

Ventura Social Service Task Force

MINUTES (Draft)

February 5, 2014

Present: Neal Andrews, Michael Anselmo, Daisy Arellano, Jerry Breiner, Sue Brinkmeyer, Peter Brown, Cathy Brudnicki, Kevin Clerici, David Deutsch, Jim Duran, Elizabeth Egelko, Pat Esseff, Susan Everett, Dorothy FastHorse, Jill Forman, Tim Hawkins, John Jones, Sharon Lanning, Amy Luoma, Donna Luttrull, John Luttrull, Arlene Martinez, Kate Mills, Jennifer Mokos, Rob Orth, Kathy Powell, Amanda Pyper, Rick Raine, Laura Roberts, Debora Schreiber, Karol Schulkin

Meeting was called to order at 3:15 PM

I. Introductions and Announcements

Brief self introductions were done.

II. Changes or Additions to the Agenda – none

III. Special Reports

Collaborating for Clients – Susan Haverland

This is a major and multi-year initiative by Feeding America to leverage its core service of food provision and also build partnerships to help clients achieve more stable and self-sufficient lives. In Phase I, the team identified the primary drivers of food insecurity as unemployment, poverty and the struggle for housing. They decided that the initial focus should be on households with children, target partnerships and strategies for food, housing, health and employment, and support local planning and collaborative initiatives. Bonnie Weigel of Food Share and other partners of Ventura County Together are working to implement Collaborating for Clients in Ventura County. For more complete information see: <http://tfbn.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Collaborating-for-Clients.pdf>

The Avenues Silent Partner – Pat Essef

The building itself is 50% Catholic Charities, 25% empty and 25% Family to Family. There were 10,189 visits to Catholic Charities last year and 25,633 Basic-need services provided through the help of 2,000 volunteers and .75 FTE paid staff. They provide emergency food and shelter assistance, help with Ventura Homeless Prevention Fund administration, Edison assistance fund, and gas assistance fund. They have a back to school backpack program serving 230 children, Easter, Thanksgiving, Christmas, clothing and gift basket programs serving 470 households. They provide a women's health breakfast, pro bono legal services and host the Avenue's food day. They try to fill gaps in services with various funding sources. They recently hired a client resource coordinator and case management is done through a contract.

Housing Authority – Vista Del Mar Commons

The Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) is getting underway. The HA is rehabilitating 141 units of senior and disable public housing and converting those units to non-profit units. The groundbreaking is February 21, 2014 at 10:00AM.

IV. Subcommittee and Other Reports

A. City Report – Peter Brown

1. The annual Homeless Count was January 28, 2014. There were enough volunteers for two full shifts. From the initial results it looks like a greater number of people declined to be interviewed this year.
2. The issue of the Conditional Use Permit for the Harbor Church will be going back to City Council on March 3rd. There were 12 to 15 inquiries from the City Council members from the February 20th report which will be addressed.
3. Twenty staff members were trained by the Red Cross. Emergency Shelter management for states of emergencies.
4. The Hamilton Hotel will be re-inspected on February 6, 2014 or later. There are 36 managed clients in the facility. There will be a room by room inspection. In the worst case the clients will have to be relocated.
5. There is a currently a tough group of chronically homeless and help-resistant people hanging out behind Riverhaven causing problems.
6. The Second Unit amnesty program one-year extension was passed by City Council .

G. Winter Warming Shelter – Laura Roberts

1. The Winter Warming Shelter has served 301 individuals, 126 chronically homeless. That is 4,731 shelter nights and 9,461 meals.
2. The Armory will not be available on March 1st. The plan is to relocate to Mission Church again.

C. Report from the Faith Community Subcommittee – Sue Brinkmeyer

1. Action VC (Area Christians Taking Action on Needs) uses a nice tool at MeetTheNeeds.org website to get volunteers signed up. A meeting to plan Serve Day 2014 for Ventura is February 11 at 7PM at the Mission Church.
2. ACTION VC and the Faith Subcommittee will continue to work together to compile information about services provided by the broader faith community.
3. The subcommittee is discussing a workshop exploring how the broader faith community could do more and be more effective through collaboration.

D. Report from the Outreach Subcommittee – John Jones

1. Last meeting was January 31st. They meet the fourth Friday at 4PM at the Ventura County Health Building 3147 Loma Vista.
2. Would like to develop regular radio spots.

E. Report from the Homeless Prevention Subcommittee – Brian Brennan

1. They collected almost \$7,000 but gave out \$6,000. Served four households consisting of 4 to 8 people.
2. Currently have \$6,600 in funds after a \$2,000 on-line donation the last day of the month.

F. No Report from the Housing Options Subcommittee

G. Report from the H2H Community Solutions – Amy Luoma

1. Focusing on rapid re-housing. Currently working with 6 households.
2. Almost finished developing criteria for doing a vulnerability Index for Ventura.
3. The group is creating a Sheltering Options Subcommittee – whose task is to look at the future of shelters, particularly after the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul ceases to manage the winter warming shelter as it has existed for many years.
4. Continuing to discuss the creation of an endowment for housing needs and meeting with Community Foundation direction to discuss

H. Report from the Coordinated Assessment/Intake Committee – Clyde Reynolds

1. The intake document is complete.
2. Working on a list of front door organizations to train to use the brief 4-question assessment form. There will be a 3-month testing process.
3. Clarifying resources – what partners provide and looking for other partners for referrals.
4. They want to establish a single phone number with voice mail service. Would like to extend services to 6 days a week and an on-call service on Sunday.
5. Meeting with churches to train in the use of the form is scheduled for February.

