

Ventura Social Service Task Force

May 1, 2013

Present: Andrews Neal, Brady Fred, Breiner Jerry, Brinkmeyer Sue, Brown Peter, Brudnicki Cathy, Deutsch David, Esseff Pat, Everett Susan, Finning Ken, Forman Jill, Gallucci Sam, Gonzalez Sal, Haffner Mary, Hawkins Tim, Jones John, Luoma Amy, Luttrull John, Mason-Luttrull Donna, Mills Kate, Orth Rob, Powell Kathy, Pyper Amanda, Reynolds Clyde, Schreiber Debora, Schulkin Karol, Surber Michele, Tippelt Kristen, Ward Sid, Zapata Daniel

Meeting called to order at 3:04PM

Introductions and Announcements

Introductions were done.

I. Subcommittee and Other Reports

A. City Report

1. VSSTF Grant applications due at City on May 16th – members of the grant panel are Peter Brown, Sid Ward, Debora Schreiber, David Deutch, Karol Schulkin.
2. Continuous Care Oversight Board will meet May 16th – the homeless count will be released then.
3. Harbor Church – April 30th – CPU application has been deemed complete. Next process will be fact finding meetings.
4. New friends of the river map – indicates the repurposing of the river as a result of the removal of the trash and the homeless from the river bottom. The map is a vision of what the river might be and a guide to places of recreation.
5. Public Safety Meeting regarding the river. Friday is the last meeting. The group consists of 21 parcels and 9 entities including Park Rangers, Oxnard Police. The discussion included the problems with the Santa Clara River. Foothill/Anna Huber – representative of the Woodclassens.
6. Behind Riverhaven – there must be preparation for the September 3 river clean up when 600 CLU Freshmen will be in the river cleaning up the trash. Officer Al Davis - explained that there was recently a police action in the area to execute 4 warrants – found 2 of the persons who have warrants for their arrest. There have been eight felony arrests. The police have let the folks

know that living in the river bottom is not allowed and tolerance is coming to an end.

7. The City has set aside 20 – 25 K for people who must be moved out of the Santa Clara River bottom who want social services assistance/case management and our housing resources to find a place to live
8. The next step is to meet with social services partners. Post the camps with information about case management assistance – come to this place at a certain date. As with the Ventura River there are likely as many animals as there are humans in the river bottom. The plan is to remove debris and the possessions people plan to store before the CLU students come in, and the students will remove the stuff left behind. The priority is 1. People, 2. Possessions that they can carry, 3. Trash, 4. Possessions that they want to store. The possessions that they want to store must be kept for 90 days – life sustaining possessions.
9. There has been a significant uptick in nearby crime, including thefts at the golf course. Stolen debris is visible in the river bottom area.
10. Homeless Subcommittee meeting has been postponed.

B. Faith Subcommittee - Sue Brinkmeyer

1. This month they are publishing information about available services and also ways to help to insert in church bulletins
2. They are continuing to distribute a form groups can use to provide an update to the kinds of services they provide.
3. Some faith groups have begun using cards to refer individuals who come asking for help to Project Understanding so that they can be more fully served and also be entered in the HMIS system
4. More food pantries are to follow the process used at Project Understanding of interviewing and entering clients in the HMIS system.

C. Homeless Prevention Subcommittee – Debora Schreiber

1. Since June of 2007 they have helped 267 families, 678 individuals
2. In April/May – Catholic Charities had the fund.
3. They shared a booth with the DVO at the recent Eco Feast Fair. At the Art Feast the group will have its own booth. It is a good way to make connections and raise a little bit of money. Half the people that come by

the booth are looking for help and receive pamphlets, flyers, and referral cards.

4. Ken Belden has money for veterans – 5 months' rent and costs for moving.

D. Housing Options Subcommittee – Susan Everett

1. Submitted a final year report for the Homeshare of Ventura for the 2012 VSSTF Grant
2. Contacted Fred Evans – to see if he would consider being a board member.
3. Please note the meeting location and time have changed. The next meeting is the 2nd Wednesday, April 10, 2013 at **4:00PM – 6:00 PM** at the Housing Authority office located at 995 Riverside Street.

E. Report from H2H Community Solutions- Rob Orth

1. Within the next three months St. Vincent de Paul and Salvation Army will fund a housing specialist position for 3 years.

F. Coordinated Assessment/ Intake Committee – Clyde Reynolds

1. The screening/assessment subcommittee – the name is evolving – had a meeting with 211 to get an understanding of their capacity. They are not there for assessments.
2. Each organization should check their own information of the 211 website to make sure it is correct.
3. 211 says the top ten calls for services is for housing
4. The goal is to create a “Coordinated Referral System” - which is a hub or a key center where we can referrals can be sent to obtain information about services. They are working on an action plan, they will receive feedback on May 6th and the pilot project will roll out in September. They hope to take the project county wide.

