

CULTURAL DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25TH, 2018
3 PM-5 PM

TOPIC: **THE CULTURE OF HOMELESSNESS**

LOCATION: 101 N FRANKLIN ST
FT. BRAGG CA. 95437

In Attendance: Rebekah Anthony, Melinda Driggers, Nickie Marvella, Townley Saye, Julin Gables, Matthew Winslow, Laura Bradley, Mike Hodges, Sylvia Strauss

1) Welcome, Mission & Introductions	15 Minutes
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- Melinda and Rebekah welcomed the visitors.
- Melinda explained the purpose of the meeting and began the presentation.

2) Cultural Competence Plan Review	10 Minutes
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- Melinda presented on the culture of homelessness, and provided some demographics relevant to Mendocino County, which can be found in the Point in Time Count, which counts the number of homeless people in a given area.
- Melinda explained that although there are great obstacles for homeless people, there is also a resourcefulness, which comes from being homeless.
- The presentation also mentioned a recent Homelessness Report done in Mendocino County by Dr. Robert Marbut, that can be found at the Health and Human Services Agency page on MendocinoCounty.org (<https://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/health-and-human-services-agency>).

3) Discussion	60 Minutes
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- Someone explained that they were frustrated about how County-oriented the Cultural Diversity Meeting was. They said that there should be homeless people there advocating for themselves, and that there should be more activity within the [Ft. Bragg] community to reduce the stigma of homelessness.
 - They said that there should be a round table at these meetings to evoke equality, and that perhaps there should be venues that seemed more like a middle ground, such as a local thrift store, library, or park.
 - They said that there was a “free box” at one point in the area, and that the community eventually removed it because it was causing disagreements between community members (particularly those who are homeless).
- Someone else explained that there is a new Café in town run by the Hospitality Center, that is open on Saturdays and Sundays from 11-2. This café will train homeless individuals or people in transitional living situations the skills that they need to get a job in the food industry or in general, such as Starbucks.

4) Improving Cultural Responsiveness	25 Minutes
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- What’s being done to improve cultural responsiveness?
 - The response to this question was that the County could use these meetings to bridge a gap in the community, and reduce stigma towards homeless people, but that the current structure needed to be changed.
- Discuss experiences with Mendocino County Behavioral Health Service Providers cultural responsiveness, positive and negative.

- Someone explained that their experience with Mendocino County Behavioral Health Service Providers' cultural competency was limited. They had interacted with other county-funded projects, but not with Behavioral Health and Recovery Services.
- Discuss strategies and ideas to overcome disparities, providers and public.
 - See suggestions provided by a community member in the discussion section point one, and sub-points one and two.
 - Someone suggested that more people heard about these meetings via word of mouth. They said that several people do not necessarily have access to a computer.
- Other Public feedback:
 - There were no further comments made.

5) Next Steps	10 Minutes
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next meeting location is still to be decided. The Cultural Diversity Staff will be meeting together to schedule the next year of meetings, and take the feedback from the community offered today and in other meetings into consideration. | |
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For more information, contact: Karen Lovato, Ethics Services Manager, Behavioral Health & Recovery Services at 707-472-2332.