

Cape Cod Hoarding Task Force

February 2, 2017

9:30 – 11:30 am

Dennis Police Department

90 Bob Crowell Road

Dennis, MA 02660

In attendance: Melanie Bach, Pine Oaks Villages; Julie Brooks, peaceful Place Organizers; Lois Carr, Bourne COA; Linda Colby, Yarmouth Senior Center; Alexandra Gerry, BCDHE; Kevin Grunwald, Harwich COA; Andrea Lavenets, Provincetown COA; Sherri McCullough, Brewster Health Department; Lori Miranda, Dennis Animal Control; Lynn Mulkeen, BCDHE; Beth Russel, Servepro of Upper CC&I; Deborah Scavotto, Smooth Moving for Seniors; Zackary Seabury, Orleans Health Department; Paul Wild, Elder Services of Cape Cod; Greg Baker, Orleans Fire Department; Don Campbell, Sandwich Fire Department; Maryanne H., Clutterer's Anonymous; Melanie Parrish, VNA of Cape Cod; Rick Brigham, All Needs Met; Rusie Edson, Hope Health – Hope Hospice; Cindy Dunham, Eastham Senior Center

Meeting Minutes:

Welcome, Introductions

Kevin Grunwald, Co-Chair of the Cape Cod Hoarding Task Force Executive Committee, opened the meeting. He welcomed everyone to the meeting and started off introductions.

Update: Public Awareness Working Groups:

Kevin explained that at the executive committee meeting there was discussion on increasing community awareness activities. He asked Deb Scavotto, member of CCHTF executive committee and member of the public awareness working group along with Lori Miranda and Kalliope Egloff, to provide an update on some of the projects that have been suggested. Deb explained Kalliope Egloff, executive committee member, envisioned a PSA contest event. The idea is to have students and individuals interested in film to create a PSA regarding hoarding. CCHTF would showcase these projects and the public could vote on the one that they liked best. This activity would be messaging and branding approach for the CCHTF and allow for a greater audience coverage. Another community awareness activity she discussed was the possibility of a film viewing followed by a panel. One possible option that members of the executive committee are considering is a documentary titled "Packrat." There will be more information on a film event and other community outreach activities in the near future; as the working group meets and sets more concrete plans.

Melanie Bach of Pine Oaks Villages asked if CCHTF had any presence at home shows? As it would be a good opportunity for messaging and reaching wider audiences. Kevin said CCHTF still has somewhat of a low profile but it is definitely something of interest. Linda Colby from Yarmouth Senior Center discussed her Buried in Treasures (BIT) group that will be finishing in the next couple of weeks. She has noticed that many of the people that participated do not want it to be over and she expressed in an interest in some type of group for support after BIT is completed. This allowed for a transition into Maryanne's presentation on Clutterer's Anonymous.

Presentation: Maryanne, Clutterer's Anonymous (CLA):

CLA has open meetings on Wednesday's at 9:30am at the Harwich Council of Aging; phone meetings are an option for any interested individuals – visit www.clutterersanonymous.org for more information

Maryanne provided the meeting attendees with a briefing on her history and background which led her to discovering CLA. There are only four CLA groups in Massachusetts and one on Cape Cod. She started the CLA group on Cape Cod with one other friend as group of support, similar to AA or OA models. Some weeks will focus on discussing specific pamphlets, daily reflections from a meditation book, or the group will read through the AA big book and apply it to CLA. Other weeks meetings will be spent just working through their emotions. CLA intends to provide individuals with proper tools to manage their cluttering. Maryann mentioned the groups use of the buddy system to help tackle difficult situations. She discussed various types of clutter that people have managed through the group. Including time clutter, focusing on people with ADD, or who work long days to help them find some peace of mind to manage the clutter. She closed her presentation by asking the audience and professionals working directly with individuals to, please be mindful when working with someone. The process of clearing and cleaning needs to be worked through together. Paul Wild of Elder Services of Cape Cod noted that CLA would be a helpful transition for individuals that have completed Buried in Treasures workshops. CLA can provide additional support.

Discuss Active Hoarding Cases:

Linda Colby discussed a case from an individual that has completed a BIT group. The individual was having success however, family events and individuals within the family have derailed progress. She described the conditions of the house and expressed concern of a potential fire and safety hazard. She is uncertain of the next steps to take because, as mentioned, certain family members do not believe that there is a problem, enabling the situation. Greg Baker from Orleans Fire and Rescue suggested having someone from the police or fire department discuss the situation with the family; people working within these departments tend to be trusted and can provide resources. Zack Seabury discussed an active case that was being handled by departments within the town. Deb mentioned a woman she was working with that may not have a hoarding problem. Meeting attendees agreed that this individual could be taking initiative over something that she believes could become a problem. Someone mentioned that a church in Centerville will be organizing an accountability group for anyone on the spectrum of cluttering and hoarding. This group setting could be a better fit for this certain individual.

There was a discussion of what municipalities can do to assist with cases. Lori from Animal Control in Dennis, discussed a situation where different departments in the town had some role in handling the case, creating a collaborative approach. A collaborative approach was a popular consideration however, if any department within the town decided to not become involved then this approach would be less effective. It was agreed that more trainings would be helpful in order to train town departments to handle these cases and further decrease any prejudices.

Next Meeting and Additional Announcements:

- The next regular meeting will be April 6, 2017. The next executive committee meeting will be March 27, 2017 and these are open meetings.
- CCHTF has a training for any professionals February 15, 2017. Everyone should register to attend.