

Mid-Alabama Coalition for the Homeless (MACH)

General Membership Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 25, 2020, 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm

The Mid-Alabama Coalition for the Homeless (MACH) convened the general membership in a meeting at the above date, time and location. The following members and visitors attended:

Patrick Aitken	MACH
Breonna Alexander	MACH
Angie Allen	Alabama's Disabilities Advocacy Program
Nita Beaty	Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System
Cindy Bisbee	MACH Board of Directors
Stephanie Blackburn	Legal Services Alabama
Sharonda Bonner	Medical Advocacy & Outreach
Buena Browder	Abner's House / Montgomery Rescue Mission
Roshaine Byfield	Independent Rights & Resources
Riley Cowell	Agape of Central Alabama
Carron Foster	
Tim Haseltine	Prattville Housing Authority
Violet Henderson	Independent Rights & Resources
Stephan Holdren	Family Sunshine Center
Valtoria Jackson	St. Peter AME Church - Wellness Ministry
Liletta Jenkins	Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education/Children's Policy Council
Jacqueline Lee	Lowndes County DHR
Stephan Mambazo	Shifaa Intellectual Soul Clinical Counseling
Kylle' McKinney	Social Security Administration
Mike Nicholson	Alabama Arise
Hyderick Norman	Loveless School Alumni Association
Lydia Pickett	MACH
Laura Reid	Family Sunshine Center
Debbie Richardson	MACH
Sarian Ross	Health Services, Inc
Lula Skowronek	Priority Veteran
Chelsea Taylor	Family Guidance Center of Alabama
Beverly Toodle	MACH
Karen Turner	Medical Advocacy & Outreach
Regina Walker	Montgomery County Sheriff's Office
Darryl Washington	Lowndes County Public Schools

Call to Order - Lydia Pickett, MACH Executive Director, called the meeting to order at 3:06 pm. (Meeting agenda provided.)

New MACH Staff - Lydia Pickett introduced the following new MACH staff members:

- Debbie Richardson, Continuum Management Assistant
- Beverly Toodle, Assessment & Services Manager
- Breonna Alexander, Case Manager

Ms. Pickett also noted the presence of Patrick Aitken, MACH Case Manager/Outreach Worker.

MACH Newsletter & Website - MACH will return to regular publication (bi-monthly) of a newsletter. The first issue (June 2020) was distributed via email last week. Starting in July, the newsletter will be distributed during odd-

numbered months. Submissions for inclusion are encouraged (agency information, photos, procedural updates, etc.) and should be sent to debbie@midalhomeless.org for submission consideration. Additionally, Ms. Pickett stated an events calendar has been added to the MACH website, and asked attendees to submit items for inclusion.

MACH Committees - MACH is reviewing information about Membership Advisory Committees and their roles. Updated information and solicitation of committee members will occur prior to the next MACH General Membership Meeting. Current committees are Membership, Continuum of Care, Coordination of Services, Data Collection, and Mainstream Resources. Committees meet one (1) time per quarter or four (4) times per year. Ms. Pickett asked that everyone please consider serving.

River Region Connects (RRC) – Due to COVID-19, RRC will not take place this year. RRC is a homeless resource fair which serves as a one-day, one-stop shop of services for the homeless, usually hosted at the Multiplex. Representatives from government and community agencies bring their services under one roof to assist homeless individuals and families with shelter, employment, education, health care, civil legal assistance, haircuts, State ID's, HIV testing, answers to questions from DHR, the Social Security Administration, and other agencies. MACH is reviewing options for 2021 River Region Connects, and details will be forthcoming as they develop.

MACH Housing Assistance Services – MACH is currently providing HUD-funded services to persons who are currently homeless (Rapid Rehousing) or facing imminent homelessness (Homelessness Prevention). Rapid Rehousing funds can be used to pay security and utility deposits, rent, and utility bills for persons who are currently living in shelters, on the streets, or in places not meant for human habitation. Homelessness Prevention funds can be used to pay rental and utility arrears, as well as additional rent and utilities for persons who are at risk of homelessness. Case managers or agency representative are directed to call 2-1-1 (operated by HandsOn River Region) to refer their clients for assistance. All referrals MUST go through 2-1-1, but answers to general questions can be obtained by calling MACH at 334-261-6182.

Regarding Homelessness Prevention, a general discussion occurred regarding Governor Kay Ivey's eviction moratorium expiration date vs. the federally-subsidized housing expiration date. Stephanie Blackburn, Supervising Attorney, Legal Services Alabama shared Governor Ivey's moratorium ended June 21, 2020, and the moratorium on federally subsidized apartments ends July 25, 2020. Ms. Pickett stated MACH is anticipating a surge in calls for assistance in the wake of the eviction moratoriums expiring.

