community Resource Center.**

**The first order of business was a discussion about the duties of being a regional leader of the BOS-COC. Kristi handed out an outline of these duties to everyone present. We talked about the importance of having a leader for the 7 counties to enable us to apply for grants. In the past 4 million dollars went back to the state from the Balance of State counties from lack of agencies applying for available grants. We are supposed to vote at the next meeting for a new leader. Discussion that Bart O’Sullivan is our elected lead, and he hasn’t attended a meeting since being elected.**

**We talked again about the SOAR training coming up on June 27thand 28th. Marisol Tomas (VASH) is one of the representatives for the VA and recently 50 new vouchers have become available for the VASH program. There is another grant available called the Housing for Everyone grant through TDA Bank. They are only available in the counties where a bank is located (Haywood and Macon in this community).**

**We talked about the BOS hiring a new project person and about the meeting coming up on the 25th of this month in Greensboro, N.C. from 9:30 to 5:00. All Regional Leaders are required to attend. Tier 2 renewals announced. Kristi promoted the NCCEH membership, and encouraged everyone to become members.**

**Kristi gave everyone homework to do before the next meeting. We are to read the 10 yr. plan to end homelessness booklet (Asheville’s 10 Year Plan) she passed out so we can review it at our next month’s meeting. Discussed that we can learn some good strategies from that document, so we are not trying to re-invent the wheel.**

**The Open Door program at the Methodist Church in Franklin is participating in caring for the needs of some of the homeless by providing shelter on the weekends and food. The dates they provided these services was from Jan. 4th till Mar.1st.**

**We discussed about the Rapid-Rehousing dollars need to stay within the 7 counties and who is eligible. We did receive clarification that the funds can be used within any of our 7 counties. Bebeie McClure mentioned about the special assistance in-home services thru DSS and the 20 slots that are available for Medicaid eligible people. She also talked about the changes currently happening at DSS with a new computer based program called NC Fast. Currently they have no monies available for cooling.**

**Lynne De Luca talked about the Shelter Plus Care program and affordable housing. There’s been a change in personal care services; it’s on a needs based system now. Kristi mentioned that due to a high turnover there is currently no one waiting on the list for SPC. They currently operate 3 SPC grants. Clients must be homeless (in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation), and must be currently receiving mental health and/or substance abuse services. If it’s been more than 90 days since they have received services, they can call 800-849-6127 Smoky Mountain Center Access to Care.**

**There has been a drastic cut in the food stamp program and the unemployment program. Lynne is trying to secure a couple of apartments for transitional housing for people with behavioral health issues. They must be furnished and include utilities. She will send out flyers. Shelter Plus Care is rental assistance only and does not include deposits. So you can use your Rapid-Rehousing dollars to help your clients with any deposits.**

**Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 16, 2013, at 11AM at the Friendship House shelter, located at 73 Blumenthal Street in Murphy (located 3 doors up from the public library).**