

SHA Membership Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2013

1. Carol Dougherty, SHA Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 10 AM. Carol thanked Joe Young and Disability Rights NJ for hosting the early morning coffee klatch.
2. Participants introduced themselves.
3. Joe Young, Executive Director, Disability Rights NJ gave an overview of the organization, its mission and purpose and the many areas of responsibility and involvement it has to protect the rights of people with disabilities in NJ. (PowerPoint presentation posted on SHA website).
4. New Member Presentation: Jennifer Rector, Executive Director of Everas Community Services gave an overview of the organization's many programs including services and housing.
5. Gail Levinson, SHA Director, gave updates on the upcoming Supportive Housing Conference scheduled for December 6th at the Hyatt Regency in New Brunswick and urged members (and non members to register and attend). She reviewed upcoming advocacy initiatives including a policy position on supportive housing that SHA will be unveiling. One of the advocacy items to receive priority will be to engage in a statewide effort to increase the number of housing vouchers and other subsidies. Gail welcomed guests and introduced the directors of several statewide organizations including Valerie Sellers, NJACP, Dan Keating, ABCD and Barbara Johnston, Chair of the Mental Health Coalition. Gail asked for assistance in scheduling legislative visits during the current lame duck session. Announced Cooper Pest Control donations to non profits in need of bed bug control.
6. Arnold Cohen, Director of Policy for Housing and Community Development Network of NJ, gave a policy and legislative update – also announced Network conference and Network/Monarch sponsored Webinar on Federal Issues (see posting on SHA website) and introduced...
7. Alisa Goren, PlanSmart NJ, gave an overview of TOGETHER North Jersey, a project developing a regional plan for sustainable development including an element of that project called the Fair Housing & Equity Assessment (see PowerPoint on SHA website). She and her colleague Bob Kull handed out surveys to elicit comments and recommendations from the supportive housing industry to further inform and guide them.
8. Janel Winter, Director of Housing for DDD gave an update on the status of housing for people with developmental disabilities. 150 homes thus far in fiscal year – 68 more through Olmstead transition. HMFA/DCS SNHP – over 175 beds or in the pipeline. Some towns are increasing participation. First DDD projects through Sandy Relief Fund in the works. RLI for service provider for Project Freedom complex. Dollars available through DDD for additional leveraging of funds and speeding along financing (\$25K) for Olmstead, emergencies or Return Home NJ. Janel announced a FAQs document that will soon be released for info about new support program and access to housing by those already in community. She will be taking a more

active role with families to help them shape their own housing now that Medicaid transition is in place.

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9. Cathy Boland, Director of Residential Services for the DMHAS gave an update of new offerings at the state for people with mental illness and addictions (RIST/PACT/Forensic/At Risk SH Program/Sandy MH services with rental subsidies for 2 years). She suggested people check the state website each Monday morning to learn of new RRP's and bidders conferences (<http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/providers/grants/rfprfi/>)
10. Boxed Lunch Break
11. Vito Gallo, Housing Planner and Professor of Affordable Housing at the Blaustein Center, gave an overview of the elements of urban policy and housing for low-income people. He provided a federal, state and local perspective with suggestions and insight for the supportive housing industry. Among the items presented: How to address audiences as an advocate for affordable homes; take advantage of opportunities in the current lame duck legislative session for passage of housing reform; potential for COAH reform with court decisions (growth share issue ruled unconstitutional); differences between federal and state fair housing acts, municipal interest in lowering expenses as reason for push back on affordable development – ways to counteract and encourage follow through on fair housing plans; CDBG dollars and how to access them;

The meeting adjourned at 1 PM. Upcoming events:

Annual Supportive Housing Conference hosted by SHA – December 6th 2013

Next membership meeting: January 8th 2014