

Highland Community Collaboration Council
Via Zoom
Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2021
9:30am

The Highlands Community Collaboration Council had a virtual meeting via Zoom on June 14, 2021.

Welcome and Introductions

Chris opened the meeting at 9:30 and members introduced themselves. He asked for additions or corrections to the agenda. There were 16 members in attendance today. Chris Shortt, Jimmy Makenzie, Linda Austin, Candice Morris, Mark Moss, Chuck Stanley, Joshua Sams, Si'Andra Lewis, Kathy Fugate, Seekqumarie Hawkins, Carissa South, Susan Smith, Stan Rose, Chris Austin, Howard Chapman and Matthew Sackwitz were in attendance.

- Review and approval of May 10, 2021 meeting minutes.

Matthew motioned and Chuck seconded the motion. All in favor. The minutes are approved

Guest Speakers:

- Carissa South SWVA Regional Outreach Specialist 2-1-1 VIRGINIA. The service has been extremely busy during 2020. Over 200,000 calls during the year. Available text and chat services are now available. Information and referral for services throughout Virginia. Connect callers to local resources such as food pantry, shelter, legal services, etc. The PowerPoint presentation was not accessible due to technical difficulties. It will be added to the minutes. They are funded by the Commonwealth and committed to providing referral services. They are sponsored by VDSS and have several MOA's with other agencies. Agencies use the service in times of crisis to keep the 9-1-1 lines open. Community Resource Specialists are available to assist citizens as needed. It is categorized by program as opposed to agency. Statistics are available upon request. Contact Carissa and she will provide reports. The PowerPoint presentation was shared during the presentation. She provided an overview of the website 211virginia.org. There is no app available at this time.

- Seekumarie Hawkins Workforce Development Specialist (WDS) Virginia Department of Corrections Pocahontas State Correctional Center. Joshua Sams opened the presentation by providing an overview of exit interviews that are being conducted at Pocahontas. The interviews are video recorded and provided to the probation officer via email. It is in the format of the inmate's own voice and is captured as a video to themselves. They discuss items that will lead to a case plan. Questions such as what obstacles do you foresee in regard to reoffending? He requests feedback from probation officers in regard to what questions they would like to see added to the list. Ms. Hawkins works to support inmates through reentry. They begin the journey 6-months pre-release. They receive supportive services and training. Ms. Hawkins is also seeking success stories from folks who have been previously incarcerated. Especially any who have previous DWI's and how they have overcome barriers.

New Business

- Refer to committee members: Matthew Sackwitz (Finance Committee): Provide an update regarding May 27 virtual meeting focused on future Q&A session. Matt says he would like to invite 1-2 inmates from Pocahontas to join the HCCC meeting and conduct a Q and A session from the council's standpoint. There are many decisions to be made and the council will have the opportunity to see what challenges exist and provide possible solutions. Matt would like to have the questions submitted in advance so we can assign them to the correct council member. It appears that we have access to video equipment and also clearance from the institution to conduct the meeting.
- Tentative IN-PERSON meeting for Monday August 9, 2021 (Smyth Co): Refer to Chris Austin. Video equipment is available.

July 2021 Council Presentations:

Chris will ask Felisha to provide a presentation. Ms. Lewis will also consider providing a presentation. Chris asks for members to email him with any requests.

Sub-Committee Reports

Housing Committee/ Service Integration Committee/ Grants/Finance Committee
(Matt, Emma, Andy, Felisha, and Linda)

Employment Committee: (Jimmy with DARS, Mike with VEC)
None

Mentoring Committee/ Substance Abuse Committee: (Ruth, Teresa, Chris, Chuck)

None

Public Relations Committee: (Manuel)

None

Executive Committee: (Chris, Richard, Felisha and Chris).

None

Re-entry Updates

None

Local Coalition Updates

Questions/Concerns/Comments/Announcements:

Next meeting –July 12, 2021: second Monday

We meet the second Monday of each month.

<http://www.highlandsgcc.org>

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The meeting adjourned at 10:50am.

If there is someone you would like for us to invite to a future meeting as either a guest or member, please let one of us know.

christopher.shortt@vadic.virginia.gov

manuelstreet14@gmail.com

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Austin
Secretary

