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# Boone hires help for homeless study

 BY PAUL MCKIBBEN • [PMCKIBBEN@NKY.COM](mailto:PMCKIBBEN@NKY.COM) • AUGUST 19, 2010

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Boone County has hired a consultant who will work on a study of homelessness.

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Kirk Kavanaugh, director of the county's human services department, said it received a \$3,000 grant from Welcome House of Northern Kentucky to conduct an economic study to determine the cost of homelessness in the three Northern Kentucky counties in 2008-09 involving 37 chronically homeless individuals.

The fiscal court unanimously approved on Aug. 10 hiring Lisa Desmarais of Villa Hills to a part-time position in the county's human

services department. She is currently the director of technology at Villa Madonna Academy in Villa Hills.

Kavanaugh said Desmarais is a part-time Northern Kentucky University graduate student studying public administration. He said she has received permission from NKU to have the study serve as her graduate thesis. He said the county will pay Desmarais \$500 to assist the human services department through this fall and probably the first four to five months in 2011. Her pay is from the \$3,000 grant.

Kavanaugh said Desmarais is on the board of the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Northern Kentucky and she has seen "a big spike in homelessness." The nonprofit organization serves the homeless.

Kavanaugh said officials are tracking 37 individuals for 2008-09 retrospectively. He said the Point-In-Time Homeless Count that is conducted every January is when officials look at a point-in-time count of homeless on a specific date and time. This year's count was from midnight to 11:59 p.m. on Jan. 28.

"That's not a study. That's just a count. We're doing an economic study," he said.

The 2010 Point-In-Time Homeless Count found 116 homeless people in Boone County.

Covington-based Welcome House helps the homeless and its services include an emergency shelter for women and children.

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