

Highland Community Collaboration Council  
Meeting Minutes  
October 15, 2018  
9:30am

The Highlands Community Collaboration Council had a meeting on October 15, 2018 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 September 19, 2018 meeting**

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

**New Business**

Matt explained that if we want to move forward with the trauma informed community network, we need to identify stakeholders and determine if they have received trauma informed care training. If not, make arrangements for them to receive it. Once received, we can then work toward planning the TICN conference, with a cost of \$1500. We are pursuing funding opportunities.

Matt discussed a PayPal account for the Council. It would allow us to put a button on Facebook page to allow donations. There are small fees attached. It is around 1-2%. Linda says Walmart has a simple process for requesting donations. Felisha says OEI could manage the donations received online. The proper paperwork has been filed. The site may need a memo section so if donors want to specify what the donation can be used for. Linda adds there is also a Facebook donation page.

Manuel says the website is averaging 250 views per week.

Manuel noted that Mountain CAP is not listed in the booklet. We will need Kim to

**Guest Speakers:**

- Chaplain Danny Thompson from Abingdon Regional Jail to speak about the (trauma-related) healing groups he is doing in the Regional Jail system.

He has been working with the Good News Jail and Prison Ministry for 23-years. They also travel to other countries and train ministers for jail ministry. He has seen a lot of programs come and go. In 1995, Bristol had 85 inmates. They now have 150. A poem from an inmate was shared with the Council. Single mother, went to work, came home and house had burned to the ground with her child and father inside. Sharing the story is the road toward healing. We can't forget these people. There are people locked in cages in our community. 1 ½ years ago, the

American Bible Society was approached about a program called Healing the Wounds of Trauma. We have been training chaplains. Our largest group of trained chaplains are in Nebraska and are making great strides with this program. The Healing Journey is a 5-day program. It leads them to a place with a sense of hope and peace. The ABS wants to share this with as many people as possible. The few groups in Abingdon and Tazewell are doing well with the group. A second poem was shared. Most inmates are parents. How do we change the drug problem? The answer is with the family. The poem captures why we do what we do. A few years ago, I was at the jail. An inmate was cussing at me. I then come upon an officer who was having a bad day and we had an argument. I was also behind on my bills and having some marital problems. The phone rang. It was Johnny. Do you remember me? I was in this pod. Yeah, I remember you. I am sitting here at home with my grandson on my knee. I have a job and I go to church. This is all because of what you did for me when I was in jail. The poem "Prayer for Mommy" was read to the Council.

Matt says people being released are not known by us. Maybe Chaplain Danny can provide referrals to the Council.

Is the material only for inmates? No, outside groups can be trained. It is a participatory model. You would act to guide them through it. If you have volunteers who want to be trained, I would be happy to provide the training. It is best to go through the training first, then be trained to be a trainer.

### **November 19, 2018 Council Presentations: Suggestions?**

Debbie Debord will discuss Medicaid Expansion.

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

None

### **Re-entry Updates**

None

### **Local Coalition Updates**

ASAC will meet in Abingdon in December.

### **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)*

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:**

What services are available for the homeless? HOPE House in Galax and HOPE, Inc. in Wytheville. The Salvation Army in Roanoke is currently the closest shelter with a large capacity. Mount Rogers can help those who are homeless with mental health issues. Housing complexes who receive Federal funding restrict housing from those with felonies.

Marion Manor is empty and may be an option for a re-entry housing complex.

The Town of Marion rent has jumped to \$500/month for a 1-bedroom apartment. Some are \$625.

Emma went to a dialogue conference. Someone asked about the future of re-entry councils. DSS has a new director who will create a MOU with DOC. A survey was sent out by DOC last month. Housing and funding were large items.

There is a TOPS program in jails that shows promise. It appears that the program works. Linda provided a success story from the program. The TOP pod in Abingdon can only house 10 inmates. It needs to be expanded. Jake Moore has visited the program in Abingdon.

BLR building owners have donated the building to Fairview Housing. The facility will be structured to separate males and females.

401 West Main in Radford is a day center that is doing well.

Volunteers are needed at BLR to help paint and clean. If interested, please contact Linda.

**Next meeting –November 19: 3rd Monday: (State Holiday: November 12).**

<http://www.highlandsgccc.org>

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**The meeting adjourned at 10:45am.**

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,

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