Mayor's Blue Ribbon Panel on Homelessness
Meeting Notes
March 1, 2017, Dover City Hall

- The meeting was called to order by Dr. Jerry Abrams at 4:05 PM
- Reviewed meeting minutes from 2/16/17
    - Minutes approved as written
- Presentation by Charles Martin – Kent County Board of Realtors
    - Two handouts were disseminated
        - Handout #1 showed residential housing available (single family homes, not apartments)
        - There are 121 rental properties ranging from $550-$2000/month rent – the average rent is $1239/month
        - Handout #2 showed (single family homes) properties currently available for rent
        - There are 51 properties ranging from $750-$2000/month rent – the average rent is $1257/month
        - Renters want applicants showing income and a credit report
    - A question was raised about regulations regarding the number of unrelated individuals in one rental property
        - Per County Code 4 people, City code 5 people
        - All individuals over the age of 18 must be on the lease
    - A question was raised about social security income showing as income
        - Yes however renters typically want to see 3x income needed
    - MLS system cannot search by Section 8 housing
    - City website does list Section 8 housing
    - There was discussion about the need for housing vouchers – the waiting list is two years just to be eligible and then people are placed on another waiting list
    - A question was raised about the applicant that meets income but has no credit history
        - A co-signer would be needed on the lease
- Presentation by Rachel Stucker, Acting Executive Director, Homeless Planning Council
    - Mrs. Stucker invited everyone to the Homeless Planning Council's next quarterly meeting in April at DTCC
    - Handout was disseminated: Homeless Demographics in Kent County
    - Question was raised how is HUD money distributed per County
        - There are two funding streams
            - Emergency Solutions grant money
                - Kent and Sussex County money passes through to the DE State Housing Authority
                - Total was estimated $172,000 but that includes rapid rehousing as well as emergency
                - Was estimated 60% to rapid rehousing / 40% to emergency solutions
                - Dover Interfaith Mission only receives approximately $5000

        - Continuum of care
            - Competitive process
            - Discussion about Community Block Grant (CBG) – administered by DHSA?
            - Discussion about Permanent Supportive Solutions
    - Mrs. Stucker will send a Rapid Rehousing report for Kent County
    - Mrs. Stucker also stated that point in time numbers will be out late April or May
- The Panel agrees that there are quite a few homeless not captured on report data, but feel that the report provides the best estimate that captures those individuals who seek shelter
- The Panel talked about the upcoming series of the collective community meeting at the Library and thought that would be helpful if we have an exercise that would help the general public to actually get a feel for trying to navigate the system. Discussion about a DOJ interactive exercise.
- The number of vouchers given by the State is an unknown
- Mental health is a huge component – discussed the need for more case workers
- Discussion on how do we better organize to navigate resources
- Discussed the need for affordable group housing either in existing buildings or new construction
- Mr. Lewis is working to obtain information from the City of Dover Planning and Inspections Department on the number of vacant City lots and number of vacant homes
- Discussed Block Grant discretionary funds run through the State Office of Community Services @ DHSS
    - Need to advocate with them
- It was suggested to ask community mental health workers and employees of Grace for Dover to the next meeting
- Next meeting date set for March 16th at 5:30 PM at City Hall Conference Room
- Meeting adjourned at 5:35pm