HOMELESS ALLIANCE OF WESTERN NEW YORK

MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

March 19, 2014 – 3:00pm

American Red Cross

**Attendance** –

**Introductions**

Board Vice-President Karen Carman called the meeting to order at 3:00pm and welcomed all present. All members introduced themselves.

**Community Presentations/Outreaching**

**Veterans Outreach Center of WNY** - **Chelsea Boyd** introduced the work of the center. VOC is located at 1289 Main Street, Buffalo, NY 14209. VOC was created two years ago with the purpose of providing services to US veterans and their families. Since its inception, VOC has served about 1000 clients with more coming to their doors needing housing and supportive services. Services provided include rapid re-housing, security deposit, rental arrears, transportation and intensive case management. To be eligible, prospective applicants must meet the definition of Title 9 discharge status.

 Service providers can call (716) 898.0110 to refer clients or to obtain more information.

**Community Access Services** **of WNY - Joshua McCain** of Community Access Services of WNY presented the role and scope of services of CAS. CAS is a non-profit organization that is committed to addressing “the epidemic of HIV/AIDS and other chronic diseases that challenge the health and welfare of urban communities in Buffalo and Erie County”. Their scope of work includes prevention education and treatment, and risk and harm reduction model. Active drug users that are not ready for treatments are set up in a spectrum of readiness program. Their services also intersect with the homeless population. Other services provided includes free drugs and HIV testing, support groups, syringe exchange program and pregnancy testing.

CAS is located on 200 South Elmwood Ave, Buffalo, NY 14201. If agencies are interested in having Joshua speak at their locations to give him a call at (716) 8525969

**HAWNY Updates**

**Connie Sanderson** - NOFA announcements is expected to come out soon. HAWNY has requested HUD technical assistance on how to implement the Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System – So far no response from HUD. If HUD does not respond, the next approach will be to hire a local consultant to assist in the implementation strategy of the project.

**Rapid re-housing and PSH** – A committee has been formed to increase the pool of landlords that are willing work directly with service providers that provide RRH and PSH  to shorten the time it takes to secure housing for homeless households  – So far 20+ landlords have signed on to the idea.  HOME (Housing Opportunities Made Equal) has agreed to maintain the landlord database.  HOME will be sending out emails on a weekly basis:

To Landlords – they can enter any current vacant units they may have

To Providers – can enter their housing needs; ie. – (2) 1 bedroom units

These will be put into a spreadsheet and then emailed back out - so landlords can call providers; providers can call landlords to make arrangements to see the units.

If providers know landlords that they think may be interested in participating – call or email - Alyssa Bergsten at HOME - 716-854-1400 or happylandlords716@gmail.com .

**Announcements**

* Hands Across Buffalo is taking place on May 17, 2014 @ 11am. The event is aim to celebrate our city’s diversity and unite against poverty. Theresa is urging people to register online at [www.handsacrossbuffalo.com](http://www.handsacrossbuffalo.com).
* Buffalo Municipal Housing has announced that they will be granting a 1% preference to clients who have completed 60 days in the Continuum of Care transitional housing programs.
* HAWNY website is under construction. The revamp completion is expected in the couple of weeks.
* Poverty Research Workshop V is scheduled for March 28, 2014 at the Buffalo Auditorium library.
* Fundraising mini golf tournament – HAWNY is holding its first annual mini golf tournament fundraising event on April 7, 2014 at 6pm at the Paddock Gold Dome in Tonawanda.
* Opportunity and Challenges Bus Tour is schedule for April 11, 2014 at 1:30pm. People can register for free online;  <http://wnyhomeless.org/home/2013/09/opportunities-and-challenges-bus-tour/> or by calling the Homeless alliance.
* Friends of Night People (FONP) is having an annual race and Cigar for a Charity event. The race is scheduled for May 3rd 2014. Registration starts at 7 am. The Cigar for a Charity is scheduled for April 18, 2014. For more information, please contact Megan Bingham at (716)884.5375
* FONP established a new Friends of Friends program – this is a one-one tailored 6 month of intensive Case Management program for people experiencing homelessness issues. For more info, please contact Megan Bingham of FONP at (716)884.5375
* 2.1.1 of WNY thanks those that reached out to the NYS elected officials – funding

They were able to retain their funding.

* Community Access Services is launching a “Safety Counts” program. A free program for active drug users to learn how to stay safe from HIV and Hepatitis C. The program starts May 2014. For more info, call (716) 8525969

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm. The next meeting is scheduled for April 16, 2014 at 3:00pm at American Red Cross.

Submitted by Suckie Smith, Homeless Alliance of WNY