

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

MARCH 19, 2019

**PORTSMOUTH CITY HALL
CONFERENCE ROOM A**

6:00 P.M.

Present: Chair Hannah Dahlgren, Vice Chair Jonathan Sandberg, Lynne Langley, Alison Hamilton, Judy Bunnell, Marie Cowgill, Janet Phelps

Absent: None

Staff: Elise Annunziata, Community Development Coordinator

Chair Dahlgren called the meeting to order and recognized the following individuals to discuss their application for the FY 2020 Public Service Agency Grant Program each agency also described the needs facing their clients, their agency operations and the overall community development challenges over the next five years.

6:15pm – 6:30pm	Chase Home for Children Cory Towne-Kerr, Diversion Coordinator
6:30pm – 6:45pm	HAVEN Sarah Shanahan, Program Director
6:45pm – 7:00pm	Crossroads House Martha Stone, Executive Director
7:00pm – 7:15pm	AIDS Response Seacoast Richard Wagner, Executive Director
7:15pm – 7:30pm	Greater Seacoast Community Health (formerly Families First) Helen Long, Grant Writer

Ms. Towne-Kerr discussed Chase Home's diversion program which seeks to prevent children from entering the penal system and keep children together with their parents. She stated that opioids and substance misuse, and lack of affordable housing for families and for young adults aged 19-22 are among the top challenges for community development and facing her agency's clientele. Rate of recidivism is 22% after 1 year.

Ms. Shanahan for HAVEN described HAVEN's services, which include sexual assault services and shelter to women and children who are survivors of domestic violence. She also explained the new effort to support Housing Stability and Counseling in an effort to prevent recidivism. The rate of recidivism among HAVEN's clients is less than 30% after 1 year. These efforts are largely focused outside of Portsmouth, and Ms. Annunziata clarified that CDBG funds must be spent on services or operations in Portsmouth. Ms. Shanahan expressed that affordable housing, lack of transitional housing for persons fleeing domestic violence and lack of permanent supportive housing for families needing additional assistance is a significant challenge for Portsmouth and HAVEN's clients.

Ms. Stone, Executive Director of Crossroads House emergency shelter for homeless families and individuals stated that CDBG funding would be used to support the operations of its emergency shelters. She noted that there has been an increase in the

number of persons seeking shelter and that the facilities are overfull or overfull. She also stated that she believes the lack of affordable housing options in the City of Portsmouth have contributed to the longer stays at the shelter. The shelter is planning for IT and technology upgrades and exploring funding options for other infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Wagner expressed that the challenges facing community development in Portsmouth and his clients in particular is housing, transportation, mental health services, substance misuse, food security and insurance coverage. He noted a decrease in the number of newly diagnosed HIV/AIDS clients, which is concerning given the dramatic increase in opioid and needle sharing that has been reported. Education and outreach is key, but AIDS Response Seacoast is limited by resources to be able to do that outreach. Mr. Wagner stated that the agency's lease was renewed for 5 years in FY 19.

Ms. Long presented a summary of the agency's work, including the dental services that are supported by CDBG. The number of clients served specifically by a CDBG public services grant was clarified. She described challenges facing the community and the agency's clients as: lack of affordable housing; insufficient access/availability to public transportation and opioid addiction and substance misuse.

The meeting adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m.