

Highland Community Collaboration Council
Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2019
9:30am

The Highlands Community Collaboration Council had a meeting on March 11, 2019 at the Smyth County DSS conference room.

Welcome and Introductions

Chris opened the meeting at 9:30 and members introduced themselves. A sign-in sheet was passed around the room. He asked for additions or corrections to the agenda.

Review and approval of Minutes of February 11, 2019 meeting

Matt motioned and Manuel seconded the minutes. All in favor. The minutes are approved

New Business

Manuel provided an update on the website. He says we are averaging around 300 hits per week.

Guest Speakers:

Susan Smith (District Mental Health Clinician: VADOC/D-16). A handout and business card was distributed to members. Has been in the position 18-months. Loves it. Has the best job in the world. Shares an office with Emma. Every day is different. Gets to meet a variety of folks. When inmates are released, it is gratifying to see them put their lives back together one piece at a time. Some have been incarcerated for over 30-years. Some say it is bad luck to take anything with you when you leave a facility. This position is new. Some hired in 2016. Statewide coverage; about 22 across the state. The position is a result of several factors: healing environment and re-entry initiative, among others. Virginia has the lowest recidivism rate in the nation. One responsibility is to work with those being released from regional jails. There is parenting, vocational skills and anger management classes available. Most referrals come from within the system. There is a question about SA programs inside the facility. Yes, there are programs within all facilities. There is also a mental health clinician within the facilities.

Jason Pritchard with Ballard Health. Jason spent 16-years in active addiction, now 7 years clean. Spent some time within a facility. He has lived it and says the programs within the system are ineffective. One issue is that the classes are mixed. Another issue is that trainers regularly jump over some material. Got out in 2017. One year and one day out bought a \$100,000 home. Several members have been involved in the transition. Has received CPRS and encourages other to participate. With Ballard Health, there is a conference on April 11th at the Higher Ed Center and he encourages all members to attend. It is about re-entry. They expect 300-500 people to attend. The U.S. Department of Commerce has created a webpage for the event. On May 23rd, there is a trauma informed care and NAS conference upcoming. Business cards were presented to members. Tri Cities Recovery offers Living Free classes. There are 32 topics that can be covered. This program works closely with Recovery Courts. They encourage sentencing to Teen Challenge as opposed to incarceration. The success rate is as high as 87%. Questions: Are you interested in coming back into the facilities? Yes. There is a question about community service

for fines. Low wages and probation are an issue. Works 50 hours a week at job and about 80 hours per month at Tri Cities. Emma says Pocahontas is interested in having him come over and present some information. 90% of people are defeated before leaving the system. He says he has 3 felonies and a drug charge on his record and has been able to have a successful career. His boss went to bat for him to encourage HR to work with him. He is currently on Federal probation. He has had some success with helping others. Living Free is taught in Saltville and a couple in Abingdon, and one in Wytheville.

Janie Edwards with Arise (Family Preservation Services) Postponed. Janie will present at the April meeting.

April 2019 Council Presentations: Suggestions?

Janie Edwards with Arise (Family Preservation Services). Josh Richardson with Mount Rogers would like to present on Intercept 2 (Jail Diversion). Sober Friends Social and Support Group will present.

Sub-Committee Reports

None

Re-entry Updates

None

Local Coalition Updates

Sub-Committee Reports:

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

None

Employment Committee: (Jimmy with DARS, Mike with VEC)

None

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

None

Public Relations Committee: (Kim, Manuel)

None

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

None

Questions/Concerns/Comments/Announcements:

Pocahontas is having a resource fair on April 11th.

Bland is having a resource fair on May 16th.

The job fair is still being organized. She has reached out to the Henderson Art Center in Marion. Tentative timeframe is June 14th.

Currently 10 participants in Comprehensive Harm Reduction program in Smyth. This up from 3 from last month. Pamphlets are available.

Carla Mullis with Mt. Rogers is an attendance for her first meeting. The grant she is working under serves those up to age 25. She has a vehicle and can transport clients' home from local prisons. It is a new program and business cards were distributed.

Next meeting April 8, 2019. We meet the second Monday of each month.

<http://www.highlandsgcc.org>

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The meeting adjourned at 10:55am.

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.

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Respectfully submitted,

Chris Austin
Secretary