

Okaloosa/Walton Continuum of Care/Opportunity, Inc
Minutes of the Membership Body
March 2, 2009/ Chamber of Commerce

Attendance:

Martin Fancher, Vice-President
Kathy Baird, Okaloosa County School District
Lydia Barton, Seventh Day Adventist
Virginia Glynn Barr, Treasurer; Mental Health Association
Gloria Battle, St. Simon's Episcopal Church
Denise Buscavage, Community of Christ, Crestview
Tom Buscavage, Community of Christ, Crestview
Karen Chapman, Okaloosa County Health Department
Lancy Colaco, Waterfront Rescue Mission
Frank Cooper, Christ the King, Walton County
Rob Crosby, Liberty Tax
Cathy Ducharme, City of Fort Walton Beach
Pat Franklin, Department of Children and Families
Yvonne Franklin, First Presbyterian
Bill Garvie, Fort Walton Beach City Council
Jim Godwin, Pizza Man
JoAnn Gorsuch, St. Simon's Episcopal
Mary Hauge, St. Simon's Episcopal Church
Maryann Helfrich, FRESH Start/ Okaloosa Coalition on the Homeless
Terry Henderson, Families County
Ron Holbrook
Chris Lefebvre, Seventh Day Adventist Church
Ramsey Long, Families First Network
Claudia McArthur, Families First Network
Butch McKay, OASIS
Donna Morgan, Bridgeway Center, Inc.
Jan Palmgren, visitor
Charity Parker, COPE Center
Jackie Pilcher, Rosewood Realty
James Robbins, Gregg Chapel AME
Charles Sansom, Family of Faith
Duane St. John, St. Andrews by the Sea
Doug Smith, Haven House
Lisa Jo Spencer, FWB Chamber of Commerce
Michelle Sperzle, Shelter House
Aaron Thrush, Sharing and Caring
Michael Walsh, Destin Harvest
Linda Whitney, First United Methodist Church
Carrie Ziegler, Okaloosa County Health Department
Lenore Wilson, Opportunity, Inc.

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm by Vice President Martin Fancher, who welcomed members and guests. The minutes from February 16 were read and approved.

The treasurer's report was read by Ms. Virginia Glynn Barr, Treasurer of the Okaloosa Walton Homeless Continuum of Care. Ms. Barr reported cash on hand as of January 1, 2009 at \$30,498.32; deposits of \$30,798.07 for January and February, expenses for that same period of time at \$28,121.57, leaving a balance of \$33,174.82. Of those funds, \$13,194.03 are encumbered for use by Challenge Grant subrecipients, leaving an available balance of 19,980.79. The treasurer's report was approved.

Dr. Karen Chapman spoke on Opportunity Health, the primary health care facility for the indigent located at the Health Department office in Fort Walton Beach. The clinic is open Tuesday-Thursday, and is staffed by two part-time physicians, a physician's assistant and a nurse practitioner. The clinic is not designed as an urgent care facility. Instead, patients are provided with an intake appointment, and provided with follow-up and sick care thereafter. Dr. Chapman reported that 60% of the clientele is significantly under the poverty line set by the federal government, but that the clinic would accept persons up to 200% of the poverty level on a sliding fee scale. Goals include expanding operations to Monday-Friday, with periodic Saturday service, and to add dental services to the program. Dr. Chapman is writing a grant to fund additional services, with assistance from Ms. Wilson.

Persons seeking services at Opportunity Health may access them by calling 833-9240.

Ms. Wilson spoke to updates on the Homeless Prevention Fund portion of the economic stimulus package, as released through the Office on Homelessness. The funding announced for the state of Florida was somewhat less than originally anticipated, and the state share for "non-formula" counties was reduced to \$20 million. How this works out for Okaloosa and Walton Counties remains to be resolved. Ms. Wilson thanked the various work groups for their help in getting a jump-start on the plan required by the Office on Homelessness prior to fund distribution. Participants helped create an outreach plan, intake, tracking and exit forms to be used for fund distribution.

Ms. Wilson also addressed the HUD awards for Continuum of Care grants. \$62,000 of which goes to Opportunity, Inc. for expansion of the Homeless Management Information System, and \$525,000 to Bridgeway Center Inc for the independent living program. A meeting of award recipients will be held in Jacksonville March 30-April 2 to discuss guidelines and reporting requirements. Meanwhile, BCI has received an extension of their old grants, and will be able to maintain their clients.

Ms. Wilson also addressed Challenge Grant disbursement, which stands at 50% of funds available. All funds must be expended by June 30, or returned to the state.

Finally, Ms. Wilson gave a brief overview of the type of presentations made on behalf of Opportunity, Inc. at workshops and conferences around the state. The specific

presentation in this case concerned homelessness among children and youth, a rapidly rising population.

Yvonne Franklin made the report for the cold night committee, which opened 40 times this winter. Ms. Franklin reported being grateful that the cold weather was coming to an end, as volunteers were becoming scarce. She also mentioned that happily behavior by homeless clients had improved. Sixty-seven clients had spent the night at First Presbyterian yesterday, and the evening had gone well.

Ann Sprague reported that the Crestview cold night shelter had opened 50 times, with slowly increasing numbers. Ms. Sprague reported a core group of 8, plus transients. They have had families, including new-born infants.

Ms. Sprague also mentioned the Triple B Bar-b-cue in Crestview, to be held March 14. The HOPE Network will be staffing a dessert booth, with banana pudding as a featured item, hoping to raise funds for the Opportunity, Inc. North emergency fund. Persons wishing to assist in this effort may bring their baked goods to the Continuum office, or make arrangements with Ms. Wilson for pick-up. Ms. Wilson will be delivering to the Crestview site on Saturday morning.

Motion was made to adjourn and the meeting was adjourned at 4:56PM by Vice President Martin Fancher.

Respectfully submitted by Lenore Wilson