The meetings are the 3rd Thursday at the Ventura Community Foundation – United Way from 8:30 to 10:00AM.

G. VSSTF Steering Committee - Sue Brinkmeyer

1. April 23 Homeshare received recognition at the County Board of Supervisors.

2. Those who live in the area are invited attend a meeting at City Hall regarding Harbor church.
3. Thanks to all who made pledges last month for the NAMI Walk May 4th and the Black & White Dinner November 9th.

III. Business

A. One Stop - Kate Mills – Rev. McCurtis and Candelaria will be at One Stops both Tuesday and Wednesday providing job outreach and resume writing help. One Stop is at capacity, but they are seeing new people each day. One Stop is not seeing a reduction in homelessness. The majority who come in are unhoused. Many have received a 3-day notice or cannot maintain their present abode. We are six years into the 10-year Strategy and there is still too little housing. Kate's perception is that we have done very little toward meeting the needs of those on the street.

Discussion ensued as to what has been and has not been done. Though mention was made about an article in the Sacramento Bee describing 100 units built with Prop. 63 money for the working poor and the homeless, others responded that the project was proposed when more funding was available. Amanda mentioned that Prop. 63 funding is coming to an end. Someone mentioned that Cabrillo has recently opened 20 units for special needs/farm worker housing. Amanda indicated that not all clients are able to live independently – there are 160 -170 beds with inboard care but there are 500 people on the waitlist. Ken Bonner referred to the Therapeutic Housing model that addresses jobs and mental health as well as housing. Rob Orth indicated that H2H is getting people off the streets. Rob mentioned that ten years ago service providers gave stuff to homeless people and we were not on a case management/housing track, but now we have initiated a process to move homeless individuals into real housing with case management, and it is working. Housing the homeless is a matrix with a 1,000 pieces. And as always there is a lack of funding. The new housing specialist position will focus on developing more housing.

B. Family to Family – Donna Mason-Lutrull - Catholic Charities and Family to Family are funding a uniformed guard at their location. Some they serve are finding homes to share using Craigs List.

C. HomeShare – Ken Finning –No matches last month. The VSSTF End of the Year for 2012 was distributed.

D. Results of the Harbor Church Survey - Kathy Powell. Eighty-one people participated in this snapshot survey. 35% of the participants were born in Ventura. Greater than 50% of the people (57) live in Ventura. Only 5% were transients.

A discussion of the Harbor Church Conditional Use Permit followed. Peter Brown explained that a meeting was facilitated by the City, and 89 people signed in for the meeting but more than 100 appeared to be present. A description of the circumstances in the neighborhood ensued. There were reminders of why the services the church provides are important as well as of the concerns in the neighborhood regarding safety and effects on children and property. Everyone got to speak and it was a respectful meeting. The Planning Commission makes the final decision. All decisions are appealable.

Rev. Sam Gallucci from Harbor Church said that it grieves him that some neighbors spoke about fear and there were exaggerations of the troubles. They are a church and they share the gospel. A lot of teens attend these services – some who have been abused and some are homeless. The City doesn't realize how many people the Harbor helps. The church is open to working with the neighborhood but they want to protect the rights of the church. All are invited to come share a meal and a bible study.

Rev. Sam feels the city has given the impression that the Harbor is operating illegally. They believe that are in compliance with the bounds of the permit. Everything that is happening in the neighborhood is not the fault of the Harbor Church. There has been the river bottom sweep and the push to remove the homeless from downtown.

Karol Schulkin says she heard the concerns of the people in the neighborhood, but there are very few places where homeless can go.

Another person mentioned that what Harbor does is valuable but the place that the location may not work. Sam Gallucci responded that the church is open to a move but cannot afford to relocate without assistance. Someone else mentioned that some Harbor neighbors feel that the church is a good neighbor.

Cathy Brudnicki mentioned that communities are being forced by HUD to redesign the services they offer.

Another discussion came up about our local leaders. We need to convince our leaders that their fear is misplaced and they can still get elected if they support homelessness issues.

IV. Networking

- A. Black & White Dinner is November 9, 2013 from 6PM to 12PM.
- B. May 16, 2013 VSSTF grant applications are due –submit at City Hall.

V. Next Meeting

Our next regular meeting is Wednesday June 5, 2013 from 3:00 to 5:00PM at Family to Family, 303 . Ventura Avenue Ste. E Ventura, CA 93001.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Everett