

CHAC Monthly Meeting
June 8, 2018
Durango Recreation Center

Attendees:

Eileen Wasserbach, SUCAP; CHAC Board	pattie adler, CHAC
Lynn Westberg, CHAC Board	Kathy Sherer, CHAC
Vic Lopez, CHAC Board	
Marjorie Brinton, Community Member	
Myoung Fry, Myah Mindfulness	
Guinn Unger, Indivisible Durango	
Kari Plante, SJBPH	
Missy Krause, MRMK LINK	
Lora Sholes, Housing Solutions	
Brigid Korce, CEAC	

416 Fire-Related Resources

- Red Cross volunteers needed at Escalante School: Josh Stewart joshua.stewart@redcross.org or 970-242-6646
- Food drive: Centurylink is matching cash donations for evacuees at www.centurylink.com/fooddrive
- Community Foundation Serving SW Colorado is accepting cash donations for a community emergency relief fund; www.SWCommunityFoundation.org for on-line or mail-in information.
- Information and sign up for Code Red: www.lpcsar.com
- Humane Society needs help with dogs, temporary homes for cats, and crates & carriers
- LPC emergency hotline: 385-8700 to get help, give help, or to volunteer
- VOA is a clearing house to match people who need housing with those offering their homes.
- LPEA Roundup Board has reserve for emergencies – contact Jeannie Bennett to get on agenda for 6/18 (and future?) Board meeting(s).
- Four Corners Back Country Horsemen will evacuate and house horses. Call Chris at 570-228-1340.

“My Life: Deciding in Advance” (Advance Care Planning)

SAVE THE DATE for our next large community education event scheduled for September 19, 8:30 AM to noon at the Durango Library. More information will be coming.

Housing Solutions for the Southwest

(serves La Plata, Archuleta, Montezuma, Dolores and San Juan counties)

Brigid Korce, CEAC

The Community Emergency Assistance Coalition (CEAC) prevents homelessness for numerous families in La Plata County every year. Since 2014, the program has provided one-time emergency financial assistance to 809 families – the majority receiving housing assistance grants. Other help could include vehicle repairs, utilities, heating, gas, etc. (but not medical nor legal bills). In total, over \$553,000 has been awarded to assist local families to remain stable during a time of crisis.

An event to learn more about joining the CEAC funding coalition will be held on June 25 at noon at Housing Solutions (295 Girard Street). All are welcome. Housing Solutions coordinates this coalition of organizations and individuals who make decisions to allocate funds which are 100% local.

Since January 2018, the CEAC counseling program has met with 1,315 families to provide referrals, an emergency action plan, financial counseling, and assistance with affordable housing applications to ensure that those who do not receive financial assistance have support to work through an emergency. Many of these families qualify for other housing programs that can help longer term. The number of times an individual can receive funding is limited, applications are thoroughly vetted, and all housing funds go directly to the landlord or vendor, never to the applicant.

In the coming year, CEAC will experience a significant budget shortfall affecting its ability to help families who are experiencing a traumatic life situation such as illness, death in a family, divorce, job loss, disability, or domestic violence. CEAC is available to all residents of La Plata County for many types of financial emergencies with very few barriers. Weekly coalition meetings to allocate dollars are held. The holiday bell ringing of the Salvation Army (SA) provides a significant source of funding besides local donations. With the recent decision of SA to open a local office, it is expected (though still unknown) that this fundraiser will end as transitions occur over the next year. SA has expressed an interest in being a CEAC member.

Lora Sholes, Transitional Housing

The two Rapid Re-Housing programs (federal Housing and Urban Development funding) offer housing and advocacy to those who are homeless and in need for short-term (6-24 months) rental assistance, help locating housing, and case management. While on the program, families pay 30% of their adjusted gross income toward rent and may participate in a case management plan to address barriers and attain goals leading to self-reliance. This program is designed to help people stabilize, save money, gain education and/or vocational training, and transition successfully.

The Homeless Prevention program offers short-term rental assistance to those who are facing homelessness due to a short-term inability to pay rent. Typically, 1-3 months of rental assistance is offered as they recover from a financial setback.

Housing counseling assists with money management, reverse mortgage counseling, search for affordable housing, fair housing issues and referrals, homeless services referrals, and information on local subsidized housing programs including how and where to apply. Utility assistance is also available as funding is available.

A new federal VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) grant is for domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking victims at risk of losing their homes. It provides up to two years of housing and support services such as traditional and alternative therapy. This three-year Dept. of Justice grant partners with Alternative Horizons, SW Safehouse and SASO.

The Home Again Partnership helps victims of any crime pay rent for up to six months; it's a state grant.

The Housing Choice Voucher program (federal HUD Section 8) is the federal government's primary program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and accessible housing in the private market. Our area had been allocated 140 vouchers. However since it's difficult to find landlords willing to accept the voucher and the allocation is related to the number of vouchers being used, Housing Solutions now has only 99 vouchers. This reflects the lack of reasonably priced rents. VASH vouchers (Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing) are specifically for veterans. There are 47 vouchers, but again a lack of housing/landlords means not all are being used. Both of these programs provide permanent housing.

The Home Rehabilitation & Repair program works with families to make health and safety-related repairs to their homes. The cost of repairs is linked into a very low interest loan that is paid back to Housing Solutions

over 20 or 30 years. The Crisis Intervention Program (CIP) provides safety checks on heating systems and can provide new heating systems or repair at no or low cost

Housing Solutions requires all participants to undergo an assessment that will determine the family's eligibility. Eligible families will work one-on-one with a case manager to determine the best stabilizing plan for each household.

Updates and Networking

Missy Krause – June 26, Motivational Interviewing Training, 8-4 in MRMC room A, (CE credits) contact Elsa Inman or Missy. It's sponsored by the LINK program.

Myoung Fry – Leaving Mercy to start her own business offering Mindfulness Courses. Register at myahmindfulness@gmail.com:

- July 10 to August 12 – 6-week Introduction to Mindfulness
- August 6 to October 1 – 8-week Mindful Self-Compassion
- October 6 half day retreat

pattie adler – The Behavioral Health Team has been working to submit a grant proposal to promote Social Connectedness for age 50+. Since we are no longer a fit for the CHF grant, we will submit to the Next 50 Initiative which focuses on adults 50 and older. We will know in December if we have been accepted or not, and then begin in January.

Guinn Unger – LPEA has unclaimed capital credits each year that get donated to non-profits. This year, the amount is close to \$300,000. Requests need to be submitted to the Round Up Board by August; the LPEA Board makes final decisions. Talk to Jean Bennett if interested.

Eileen Wasserbach – Peaceful Spirit, a residential treatment program in Ignacio, is in the process of reviewing their services. They're trying to find a way to serve non-Indians. Let Eileen know if you have any ideas.

Kari Plante – The Oral Health Team started in 2013 and supported Smile Makers for children. Then in 2015 OHT added adult Medicaid patients. Now Axis has a 4-chair Oral Health Clinic and is negotiating to add an additional dentist. Ignacio has a hygiene clinic taking adult Medicaid and Pagosa has a dentist taking Medicaid. There are three dentists who offer dentures for Medicaid recipients. We are making progress.

Lynn Westberg – We need to keep the homeless issue on our radar as it is a health issue. She also acknowledged the recent death of a CHAC member – Dave Rich from Seniors Outdoors.

The next monthly CHAC meeting is scheduled for July 13, 8:30-10:00 a.m. at the Durango Rec. Center. A presentation about the VOA Community Shelter and the SW Safehouse will be given by the Division Director, Rachel Bauske.

Meeting notes submitted by Kathy Sherer with minor additions by pattie adler