



June 23, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Present: Brian Alexander, Thurston Alexander-Smith, Terry Allebaugh, Christine Allen, Lindsay Arledge, Linzie Atkins, Fred Baker, Jennifer Biess, Michael Bishop, Allison Bolton, Worth Bolton, Allison Bond, Marsheta Boyton, Chris Brandenburg, Patrice Brown, Brenda Brubaker, Jason Cain, Andrea Carey, Emily Carmody, Will Collins, Cajun Comeau, Lauren Costello, Samone Cowan, Danielle Cullen, Hank Debnam, Nicole Dewitt, Paul Dillon, Jeff Doyle, Khan Eakins, Mark Edmonds, Victoria Eichorn, Candace Evans, Scott Farmer, Dan Ferrell, Brian Fike, Mary Fisher-Murray, Tony Fleming, Marques Ford, Sam Foust, Bryan Fox, Angela Gallardo, Moses Gloria, Max Goelling, Bob Goodale, James Gorman, Diana Graham, Brenda Green, Penny Greer-Link, Brian Hahne, Judy Harmon, Angela Harper-King, Robin Henry, Troy Hershberger, James Hicks, James Higgins, Kathy Home, Ursula Ingram, Mary John-Williams, Teresa Johnson, Sandy Jolley, Megan Jordan, Rob Kerns, Amber Kimble, Merritt Latham, Branden Lewis, Neely Mahoney, Jerome Malloy, Ursula Mannix, Ralph Markwood, Joseph Martinez, Timothy McClain, Tim McElyea, Mark Merrick, Meaghan Messner, Brenda Monforti, Larry Moore, Trudy Murray, David Nash, Connie Ness, Denise Neunaber, Lynn Newsom, Shana Oberdorf, Raquel Painter, Allen Payne, Tim Peedin, Cecilia Peers, Sandy Pendergraft, Charshae Phillips, Melanie Piedra, Brandon Porter, Jim Prosser, Marialena Pyatt, Cheryl Rawls, Jean Reaves, Sue Roberson, Claudia Roberts, Leigh Roberts, David Roddenberry, Reginald Roy, Tia Sanders, Brian Sangutei, Matt Schnars, Anne Showalter, Harrette Smith, Jeff Smith, Kelly Snead, Nikiya Sneed, Richard Stancel, Flo Stein, Annette Stevenson, Katharine Stewart, Leslie Stewart, Doug Taggart, Mark Teachey, Ellecia Thompson, Eric Truesdale, Christiana Glenn Tugman, Kathleen Vollandt, Jasmin Volkel, Lucas Vrbsky, Janice White, Shantisha Williams, and Shirley Wong

Cheryl Rawls opened the meeting by welcoming all. Due to the packed schedule on *Initiatives for Veterans Experiencing Homelessness*, introductions of all present did not occur. Jim Prosser, Deputy Secretary, NC Department of Military and Veteran Affairs, served as moderator for the meeting. He noted that the partnership between the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Health and Human Services began last year. It was a natural fit for the NC Coalition to End Homelessness to also come on board.

Terry Allebaugh, Ending Veteran Homelessness Coordinator, NC Dept. of Military and Veteran Affairs, noted that the report on Veteran homelessness was released today. The meeting is a culmination of a number of efforts as well as a celebration. What does ending Veterans homelessness mean? It doesn't mean fully ending it. In 2010, a federal definition was provided: *Every community will have a systematic response in place that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible, or if it can't be prevented, it is a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.* Criteria for reaching the goal of ending homelessness were also developed. In 2014, Michelle Obama announced the Mayoral challenge to end Veteran homelessness. New Orleans was the first to achieve the goal in January 2015. The counties of Cumberland and Forsyth met this goal in NC.

Jennifer Biess, NC Coalition to End Homelessness, then presented on population trends in homeless Veterans. The point-in-time count remained fairly stable at 1,100 homeless Veterans from 2008 to 2015 but dropped dramatically to 888 in 2016, which is a 19% decrease from 2015. In North Carolina, the number of chronically homeless Veterans fell from 177 in 2015 to 98 in 2016 or about a 45% decrease. Homeless Veterans are both women and men and live in both urban and rural areas. Women are slightly over-represented. While most are single, women and their families are among the homeless. African Americans are disproportionately represented.

Larry Moore, Volunteers of America, provided a personal story of homelessness.

Ending Veteran Homelessness Team Leads then presented. They included Brandon Lewis, counties of Gaston, Lincoln, and Cleveland; Nicole Dewitt, Rowan County; Reginald Roy, Onslow County; Christiana Glenn Tugman, county of Buncombe and Asheville; Cecilia Peers, counties of Brunswick, New Hanover, and Pender; and Matthew Schnars, counties of Wake, Durham, and Orange. Each presented on accomplishments that their teams had achieved and recommendations for the future.

Denise Neunaber, Executive Director, NC Coalition to End Homelessness, showed efforts in NC to reduce Veteran homelessness. She indicated those communities that have ended Veteran homelessness, Zero 2016 counties, Rapid Results communities, and the Rowan County Expansion Region. She emphasized that we have a choice to end homelessness.

General James Gorman, NC Department of Public Safety, made a heartfelt plea for folks to make ending Veteran homelessness a priority in the State.

Cheryl reminded folks that minutes and other materials are available on the website, <http://ncveteransworkinggroup.org/>.

On every third Wednesday from 12 to 2 pm, Wake County hosts a Resource Fair on reintegration assistance in the NC Works Center in Raleigh.

Lynn Newsom mentioned that they are very interesting in helping incarcerated Veterans who are incarcerated because of an event triggered by his PTSD. One in every ten incarcerated are Veterans HB 1104, Grier Martin can use PTSD as mitigating factor.

On August 28, the Hospice and Palliative Care Center is sponsoring an event celebrating WWII Veterans, which is free to them. Read more at <http://ncveteransworkinggroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Save-the-Date-WWII-Veterans-45.pdf>.

Future meetings will highlight the following topics:

- August 25, TBA
- September 22, *Veterans Treatment Courts* (meeting to be held at Stanly Community College in Albemarle)
- October 27, *Overview of Veteran-Owned Businesses in NC*