

**Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry  
Membership Meeting  
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church on May 15, 2013**

Miriam called the meeting to order. Motion, with second to approve minutes from April 17, 2013: Motion approved.

The speaker for this meeting is Ahmad El-Mahdawy from the Mercy Clinic. Brendan began by speaking briefly of his experiences with the Mercy Clinic. They are part of the Safetynet provider group and operate the clinic at the Hoda Academy Center located at 5522 SW 13<sup>th</sup> St.

Theresa Lowe was unable to make it to the meeting, so Miriam gave an update on GCI. It's moving along as planned. The hope is for an October 1 soft opening, with some services being provided. The community needs assessment was sent out via the listserv. The assessment is useful not only for understanding what services needed to be provided in the current community, but can also be applied to GCI. There are going to be more opportunities for community input on GCI. The idea of additional tours has been mentioned. Once GCI is operational – city/county is intending to relocate office of homelessness to GCI and ACCHH would also likely relocate there.

Jack Donovan discussed the many opportunities for partnership with GCI. He mentioned Library Partnership as one in particular that makes sense. Advised anyone interested in partnering with GCI to mention this in the Community Needs Assessment.

John Wachtel from the City of Gainesville updated the Coalition on the city's developments regarding GCI. The issue of re-zoning was approved at the last City Commission meeting, and the first meeting in June would involve approving the final purchase and approval for construction on Phase 1, which includes 6 buildings.

**Old Business**

Miriam discussed CAPP grants. ACCHH requested \$50,000 which includes move-in costs for GCI. Melody Marshall discussed the follow-up to the Feb. ACCHH dinner meeting group. Meetings are open to anyone. The purpose of the group is to not lose sight of suggestions provided at the February ACCHH dinner meeting. Currently projects being discussed involve a newsletter, and developing a token system to pay for services such as laundry. A good example is [www.givetokens.org](http://www.givetokens.org) in Portland. Theresa is going to talk with GDOT and chamber of commerce to see if they are willing to participate and distribute tokens. Fundraising would be the next step. The meetings are held on the last Wednesday of every month at 1:30 at Holy Trinity in the library.

**Featured Speaker: Ahmad El-Mahdawy, Mercy Clinic**

The Rahma Mercy Clinic is free clinic located at the Hoda Academy Center on SW 13<sup>th</sup> St. just south of FL Works. It's open every Saturday from 9am – 1pm. The clinic will see patients who meet the less than 200% poverty level requirement. Currently, the clinic is equipped with most lab features in order analyze blood work, etc. Recently, they've signed a contract with Walmart in order to provide discount medicine using a coupon provided by the clinic. They are in current

negotiations with specialists for such things as heart disease and mental health counseling. A major obstacle is transportation. The Clinic is working on arranging transportation directly to the Clinic, because the bus does not stop in front of the Hoda Center. The main purpose of speaking here is to reach out for assistance with community outreach because they need more patients. There are plans to host two free dinners between now and October. Dr. Saaed Khan will send out invitations.

Miriam discussed the Coalition's willingness to get involved and some follow-up questions were asked regarding eligibility and care – 200% poverty level, no criminal background check, no vision care other than simple diagnostic, there is no limit on the number of patients they are seeing right now and they can help with prescriptions written by doctors at other facilities, just not narcotics.

### **Board of Director's Report**

Beth O'Grady (treasurer), gave the Board of Directors report. The budget audit for FY 2012 was submitted on 5/14/13. Currently, they are working on the budget for next year.

Elections are coming up next month. Nominations are currently being accepted. Anyone interested in serving on board may apply. Let's nominate people we think will serve well. Get their names to Miriam. Primarily your obligation as a board member is one extra meeting a month and input on decision making on the board.

### **CoC/HMIS Workgroup**

The HMIS workgroup is changing its name to the Special Projects workgroup. Peggy Henderson is chairing the workgroup, with Cheryl Twombly staying on as co-chair. The main discussion of their last meeting was the breakfast on the plaza. Currently, the breakfast is scheduled for November 14<sup>th</sup> in line with Hunger and Homeless Awareness week starting Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>. The breakfast will be sponsored by Bread of the Mighty Food Bank. Currently they are looking for an industrial kitchen in order to prepare the breakfast food. There was some discussion about moving the breakfast to GCI if operational, but ultimately it was decided to remain at the plaza for this year at least. The workgroup is also working on a homeless simulation involving the difficulty obtaining housing, similar to domestic violence simulations. The next workgroup meeting is June 13<sup>th</sup> 2:30pm at the DCF building.

Ron Hall, ACHA, asked for donations for Sunshine Inn occupants. Such things as blankets, sheets (twin and full), towels, or anything needed when you move in to a new place. He also discussed two UF professors that had developed a heat box to cook items that are infested with bed bugs using materials that can be purchased at your local hardware store. Currently they are discussing a showing at Sunshine Inn in the near future.

David Reed, Alachua County Nutritional Alliance, spoke about the Alliance's mission to fight hunger. There are overlapping interests between the Alliance and the Coalition. Mr. Reed mentioned the People's Scientific Conference on June 14<sup>th</sup> being held at the University of Florida. The Nutritional alliance meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month at 1:00pm.

The next ACCHH meeting is June 19<sup>th</sup> at 9 am at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church.