

Bedford Housing Coalition September 23, 2022 Meeting Notes

Bedrock Community Church, Town of Bedford

Attending were Tammy Venables with Adult Protective Services, Denise Kennedy with Bedford Social Services, Lisa Bailey with Bedford Domestic Violence Services, Betty Easter with BARC, Angela Hill with Lake Christian Ministries, Dara Cranney with Centra, and Aaron Watkins with Horizon Behavioral Health.

BHC members agreed to focus on a warming shelter given that cold temperatures are coming. Denise has a connection to Bedford Presbyterian Church and will ask if they are willing to open their meeting building for shelter. All agreed it would be simpler to have the shelter operate from one location with area churches rotating in volunteers. Denise will reach out to Pastor John Sallie at Bedford Presbyterian.

It was also shared that Kevin Cloran with Bedrock Community Church may know of the 12 churches that operated an emergency shelter (ice storms, power outages, etc.) pre-COVID. Red Cross maintains a storage facility in town that contains cots that could be used for the warming shelter.

BCH members discussed the importance of warming shelter volunteer training to include awareness of sex trafficking and substance abuse as those have been problematic at shelters in nearby areas. Also, there is a possibility Bedford DSS interns can provide transport for the homeless who desire shelter in Lynchburg.

BHC members discussed the continued need for data collection on county and town homeless. Angela will continue to try to reach Sarah Fuentes with the Central Virginia Continuum of Care regarding intake forms. Lisa suggested Angela call Michelle Bauman with Community Access Network.

Andy Crawford joined the meeting for a few minutes and spoke to common barriers he's seen in persuading county residents to go to homeless shelter. Unwillingness to part with pets is a long-standing concern.

To do:

Angela and Lisa – homelessness data collection and screening form

Angela – keep in touch with Tim Brooke on the regional inter-domination meeting/ministerial association and churches that may want to participate

Denise – feedback from Bedford Presbyterian on use of their meeting building

BHC committee at large – feedback on goals for BARC Strategic Plan