

Highland Community Collaboration Council
Hybrid Meeting (Zoom and In-Person)
Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2023
9:30am

The Highlands Community Collaboration Council had a hybrid meeting on January 9, 2023.

Welcome and Introductions

Charles opened the meeting at 9:30 and members introduced themselves. Charles asked for additions or corrections to the agenda. There were 21 members in attendance today.

- Review and approval of December 12, 2022 meeting minutes. Felisha motioned and Bobby seconded the motion. All in favor. The minutes are approved.

Guest Speakers:

- Patty Johnson – HOPE Center – Virginia. Several houses in Virginia. Specialize in long term recovery. Was a fraud investigator. Went to a training in meth labs in Wytheville. Decided to open a recovery program. It takes a minimum of 12-months treatment. Three phase. Celebrate Recovery immediately. Getting them away from the drug doesn't solve the problem. Faith based. Most have a drug problem because of some other issue. Have seen it change a million lives. After 45-days we partner with local trades. For 38-weeks they train with the partner and learn a new trade. Better if we can heal the community. Healthy and working citizens. This is what pays for the program. After 38-weeks, they are hired full time. They draw their own paycheck. Establish pay plan with court. Save two months. One time \$700 fee. Drug test randomly. Zero tolerance for drug use. Meeting or training all day. Upon completion they have a job and \$700 back. Integrated into a church. Help find housing and a vehicle. Male house in Galax 34-males is the closest. Have a goal to open a house in Wytheville. Male facility opening in Roanoke. One is needed about every 90-miles. The programs start with a church. Started in Tennessee. There are 14 in Tennessee. Mostly in mid-Tennessee. By the end of this year, there will be 50 HOPE centers. Have seen a lot of success stories. Have an employee in Galax. Most clients come out of the court system. Some come from the drug court. In CCAP the clients go home at night. The difference is faith based and the job portion. www.hopecm.com is the website. They also have programs to help the indigent. They normally have an opening within 30-days. Currently have 5 beds in Danville and 5 in Axton. Word of mouth is the best referral source. Have considered having recruitment materials in the jails. Get a lot of calls from prisons. She agreed to send the application to Bland who currently has 70 re-entry candidates. It is recommended that we add this information to the HCCC website. Once we provide information, we can have

inmates participate in this meeting face-to-face with the council members. Having a plan in place prior to release is the best-case scenario. The program is intense and those who choose to participate are more successful as opposed to those just trying to get out of jail. Many inmates do not know about this service, and this would be a great addition to our referral sources.

- Patricia McGlothlin – FAMIS outreach worker with the VDH. Cumberland Plateau Health District. Have a program that serves 11-counties in SWVA. Can serve greater distance but virtually. Involved in community events and learn and see what the need is. When it comes to assisting someone, we help them gain the information to apply. When the case is sent to the local DSS worker, they just have to verify and put it in their system, and it is approved. We reach out to school and community partners. It is common for some to fall through the cracks. When they move to a different facility we assist with the transition. We are willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure these people keep their coverage. One of the most important things is to educate our communities on the unwinding of the PHE. No case has been touched since COVID. It will be overwhelming on local DSS's. Most people don't report changes. We are getting out in the community and educating people. During Covid, the unemployment rate has decreased, and the minimum wage has increased. This will put a lot of families in jeopardy of losing their coverage. The request for today is that you help us spread the word. A lot of the clients I work with don't know who their DSS worker is. Sometimes, we do the little things like find out who the worker is and provide the information to the client. Patricia will send some information to Charles that can be shared with the group. The guidelines change on a regular basis. The prisons are using CommonHelp to assist clients complete applications for Medicaid and SNAP. The system will let you know if they are approved. The Medicaid number begins with a T. It is not a true Medicaid number. The true Medicaid number will include a FIPS code for the locality. About 30-hours per week will be the limit for work at the new minimum wage to stay eligible for Medicaid. We don't know if the guidelines will be increased due to the increase in minimum wage.

New Business

- Discuss HCCC being a member of the Chamber of Commerce of Smyth County. Linda says the cost to join is \$55. There are 191-members. Hands and Feet is willing to pay the fees. Do we want to let Hands and Feet pay the fees or do we want to let Hands and Feet provide the funding to HCCC and they can join. They have an excellent database of all churches in Smyth. They also maintain a list of available rental properties in Smyth. Linda made a motion and Felisha seconded. Felisha recommends Hands and Feet make the payment directly. All in favor. Motion carries.
- Determine a speaker(s) for February 2023 meeting. Angel contacted Freedom Tabernacle and learned that they are in the early stages of a facility at this point. It is recommended that we wait until the process evolves before the presentation is scheduled.

- Discuss- HCCC Board Members needed Wrap Up: Matt says we need 12-members, and we currently have seven. Our bylaws state we must have between 7-15 members. We are looking for diversity. If anyone is interested in being on the board, please let Richard know. Matt is not here today. We will table this for next month.

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: (Charles, Richard, Felisha and Chris).
None

Re-entry Updates

Local Coalition Updates

None

Questions/Concerns/Comments/Announcements:

CCAP update. Recently approved to have 10-beds. They can go out in the local community and get a job. Please let them know of any employers who are willing to give a second chance. The location is Honaker. Angel says there is a navigator for second chance employment in Russell County. CCAP was formerly the Appalachian Detention Center.

Next meeting –February 13, 2023: 2nd Monday

<http://www.highlandscce.org>

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The meeting adjourned at 11:04am.

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