

Okaloosa/Walton Continuum of Care/Opportunity, Inc
Minutes of the Membership Body
January 5, 2009

Attendance:

Nate Smith, President, Opportunity, Inc. BOD
Virginia Glynn Barr, Treasurer, Opportunity Inc., BOD
Tina Bailey, Department of Children and Families
Alma Banks, Shelter House
Lydia Barton, Seventh Day Adventist
Ann Buscavage, Community of Christ, Crestview
Tom Buscavage, Community of Christ, Crestview
Lancy Colaco, Waterfront Rescue Mission
Ted Corcoran, Chamber of Commerce
Cathy DuCharme, City of Fort Walton Beach
Richard Enos, First Baptist Church of FWB
Pat Franklin, Department of Children and Families, Opportunity, Inc. BOD
Yvonne Franklin, First Presbyterian
Bill Garvie, Fort Walton Beach City Council, Opportunity, Inc. BOD
JoAnn Gorsuch, St. Simon's Episcopal
Mack Guy, Children in Crisis
Mary Hauge, St. Simon's Episcopal
Maryanne Helfrich, FRESH Start/ Okaloosa Coalition on the Homeless
Donald Jernigan, Macedonia Community Development Corporation
Carolyn Ketchel, Catholic Charities, Inc.
Chris Leavenworth, Destin Harvest
Chris Lefebvre, Seventh Day Adventist
Terry Light, Families Count
Tammy McGhee, Krewe of Chameleons
Lin Mack, S4P Synergy
Jim Martin, Fort Walton Beach Police Department
Donna Morgan, Bridgeway Center, Inc.
Jackie Pilcher, Rosewood Realty
Mathilda Ravine, St. Simon's Episcopal; Opportunity, Inc. BOD
James Robbins, Gregg Chapel AME
Duane St. John, St. Andrews, Opportunity, Inc. BOD
Lisa Jo Spencer, FWB Chamber of Commerce
Michelle Sperzel, Shelter House
Doug Smith, Haven House (Walton County); Opportunity, Inc. BOD
Aaron Thrush, Sharing and Caring
Yvette Torres, S4P Synergy
Malva Weaver, Department of Children and Families
Carrie Ziegler, Okaloosa County Health Department
Lenore Wilson, Opportunity, Inc.

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm by Chair Nate Smith who welcomed members and guests.

Introductions were made by all in attendance.

Ginny Barr motioned for approval of the minutes from the December 1, 2008 Membership Meeting. Motion was seconded by Lydia Barton. Motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report was given by Ginny Barr. Beginning cash on hand was \$40,131.17. Total deposits made were in the amount of \$11,748.97, an amount representing private donations only. Total cash after deposits was \$51,877.14. Expenses totaled \$21,378.82, of which \$5916.50 was for property insurance for the new shelter building at 305 Lovejoy; \$4,115.57 was for the Challenge Grant and \$6,419.60 was for direct services. Balance as of December 31 was \$30,498.32. Lydia Barton moved to approve the treasurer's report, while Chris Lefebvre seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Lenore Wilson, reporting for the Board of Directors' Shelter Committee, announced that a limited liability corporation, set up by the Community Development Corporation (CDC), had finalized the purchase of property at 305 Lovejoy for use by the Continuum of Care as a homeless shelter. The CDC was also providing essential rehabilitation, including a new roof on one of the buildings, new carpet in another, and inspection and repair, if necessary to ensure workable plumbing and electricity. The CDC expects their portion of the repairs to be completed by spring. This gives the Continuum of Care two-three months to establish policies and procedures, determine an operational plan, and raise operational funds.

Gratitude was also expressed not just to the CDC as an organization, Mike Kent and Patti Sunnarborg personally for their tireless and rapid work in putting a purchase package together. Also instrumental in the process were Bill Garvie, Judy Riley, French Brown, Ginny Barr from the Continuum of Care Board of Directors, and MaryAnn Helfrich of FRESH Start/ Okaloosa Coalition on the Homeless, among others. This was the work of many, all of whom are greatly appreciated.

Ms. Wilson outlined an idea in which 31 churches would be recruited to cover one evening per week. This would include an evening meal for that one night, plus operating a severe weather shelter should the temperature be predicted to drop to 40 degrees or below, and/or rain predicted to fall in amounts of one inch or more. Approximately 15 churches have already expressed interest.

A meeting was called for Tuesday, January 6, 2009, at 10 a.m. at 305 Lovejoy for those interested in surveying the property and working up plans for building utilization and operational development.

Ted Corcoran provided an update on the Greater FWB Chamber of Commerce campaign to “Redirect Your Generosity,” an effort to redirect funds given to panhandlers to the service providers who offer meals, emergency shelter and other essential services to the homeless. The billboards, in-store posters, and brochures have been revised, adding the headline: “There IS a Difference.” The Chamber expects to roll out the campaign January 15, following approval by Ms. Wilson and the appropriate BOD committee as to the brochure language.

Executive Director’s report was given by Lenore Wilson. See attached handout for specific information given during the meeting. Ms. Wilson spoke to the rapidly increasing demand for services faced by Opportunity, Inc. and all service providers. Donations from the Compass Bank and White Wilson helped drive the total of private giving to \$10,000. Almost half of the private donations went toward funding “Operation Christmas,” a service spearheaded by Sherry Kennedy, Jackie Pilcher, and the Krewe of Chameleons. 105 children were provided with shoes, clothes, toys and books, while the children and their families received food to cover the gap between school closing in December and reopening in January.

The point in time survey will be conducted the last week of January. Volunteers are urgently needed.

Yvonne Franklin reported on the cold night shelter program. Cold temperatures set in early this year, and already shelters have been open on 19 occasions. Mary Hauge briefed the group on the Christmas Party, and expressed her pleasure at the considerate and courteous behavior of shelter guests this entire year. She was seconded by representatives of several cold night programs. Ann Buscavage reported that the Crestview cold night shelters have opened 21 times, but with generally light attendance this first year. Outreach procedures were discussed. The next meeting of the shelter committee will be held January 12 at 5 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church.

Tammy McGhee of the Krewe of Chameleons announced availability of various items recovered from the commissaries, including pallets of flour, jelly and M&Ms. A number of church and non-profit organizations requested various items. Chris Leavenworth of Destin Harvest volunteered for regular pick-up of future food supplies, and promised to distribute them to any charity or church that expressed an interest.

Hot Button Issues:

Duane St. John announced the availability of between 300-500 diaper bags, and asked if there were any takers. Several non-profits and churches volunteered.

Donna Morgan urged Continuum of Care members to go on <http://www.CMT.com>, and register the property on 305 Lovejoy as a potential recipient of an “extreme makeover.”

Carrie Ziegler said progress was being made on Opportunity Health, a primary care facility for low income persons without insurance. They expect to announce an opening in the near future.

Lin Mack and S4P Synergy are applying as a designated disaster food location as part of America's Second Harvest. Rev. Mack needs a generator to complete the eligibility requirements.

Bill Garvie brought attention to IRS rules allowing for \$0.14 per mile for travel incurred as part of charitable work, and \$0.225 per mile for travel related to medical assistance.

Aaron Thrush asked about progress on a 10-year-plan to end chronic homelessness. Bill Garvie answered that it was under discussion, but little had been done to formalize a plan to date.

Carolyn Ketchel reported on providing food for Thanksgiving and Christmas to over 150 families. She also expressed satisfaction with the dental program being run through Catholic Charities, and urged non-profits and churches to refer persons in need to their office.

Motion was made to adjourn and the meeting was adjourned at 4:53PM by Chair Nate Smith

Respectfully submitted by Lenore Wilson