**Southwestern Regional Homeless Coalition**

**November 19, 2013**

In attendance: Kristi Case, Smoky Mountain Center; Ashley Freeman, REACH of Macon County; Debra Clarke, Friendship House; Monica Sieffert, REACH of Cherokee County; Angela Chapman, REACH of Cherokee County; Judith Alvarado, REACH of Clay County; Cheryl Wilkins, Mountain Projects; Bart O’Sullivan, Friendship House; Rodney Morrow, Cherokee County DSS; Marisol Tomas, VA Medical Center

The meeting was held at the Friendship House homeless shelter in Murphy, NC.

Minutes from the October 16, 2013 meeting were reviewed and approved. A discussion was held about a set time for meetings, and the group agreed upon the 1st Wednesdays at 10AM. Beginning January 2014, we will rotate the odd months in Murphy and the even months in Waynesville. ***The next meeting is scheduled for 10:00am December 4th at the Senior Resource Center in Franklin, located at 108 Wayah Street.***

The group discussed the Rapid Re-Housing program. There were some questions around inspections, which were answered. Each agency that completes the inspection should fill out that form completely. Mountain Projects currently has an executed contract with the state, Friendship House does not. For now, all RRH requests will need to go through Mountain Proejcts. Email Bart/Debra or Cheryl when you have someone to assist, attaching the completed paperwork. They will let you know of availability of funds, and if the applicant is approved. DO NOT make any commitments of funding to anyone. It is the grantee’s (Mountain Projects or the Friendship House) responsibility to ensure everything is complete before any commitments can be made. Friendship House will cover Clay, Cherokee and Graham; Mountain Projects will cover Haywood, Jackson, Macon, and Swain.

Marisol Tomas from the VA Medical Center in Asheville spoke about their programs, of outreach to homeless veterans. They operate the VASH program, as well as transitional housing for vets. They have the potential to expand their programs to other communities to meet the needs. They also operate the Supportive Services for Veterans and Families (SSVF) program. They participate in the various Stand Down events, in Asheville and Hickory. A Stand Down is planned for Franklin in August 2014. They offer priority for services to chronically homeless, women, families, and newly returning vets.

The BOS Steering Committee meeting was discussed. The Coordinated Assessment subcommittee developed recommendations, and will develop a toolkit for regional committees to use to develop a Coordinated Assessment process. The Scorecard Committee met on 11/8/13. Andrew Romines represented our regional committee. The update from the Data Usage committee is that if there is a need to change the amount of CHIN licenses for an agency, to report that need to NCCEH by 11/30/13.

The group briefly discussed the Point in Time count scheduled for 1/29/14. We will discuss it in depth at our next meeting, looking at the forms. There was some discussion of potential interest in the unsheltered count, and we will talk about that further.

REACH of Cherokee County reported that they are serving 5 women and 5 children.

Smoky Mountain Center reported that Shelter Plus Care is full with a waiting list.

REACH of Macon reported that they are serving 6 women and 6 children in their shelter, with 1 woman and 1 child in an overflow motel.

Hurlburt Johnson Friendship House reported that they are serving 4 adults. They reported that they are waiting on their contract from the state for the Rapid Re-Housing program.

Cherokee County DSS reports they are currently assisting people through their crisis heating assistance program. They report that the LIHEAP will begin 12/1/13. NC FAST has changed the process for programs, and has caused delays in the food stamps and other assistance programs.

Mountain Projects reports that is has the executed contract for Rapid Re-Housing funds. They have helped 4 families so far, approving around $4500. They reported that they currently have around 900 Section 8 vouchers for Haywood and Jackson Counties. They are allotted for 1008 vouchers, however the cost per unit is too high to support that many vouchers in the program. They continue to work with DSS on the Family Unification Program. They have released some vouchers to people on the waitlist. There are over 500 people on the waitlist, and they plan to keep the waitlist closed for around 2 years before re-opening.