

Barrier Busters Network Action Group

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February 27, 2008, LLRC

1:30pm—3:00pm

BBN Attendees: Mary Beth Lampe, CSTS; Co-Chair (recorder)
Andrea Plevak, MSU Extension; Co-Chair
Terry Allon, Housing Bureau for Seniors
Lisa Anderson, University of Michigan
Alex Bailey, Michigan Ability Partners
Karyn Boyce, Ozone House
Moonson Eninsche, Washtenaw County Treasurer's Office
Anne Harrell ACCESS/WCHO
Colleen Joiner, Hemophilia Foundation
Heather Mooney Washtenaw County Treasurer's Office
Angela Moore, Women's Center
Christina Oliver, SOS
Patricia Parker-Self, Veteran Services
Aaron Pressel, Community Action Network
Helena Prince, Friends in Deed
Sandy Reeber, ETCS
George Ridenour, Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living
Anne Rogers, CSTS
Kerry Sheldon, Washtenaw County Administration
Susan Sifuna, Salvation Army
Peri Stone-Palmquist, Education Project for Homeless Youth
Shirley Tarvis, CSTS
Anna Tolis, St. Joe's Senior Health
Scott Wright, St Francis Catholic Church

Staff Present: Candace Cadena, Office of Community Development
Anita Mure, Office of Community Development

Guests: Kerry Sheldon, Washtenaw County Administration

I. Welcome/Introductions

Meeting began at 1:43. Members and guests introduced themselves.

II. Announcements and Public Comment

Heather Mooney circulated a handout about how foreclosure affects renters. Foreclosure affects renters when property owners are in foreclosure process. The law in this area is still unsettled, so renters and workers in this situation should consult the handout which was written by Michigan Tenant Counseling Program, 761-8599, or www.michigantenants.org. Also, information for people wanting to prevent foreclosure can be viewed at <http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/treasurer/>. Includes list of resources, workshops.

Helena Prince announced that Friends in Deed still has funding available for employed, single mothers/women who need assistance with car repairs. Please contact her (office@friendsindeed.info) or by phone for more information. She also noted that Friends In Deed is receiving a higher number of car repair requests, and can best accommodate requests for those who are working and require transportation for their job. Requests for transportation

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for medical or taking children to school may not be able to be accommodated, due to lack of funding.

Sandy Reeber, ETCS, reported that ETCS (Employment, Training & Community Services) has now moved from 555 Towner Ypsilanti to 336 Harriet Street, which is also the "MI WORKS" and WCC building. ETCS has utility funds available. Sandy will send details to list serve when available. Contact numbers are on barrier buster contact list at ewashtenaw.org.

III. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Agenda was approved by consent. Minutes from the January 23rd meeting were approved with the change that Anne Harrell works in ACCESS. Motioned by Karyn Boyce and seconded by George Ridendur.

IV. Staff Transition & Update

Appreciation was expressed to Michael Scholl for his long-time assistance and dedication to the Barrier Buster Network without which Barrier Buster Network would not be as strong as it is today.

Kerry Sheldon introduced Candace Cadena, Office of Community Development who will be succeeding Michael Scholl, effective 3-1-08 as the Barrier Buster "Master Buster" making financial approvals, and she will also coordinate the matrix of funding for the Barrier Buster Network. Also introduced was Anita Mura, Office of Community Development, who will coordinate financial and accounting functions including submission for DHS Reimbursement grant. Updated contact information will be sent out to the list serve after 3-1. Members are asked to continue to consult one of the chairs for general questions regarding Barrier Busters and appropriateness of requests, while the Office of Community Development starts this new role.

V. New Business

Terry Allon circulated information about the Tax Rebate Stimulus and recommended that agencies outreach to clients specifically about this. Many low income people (with incomes of \$3000 or more per year, Social Security Disability can be included, but SSI can't count toward eligibility) are eligible but MUST file a 1040A Form this year to receive consideration. It is not clear whether people will be able to file late (After April 15) for this stimulus because the stimulus was just announced.

Earned Income Tax Information was also circulated. Free Tax preparations are at several community sites (mostly by appointment) and Women's Center of America also assists (with Internet access available). ETCS 544-3053 also has information about appointments. Members were reminded that Home Heating Credit and Renter's Credit may also apply to renter's applying for Michigan taxes.

Terry Allon also discussed and answered questions about Foreclosure Prevention and property taxes, the two main option being 1) deferments and/or 2) hardship. Eligibility depends on age, income, and coordination is usually needed to get the proper forms to the taxing authority (city or township). She recommended to call her at 998-9341 (Housing Bureau for Seniors) if any one has this need, particularly those who are 62+ or disabled. Best to take care of payments at delinquency stage, usually prior to March 1, – if it goes to a Foreclosure Hearing then the entire mortgage and taxes must be paid off to retain possession, including penalties of 18% or more.

Terry recommended that members try to ask questions such as "Have you been keeping up with your mortgage payments? Are they getting too expensive? Has your mortgage payment amount changed lately?" as ways to introduce this topic.

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It was also reported that information regarding Foreclosure prevention can also be found at <http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/treasurer/> and thru MSU Extension's website. While each situation is different, there is a specific timeline established by law and some resources including loans and liens.

VI. Old Business

Agency agreements are due – please submit to Emily Arents if your is still outstanding.

VII. Case Consultation

Case consultation was presented by Friends in Deed concerning service assistance/recommendations for a homeless woman who has been staying in her car. Further attempts will be made to offer connections to shelter and/or mental health services such as PORT or ACCESS.

VIII. BB Emergency Unmet Needs Fund Update

The accounting audit is in process. No recommendations to report at this time. Please continue to submit appropriate requests for funding consideration thru Encompass.

IX. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:50 pm.

***The Next Meeting is scheduled for
March 26, 2008 –
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm***