

Barrier Busters Network

Barrier Busters Meeting Minutes

December 16, 2009

Meeting Attendance:

(for complete addresses and contact information of Barrier Busters membership in a printable format, click here: http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/community_collaborative/BB/membership/memrosterfiles/condensed_june09)

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Guests and Presenters (new members, interns, etc):			
Agency	Name	Listserv?	Phone and Email
Paws with a Cause	Carol Dingler and Truman	<input type="checkbox"/>	248-844-5656, cdingler@pawswithacause.org
Shelter Association	Nathifa Riley	<input type="checkbox"/>	734-662-2829, riley@ewashtenaw.org
Shelter Association	Amy Atterberry	<input type="checkbox"/>	734-662-2829
Shelter Association	Beverly Gibson	<input type="checkbox"/>	734-662-2829
Shelter Association	Megan Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	734-662-2829
Ann Arbor District Library	Beth Manuel	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Announcements: Agenda has been changed. Announcements will now be after our New Business.
- III. Agenda and Minutes Approval: December Meeting Agenda (revised) approved as well as November Meeting Minutes
- IV. New Business

- a. Paws with a Cause: Carol Dingler (cdingler@pawswithacause.org); www.pawswithacause.org; 248-844-5656

Truman (the dog)

Types of dogs Paws has: Golden retriever, lab retriever, mix, or standard poodles (because they are intelligent and work well for people with allergies). The dogs are available for:

1. Physical services
2. Hearing services (usually Terriers, pugs, or smaller dogs)
3. Seizure service dogs
4. They just started a program for autistic children, so they have different dogs for that

Legally, the animals can go anywhere. You can go to the IAADP website and they will give you all of the laws.

Raising the Dogs: All dogs start as foster dogs really young. They go from kindergarten to high school. They are trained by volunteers in socialization (interacting with kids and adults), and then they go through "Paws University" where they learn their specific skill. (e.g. – pay bills at service counters)

The service dogs are trained to:

- Save people time
- Enhance independence
- Pick up items that people drop (they are trained to pick up items and hold them until the person says "give")

The hearing dogs are trained to:

- Pick up items that people drop (they are trained to pick up items and hold them until the person says "give")
- Hear doorbells, fire alarms, timers on stove, etc. and inform the client of them
- Lead people out of the house in cases of emergency
- Wake clients up in the morning
- Alert parents to baby's cries

The seizure dogs are trained to: react to the seizure. Usually the seizures are not life threatening.

Where do the puppies come from?

1. Rescue dogs (not really anymore; health issues)
2. Paws breeds them

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3. Any way for them to know the exact background

Truman started off as a puppy. He was raised by a woman and he worked out well. The woman passed. Truman is now the educational partner for Carol.

Cost and Camaraderie: They do **not** ask the clients to pay for the dogs. It would cost over \$20,000 if the client has to pay for it by themselves. They have fundraisers and their main source of income is from the United Way.

There is a lifetime commitment for the clients (if the dog passes or retires, then Paws will get a replacement dog for them). The organization does not take the retired dog from the client. They let the client keep the animal.

Eligibility and how to refer:

1. Information packet is given to interested people
2. Fill out the application (includes doctor's report) – few people are turned down
3. Application process
4. Needs assessment (field instructor goes to the client and shows what the service dog can do for them)
5. Look for funds for the client
6. Match the person to the dog (has to be a special match)
7. Then the client meets the dog
8. They are assigned a field instructor that works with the client and dog to get the
9. Dog put on a 30 day wait
10. Dog is tested (kind of like a bar exam)

Paws' generally tells people to count on six months to a year to get their dog. They wait until the dog is available.

How is grooming done on the dog? They can pay to use the Paws service or they find Place in Macomb county, there is a place that does all of the work.

Demonstration with Truman:

He can pick up metal objects. They put rings on the things that the dogs need to pick up. He picks up anything (gum package), knife, a dime, keys, etc.

What's the difference between Paws and *Leader Dogs*? They have a slightly different personality and make decisions as needed. Dogs that do not make it through the program go through "career change"

They will take dogs up to two year old dogs if the client wants to keep their regular dog and have them trained. But the dog has to be tested and has to work out for the person.

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b. New Business Continued: Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP):

Nathifa Riley, Coordinator. riley@ewashtenaw.org. www.annarborshelter.org.

Other staff present: Megan, Caseworker; Amy, Caseworker; and Beverly, Caseworker

Nathifa gave out a packet to BB Members. The packet: the first page shows the difference between the Homeless Prevention and the Rapid Re-Housing Programs. Here are a few noteworthy differences:

- **Prevention program:** allows the program to pay people's arrearages. They can only pay the client's monthly rent*3.
- Arrearages: they will pay those
- They can only pay the utility bill **AT** the residence in which they reside; not back pay. They have a contact person at MSHDA that has answers to questions they do not know answers to. HPRP can only assist with utilities if they directly connect to housing. Utilities have to directly affect housing in order for it to count.

HPRP can give \$100 for judgment (court fees), DTE bill, or for something that is preventing someone from getting into an apartment or something like that. This is separate from the other payments people are receiving.

HPRP will send people to legal services to prevent evictions if they are not legal evictions.

Q & A:

Q: if someone is only getting state disability, would they qualify for the program?

A: Nathifa will explain more on this later.

Q: Does someone have to be a US citizen?

A: Yes. But visas count too.

Q: How much money does the program have?

A: We were awarded \$500K for the next two years.

Q: What are some of the requirements of the program?

A: Low income tax credit, Prevention program requires one to be 40% below AMI. The Rapid Re-housing program has to be below 30% AMI. For the Rapid Re-Housing program, the client **must** be homeless to get help. But homelessness has to be VERIFIED. This extra requirement is because HUD gave MSHDA power to make their own rules beyond the federally required rules.

Look at the flyer: the income limits on the flyer are the upper limit. The lower limit is not on there. The minimum income requirement can be zero income, but Nathifa and her crew will have more scrutiny for this.

Q: How many people can you help?

A: HPRP has about 102 people who have called thus far. Right now, most of the people who have called are being proactive. They have no clue of how many people they will be

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able to help in each year. It could possibly be up to 300-350 people per year, but it varies on how much money each person requests.

Q: Are you all tracking the situations to show how this barrier is keeping people from receiving help?

A: They are sort of doing it.

Q: How are your partner agencies?

A: They are case management agencies who are trying to get started in doing what the HPRP is currently doing.

Rapid Re-Housing Program:

Emergency shelter after eviction is necessary before they can be in the rapid re-housing program. The landlord would have to be the person to do it. If a person is voluntarily leaving a place, they can possibly still be seen as homeless. It depends on where you were living at the time of the request and for how long?

Living in a motel is **not** considered as homeless. If they are paying out of their pocket. If an agency is paying for it, then they do qualify. The agency has to pay for the entire stay for it to count.

General Information:

- They do not allow people to double dip.
- A person working in the county doesn't count as "living here." If a person has kids in school here, they do qualify as county residents.
- Hotel/motel max amount of days is 7 days

The double up situation: this is a MSHDA edict and not a HUD edict. If someone is jumping from home to home and living with other people, they are still seen as in need of a better home situation. As of now, MSHDA's rule is to have someone as completely homeless for a night in order to apply for the program.

Timing:

- The total 15 months includes prevention (so if they start in prevention then do rapid re-housing, then they only get 9 months for rapid re-housing if they did 6 months of prevention)
- Each approval is for at least 3 months (guaranteed).
- HQS certification is needed to do the assessments/screening.

How fast is the process?

People have to have an SER before they can be approved:

It takes about 1-2 days to qualify a person. The wait for them right now has been the DHS SERs. You can waive someone of the SERs if they have zero income, in a domestic violence situation, or in a case where the income does not match the cost of their housing.

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Information from the packet:

- The flowchart in the package is related to references.
- You don't have to fill out both grids for the client. You really only need to do one or the other depending on which one you are applying for.
- Last page: MSHDA requires the local agency to have all of these criteria even though you do not have to record all of the information from the page.

Hours of Operation for the HPRP Office: 9-5pm office open. Then they have flex hours after 5pm. You (the agency, not the client) can call them directly after 5pm.

The screening interviews mostly happen over the phone or they will go to them. If the client does not have a phone, then they can use one at another agency or set up an appointment.

V. Old Business: No time to cover this today

VI. Announcements and Public Comment

1. A good topic for next month: discuss and think of ways that we can work with clients outside of regular work hours. Please think about (as an agency) of how to flex services at your agencies to cater more to migrant workers with little to no time during the day to utilize our services.
2. Tara Truax of CSTS and the Jaycees brought a handout with a list of the holiday meals in Ypsilanti
3. ETCS is getting a boatload of money coming in January. Sandy Reeber will send out more information about this.
4. Kelly Stupple of *Success by 6* is passing around a spreadsheet with the updated health concerns in Washtenaw County.
5. SOS is no longer having Wednesday night food distribution. It is now only on Tuesdays. They are no longer helping with just utilities, they are only helping with cases related to housing.

VII. Meeting Adjourned at 3.05PM

For additional materials from the HPRP Presentation, follow the "Additional Materials" link on the December 16, 2009 Meeting Materials page.

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