Additional data included for informational purposes: *The CARES Act provides a temporary moratorium on evictions for most residents of federally subsidized apartments, including those supported by HUD, USDA or Treasury (Low Income Housing Tax Credit developments) as well a moratorium on filings for evictions for renters in homes covered by federally-backed (FHA, Fannie Mae, and Freddie Mac) mortgages for 120 days after enactment. On June 17, 2020, to help borrowers and renters who are at risk of losing their home due to the coronavirus national emergency, the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) announced that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (the Enterprises) will extend their single-family moratorium on foreclosures and evictions until at least August 31, 2020. Source Internet <https://www.fhfa.gov/Media/PublicAffairs/Pages/FHFA-Extends-Foreclosure-and-Eviction-Moratorium-6172020.aspx>*

Guest Presentation - Mrs. Buena "Bea" Browder, Director, Abner's House (a program of Montgomery Rescue Mission), located at 1718 Mt. Meigs Road, Montgomery, Alabama shared information on the new shelter. The facility will provide emergency shelter and housing for female veterans. The facility is currently under renovation with an anticipated opening date of August 3, 2020. Mrs. Browder stated the facility has two (2) single-occupancy emergency rooms (length of stay 1-30 days) and eight (8) single-occupancy, transitional units (length of stay – unlimited). The facility will provide a continental breakfast, one meal, onsite counselor, and shared bathrooms and kitchens at no cost to residents who have no income. Those who do have income will be charged rent for transitional units (amounts to be determined). Abner's House is currently funded with proceeds from the Montgomery Rescue Mission Bargain Center located adjacent to Abner's House. Currently, Abner's House needs twin-size linens, comforters, a microwave and a mini-refrigerator.

Announcements & Information

MACH Membership – Ms. Pickett thanked those who recently joined and/or renewed membership with MACH. She stated since the publication of the June 2020 newsletter, Aid to Inmate Mothers, Montgomery Habitat for Humanity; and Montgomery Volunteer Lawyers Program have renewed/joined the Coalition. Membership is \$10/year for individuals, \$50/year for organizations, and attendance at meetings is open to the public.

Community COVID-19 United Relief Fund Grants – Ms. Pickett shared information regarding Central Alabama Community Foundation and River Region United Way’s partnership to provide funding to area non-profits for COVID-19 related projects. Agencies can visit www.cacfinfo.org/grants to make application for grants up to \$2,500. Agencies can apply up to four (4) times and the application process is fairly simple with a quick turnaround. If an agency is not notified their application does not meet the required criteria for consideration, the applicant remains in consideration without a need for reapplication throughout the program. Relief funds are on a rolling application process. If awarded funding, agencies can reapply once the funds are expended for the project submitted or reapply with a different project. The total funding award potential is \$10,000 over the four (4) award cycles.

Fourth Saturday Community Outreach at River City Church - Patrick Aitken (MACH) stated the event will be held June 26, 2020, 9:00 – 11:00 am at 301 Dexter Avenue. The event will be slightly modified due to COVID-19. The event is hosted on the 4th Saturday of each month, historically providing food, haircuts, wellness checks, vision checks, pet wellness tests, clothing, prayer, bus passes, gifts cards, and information about local services for the homeless and others in need. Also, River City Church offers the “Loads of Love” portable shower/laundry facility three (3) days per week - Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (weather permitting) from 9:00 am – 12:00 noon located at 301 Dexter Avenue in the rear parking lot. Homeless persons are provided an opportunity to shower, get their clothes washed, eat breakfast and lunch, and have free access to the clothes closet for any needed items.

Shelters Availability – Ms. Pickett stated area shelters are continuing to accept persons and have modified intake procedures and facility spacing due to COVID-19. She recommended calling in advance when referring individuals to shelters to check on intake procedures and availability.

Funding – Ms. Pickett stated the City of Montgomery is working with MACH and several homeless service providers, on how to best use HUD COVID-19 funding allocated for the homeless.

Free Food - Mrs. Browder stated the Montgomery Rescue Mission Bargain Center located at 1728 Mt. Meigs Road (daily) and the facility at 17 Mildred Street (Thursdays only) is providing free food (as available from donations) to anyone in need. The food items are provided using a drive-thru method.

Virtual Support Group - Sharonda Bonner, Medical Advocacy & Outreach, 334.320.1303, sbonner@maoi.org, shared MAO is hosting a virtual support group from July 16 – August 20. The group will meet virtually each Thursday from noon – 1:00 pm. Agencies wanting to refer clients should contact Sharonda. Participation is open to anyone who is interested.

2020 Census - Regina Walker, Montgomery County Census Coordinator, stated Alabama’s 2020 Census return rate is currently 59.4% and Montgomery’s return rate is 60%. Regina stated an event will be hosted on Saturday, June 27, 2020 from 1:00 – 6:00 pm at Eastdale Mall in Montgomery to help increase awareness assist persons in completing the census.

Ms. Pickett concluded by stating that MACH is open for ideas for sharing information and working together.

All business being concluded, the meeting adjourned at 4:07 pm.