

### **Cape Cod Hoarding Task Force**

June 1, 2017

9:30 – 11:30 am

Dennis Police Department

90 Bob Crowell Road

Dennis, MA 02660

**Attendance:** Melanie Bach, Pine Oaks Villages; Elton Cutler, Truro COA; Kalliope Egloff, Cape Cod Cooperative Extension; Alexandra Gerry, BCDHE; Kevin Grunwald, Harwich COA; Andrea Lavenets, Provincetown COA; Sherri McCullough, Brewster Health Department; Lori Miranda, Dennis Animal Control; Lynn Mulkeen, BCDHE; Kathleen Pedini, Dennis COA; Carry Schoener, Dennis Health Department; Michael Smith, Medical Alarms USA-Lifeline; Patty Watson, BCDHS; Kim Lemmon, Nami C&I; Camilla Luppi, Nami C&I; Maryanne, Clutterer's Anonymous (CLA); Karen Cardeira, Falmouth Human Services; Judi Wilson, Orleans COA; Beth Chester, Spray Away

### **Meeting Minutes:**

#### **Welcome, Introductions**

Kevin Grunwald opened the meeting and started introductions.

#### **Updates:**

##### **Upcoming Events**

CCHTF will be hosting a community forum event on Wednesday, June 21, 2017 at the Orleans Council on Aging from 4:30pm to 6:30pm. This event will be a discussion panel and panelists will include members of the CCHTF executive committee: Paul Wild and Lori Miranda; a BIT graduate and a member of CLA. Publicizing for the event needs to start immediately and Kevin will send information to members so that this can begin. NIMA offered to target people through their email list.

The task force will be hosting a second community forum in the Falmouth area. Date and location TBD.

#### **Public Awareness Task Group**

The sub-group is Kalliope, Deb and Lori.

The sub-group is planning several projects. This includes 12 radio PSAs and 12 news releases each of which will lead listeners and viewers to the CCHTF website for resources. Another project being discussed is creating a film project for students at local high schools to create a video PSA. The sub-group hopes this project could be part of a larger event in the future. For example, picking a winner of the student PSA project and showcasing their work at a local film festival. Members in attendance verbalized their approval of this project believing it has the potential to be a preventative method for students involved since hoarding tends to begin at a young age. The CCHTF would be able to provide resources for any students that may ask for help either for themselves or a family member.

Sue Dorey of ServiceMaster offered the ServiceMaster Facebook page for posting any news and events. Anyone interested in assisting the public awareness task group can contact Kalliope or Lori.

### **Miscellaneous Updates**

Lori, Kevin and Erika were interviewed on the radio show Spectrum. The host is interested in doing a follow-up interview. Kevin offered the opportunity to anyone in attendance that may be interested in sharing their experience and perspective on hoarding. Maryanne from CLA mentioned that she received calls after the interview was aired because people were directed to the CCHTF website and discovered Clutterer's Anonymous.

Beth Chester the creator of Spray Away Cleaner and Stain Remover introduced her product\*. Seven years ago, she invented a non-toxic, ph balance, germ and molding killing cleaner, stain remover, laundry detergent, degreaser, fabric softener and deodorizer. It has been lab tested and you can find more information about the product at: <http://www.sprayawaycleaner.com/>

\*CCHTF does not endorse any services or products.

Provincetown Health Department will be hosting an event June 10, 2017 from 10-11:30am at Veterans Memorial Community Center. This will be an information session on hoarding and recovery presented by experts Lee and Bec Belofsky Shuer. The event is free and open to the public.

### **Presentation: Alan Hope – “How Can Receivership Benefit your Community?”**

Alan Hope works for The Charles Hope Companies, LLP a company that specializes in receivership. The Charles Hope Companies manages all aspects of receivership. This includes notifying any interested parties, relocating tenants, bringing properties up to code and managing disposition of properties.

Alan explained that as a receiver when claiming a house that was a hoarding case he must sort clutter and repair any damage left behind because of the hoarding. The receiver must work with the health department and fire and police for their work to be completed; receivership can be an effective way to get all necessary parties involved. The receiver often relieves much of the pressure on town departments involved in hoarding cases. An advantage to receivership is that the receiver is appointed by the court. Therefore, there needs to be complete transparency of the entire process and everything is documented for the town, the court and the receiver. The receiver is also required to pay expenses on the property including liens, this relieves some of the financial burden for the town. Once a receiver repairs a home to be sold they are reimbursed by the property owner, typically this is the bank since most cases are in foreclosure, or another interested party.

The audience expressed concern that receivership is dependent on having people leave their homes. Whereas much of the work and effort by members of CCHTF is to keep an individual in their home. One health agent explained that her town had used a receiver for a case where the individual did not own their property and was placed in assisted living. Receivership was the most effective approach in handling the situation. Kalliope also offered an example of a case where receivership would have been helpful to the town. The town paid roughly \$40,000 to clean one women's home with no promise of being repaid. The woman did sell her house and therefore, could pay back the town. However, had a

receiver been involved they would be responsible for the clean-up costs. These examples highlighted that certain circumstances may require alternative methods and receivership can be just one of those.

**Active Hoarding Cases and Closing Remarks:**

Kevin discussed a case in Harwich in which the occupant had passed away however, while alive multiple agencies knew of his hoarding behavior and nothing was done. This should have been a protective services case and we must be aware to not let situations go ignored.

Someone in the audience suggested another CLA group location on the cape. Right now, there is only one group that meets in Harwich on Wednesdays at 9:30 am. If anyone is unable to attend there is a website: <https://clutterersanonymous.org/> with many resources.