I. Report from the VSSTF Steering Committee – Sue Brinkmeyer

1. Sue Brinkmeyer is now a member of the Board of the CoC, and Ventura is well represented at the CoC with several members of the VSSTF, including Cathy Brudnicki, Kate Mills, Debora Schreiber, Rob Orth, and Kathy Powell, attending regularly.

J. One Stop – Kate Mills

1. Expansion into the East county should be established by June 2014.
2. Triage table is handling a lot of folks who will now have coverage under Covered California. Signing many clients up to Medical and Covered California.
3. Child Support Services will have a new table at Oxnard next week. They will begin in Ventura the following week.
4. The Self sufficiency index they have been using to target individuals for case management for the last 2 years assesses education, employment, housing food. Obtaining care through Covered California will reduce one of the main causes of homelessness.

K. Update on the Blue Ribbon Panel on Inclusionary Housing – Kate Mills

1. Meet January 21, 2014 to discuss the best practices of other jurisdictions.

L. Family to Family – Donna Mason-Luttrull

1. Very quiet this week. All going well.

M. Homeshare – Ken Finning

1. Had one match in January.

N. Update on the City Centre – Jim Duran

1. There will be 14 families in place by the end of the month.
2. Project Understanding is handling the intake process.
3. A new board of directors is being formed. New board met February 1, 2014.
4. Hired an on-site manager that will move in by the end of the month.
5. Eleven more rooms needs to be redone. Hoping to complete them all by the end of the year.

O Update from Continuum of Care – Sue Brinkmeyer/ Cathy Brudnicki

1. HUD Funding intended for permanent housing. It is a scored National Competition. For the last six years the application was done on line with drop down menus.
2. Anticipating a shortfall in the Federal budget. \$2M available to Ventura County. \$99K in Tier 2, which will likely not get funded.
3. Anticipating our Continuum of Care getting a good score, an additional project from the Housing Authority was added.
4. It is important for all to be aware that Transitional housing will not be funded.
5. The Board consists of disinterested parties who are not looking for funding. Cathy Brudiniki, Kate Mills, and Sue Brinkmeyer all serve on the Board.

P. Update from Homes for All Alliance – Deborah Schreiber/John Jones

Nothing to report.

IV. Business

- A. City is extending another \$70K this year for VSSTF to redistribute to applicants. Applications will be due on May 15, 2014 and will be turned into the VSSTF at its box at the UU Church. The committee will consist of Karol Shulkin, Kathy Powell, David Deutsch, Kevin Clerici and Peter Brown. Sue Brinkmeyer will chair the committee and serve as a non-voting member.
- B. Input to Homeless committee Agenda
The Task Force members suggested some additions regarding steps the City might take to help implement the various recommendations of the 10-Year Strategy,.

1. Recommendation #1 **Housing First Model**: CDGB funds can be targeted to Housing First strategies. When the recommendations come out of the Blue Ribbon Panel on Inclusionary Housing, the Committee can recommend that the Council implement those recommendations, as they should encourage more building/more housing.
2. Recommendation #4 **Permanent Supportive Housing beds**. Again, the Blue Ribbon Panel's recommendations might be implemented. It should be noted that "100 more permanent supportive housing beds" are for the entire county; however, 2/3 of homeless in county are consistently in West County. The city might ask VCOG/IACH to place the item on its agenda and to develop a county-wide strategy for meeting this recommendation. Cities like Seattle in Multnomah County, Washington have implemented levies that fund low-income and supportive housing. In all of these areas, best practices from other jurisdictions should be considered.
3. Recommendation #7 **Shelters**. In addition to discussing a winter warming shelter, much broader strategy and discussion of sheltering for inclement weather or emergencies. Specific language dealing with such shelters could be added to city ordinances on shelters. It should be noted that a working group has grown out of the steering committee for H2H and has begun discussing the future of sheltering programs in the city.
4. Recommendation #9 **Permanent Very Low Income Housing**. See comments in 2 above.
5. Recommendation #12 **Homeless Prevention Resources and Services**. Groups like Rotary might be recognized for the Homeless Prevention work they are doing and encouraged to do as much in that area as they can. In addition to working with Ventura water on a Utility Assistance fund, a fund for help with electrical/gas bills might be augmented as well.
6. Recommendation #18: **Business Community Involvement**. The city can promote job and career centers, vocational rehab and rehab counselors and host a web board for job/career/internship opportunities. The City Council might recognize businesses that begin internship programs or hire those in need. Staff might research best practices for involving businesses and for fund raising for homeless services and housing in other communities. Downtown Ventura Organization will want to play a role.
7. Recommendation #2 **Community Outreach, Engagement and Treatment for Chronically Homeless Individuals and Families**. City can give priority to those at the top of the vulnerability index. Treatment for the chronically homeless should be given more attention and resources.
8. Recommendation #6 **Rapid Re-Housing Strategy**. City and County government each have a role to play.
9. Recommendation #14 **Discharge Planning**. When individuals are discharged perhaps from prisons or from foster care and do not need housing specific to short-term needs, "transition in place" should be considered, where the person

stays in the housing first provided and the money moves on to serve the next client in a different space.

10. Recommendation #19: **Faith-Based Organizations.** Partner with VIMA and faith community leaders not only to facilitate a community-wide collaborative approach but to provide ordinances, practices, and attitudes that enable faith communities to do more (e.g., RVs in each church lots that can serve as temporary housing.)

As an overall note, though HUD will not fund transitional housing and shelters, these still must be part of the city's continuum of care.

- C. July 4th Street Fair – Application is due April 25th. We will pay the non-profit rate for the booth and do what we have done in the past – the wheel and the balloon yoyos. Volunteers include Deborah S., John J., Cathy B., Kathy P., Jill F. and Sue B.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Everett