

Ventura Social Service Task Force

ADOPTED MINUTES

December 3, 2014

Present: Debra Adams, Judy Alexandre, Neal Andrews, Brian Brennan, Sue Brinkmeyer, Peter Brown, Kevin Clerici, Jim Duran, Susan Everett, Jill Forman, Mary Haffner, Tim Hawkins, Tim Hockett, Amy Luoma, Kathy Powell, Dave Schmutte, Jan Schmutte, Debora Schreiber, Karol Schulkin, Holly Whitmore, Ben Unseth, Daniel Zapata

Meeting was called to order at 3:24 PM

- I. Introductions and Welcome
- II. Revisions to/Approval of Minutes

November Minutes are approved without changes. Mary H. moves, Tim H. seconds

- III. Changes or Additions of the Agenda

No additions mentioned

- IV. Committees and Other Reports

- A. Updates from City – Peter Brown

Point In Time Homeless Count will be January 27th. The only place to register is at the United Way website volunteerventuracounty.org. There will be two trainings, one in Ventura and one in Oxnard, January 20 and 21, respectively. Eighty volunteers will be needed in Oxnard and fifty are needed in Ventura. The shifts are 9:00AM to 1:00PM and 1:00PM to 4:00PM. The morning shift volunteers will need to arrive at 8:15AM. The afternoon shift volunteers will need to arrive at 12:15PM.

The Winter Warming Shelter (WWS) had a fast ramp-up this year; it opened on Monday. There were 61 clients the first night and they are expecting over 100 soon. Bus tokens are available at the shelter and at service providers. Clients need to be at the bus at Ventura and Main Street at noon in order to arrive at 515 K Street in time. The bus ride including transfers and waiting time takes about 2.5 hours. SVDP are very professional.

The City Council Homelessness Committee has been postponed to Monday at 3:00PM. They will be discussing the future of the Veterans Facility and the Safe Sleep program. They will have a discussion of the City of Ventura philosophy and guiding principles before taking up, at a later meeting, a discussion of the steps the city can take on each of the 10 recommendations in the Recalibrated 10-Year Strategy that the Committee previously decided the City could most effectively take action..

Oxnard is in a period of transition. They are reducing the number of seats on the Homeless Commission from 11 to 7 in order to make it easier to have a quorum at each meeting. Community spots are open as some seats have been vacated. Peter has been meeting with all the elected officials in Oxnard and asking the question “Does homelessness matter?” He feels that Oxnard will be having big discussions over the next 6 to 10 months.

Homelessness is an established priority for the Ventura Economic Development Department and the City Council. One of the big discussions is the future of sheltering. This year will likely be the last year of the WWS. The concept is to move away from the WWS and tie sheltering to inclement weather sheltering – which would include very hot and cold, wet weather. Two options for shelters would include: 1) Faith based locations or 2) multiple faith based locations. The concept is complicated because of complicated zoning issues.

In Oxnard, Community Action of Ventura County is currently not zoned for a temporary inclement weather shelter but they are working on it. Oxnard has permanent shelters – there is the Rescue Mission with 130 beds and there are 175 beds at the Lighthouse for woman and children.

FUSE – Frequent User of Systems Engagement for chronically homeless individuals who frequently utilize all the systems -- is getting underway. First thing to do is I.D. the users and secondly gather consent for the mental health services. Service providers submitted lists of frequent users. One hundred and thirty names were submitted in total, and 18 individuals were mentioned on 3 or more lists. The intention is to reduce costs to the system and to help the chronic users of services. FUSE will help connect with the most vulnerable and will parallel with the vulnerability index.

B. Special Report – RISE Robert Mendoza and Randy Brown

Robert Mendoza - Rapid Integrated Support Engagement -- went after a large grant that was funded in the summer of 2014. They will offer support/engagement through a triage staff. They intend to expand the crisis team by six positions. The goal of the intervention team is to assist clients who are experiencing a crisis without involving law enforcement. RISE focuses on lower level mental health crisis issues by engaging and motivating clients. RISE is a voluntary program. They can provide transportation and can purchase equipment to overcome barriers such as wheel chairs. In some cases they can provide support with housing and some limited emergency shelter such as hotels. They point clients to providers. They provide follow up, therapeutic intervention and can follow a client for several months until they are suitably routed. They work closely with families. Robert has told his staff that communication is the key and it is imperative to have meaningful contact with community partners. The grant is from 2013-2017 and may extend into 2018. The RISE office hours are Monday-Friday 8:00AM – 5:00PM Phone number is 981-4233. They have a referral packet that can be emailed.

C. Faith Based Community Subcommittee –

Judy is chairing a group planning event on March 12 that will bring all the Faith community members together to find out who wishes to be involved in efforts to address issues related to poverty and homelessness. The event will take place at the Poinsettia Pavilion and dinner will be served. The goal is for all the Faith organizations to be in the room at the same time, along with private and public service providers.

Unrelated to the March 12 event is an effort to provide support services for children 0 -5 years old who are experiencing homelessness. An outside group is working to set up a 501(c)(3) for this effort.

D. Outreach Committee –

Folks are still working on the brochure.

E. Homelessness Prevention Subcommittee – Brian Brennan

The subcommittee is meeting with the board of the VSSTF 501(c)(3) to define rolls. This will be a year of transition. They have missed the fund raising window for this year but all hope that those who have provided funds in the past will continue to do so. They kept 9 adults and 11 children in housing with \$1,800. The balance in the fund for December is \$388. The Ventura Homeless Prevention Fund mailing address is 5654 Ralston Street Ventura, CA 93003.

F. H2H Community Solutions – Sandra

In November the coordinated assessment phone line has had 54 phone calls with 13 duplications. They made 8 referrals and housed 18 people for a total of 371 for the year.

G. Continuum of Care – Tara

The COC application is was submitted on October 30th, now we are just waiting for a response. HUD should make the announcement by the end of the year.

H. VSSTF Steering Committee – Sue Brinkmeyer

See the announcements in the Business section of the December 2014 agenda. Jewish Family Services will report on the services they provide in January.

I. One Stop – Kate Mills

November 2014 statistics were handed out in a report. See handout.

J. Family to Family – Jan Schmutte

They are currently doing some fundraising until the end of December.

K. Other Updates (Homeshare, City Center, Project Understanding etc.)

At the City Center the Lowes Loft is complete. The Kiwanis are taking on another unit. The illegal playground was removed. They are opening up 5 – 6 more rooms. Section 8 vouchers are welcome.

V. Business

A. Elections will be held in January 2015. The positions available are Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. Sue Brinkmeyer would like to run for the Secretary position. Kathy Powell said she would be willing to remain at the Vice Chair position.

B. Agenda item “Speaking with one voice - a process to set priorities for the VSSTF role in the 10-Year Strategy” was carried over to January 7 meeting. This will be a discussion of what we can do to rededicate ourselves to ending homelessness.

VI. Announcements – None to report.

Meeting Adjourned at 5:17PM

Respectfully submitted, Susan Everett