

Norfolk Homeless Consortium

Single Adults Committee

Meeting Minutes

May 23, 2007

Attendees:

Bill Groom, Sacred Heart
Debbie Williams, The Planning Council
Martha Gorman, Ghent Area Ministries
Bruce Johnson, Love Unlimited
David Wall V.A. Med Center
Officer Rowden, Norfolk Police Department

Alisa Berry, OTEH
Neil Walksh, Sacred Heart
Lindsey Roach, Barrett Haven
Katie Kitchin, OTEH
Ike Bingham, St. Columba

I. News Story to Raise Awareness about Single Adults

Martha Gorman continued the discussion from the last meeting regarding a possible news story about homeless single adults. The article should highlight the plight of single women and give statistics about the number of homeless women. Katie Kitchin mentioned that this would probably be a hard story to tell, particularly from a positive point of view. There needs to be action steps at the end of an article, in order for the article to have the intended purpose.

Love Unlimited will be putting out a tri-fold in the next few months with information that they have collected from other churches. It may be possible to tie an article into the release of their information.

II. Union Mission beds

According to the Housing Inventory Charts for the 2007 CoC Union Mission's new facility will add 88 new beds for individuals. Currently the Union Mission has 156 individual beds; however, they do take overflow, especially if an individual is accompanied by a police officer.

III. Financial Assistance in Norfolk

Currently there is still Rapid Exist money available for assistance. Both St. Columba and The Planning Council's Homeless Prevention Program are out of money until July.

IV. Homeless Situation in Ghent

Neil Walsh told the Committee that he has been asked to make a recommendation about the homeless that are currently sleeping in Sacred Heart's parking lot. Some individuals have been defacing the church, become aggressive and bothered the neighbors. The neighborhood wants Sacred Heart to shut down the parking lot or pay for security to be present at night.

The Committee discussed the issue and came to the decision that there is no quick or easy answer. Sacred Heart could shut down the parking lot to end the immediate issues facing the church, but the homeless who have been sleeping there will move to another area in Ghent. Closing the parking lot will not end the homeless situation in Ghent, it will simply force the individuals to move to another location.