

Adopted Minutes of December 2, 2015 Meeting of Ventura Social Service Task Force

Present: Judy Alexandre, Neal Andrews, Jerry Breiner, Brian Brennan, Sue Brinkmeyer, Peter Brown, David Deutsch, Jim Duran, Mark Gisler, Tim Hawkins, Amanda Herrera, Tim Hockett, Ron Irwin, Steven Karnazes, Camilla Lee, Miguel Marquez, Kate Mills, Manuel Minjares, Ron Mulvihill, Kathy Powell, Melissa Ramirez, Dave Schmutte, Debora Schreiber, Karol Schulkin, Doug Stanton, Ben Unseth, Monica Vergara, Holly Whitmore, Daniel Zapata Huerta

Meeting was called to order by Chair Judy Alexandre

1. All present introduced themselves, and shared something they were grateful for related to 2015 work to end homelessness:
 - 1.1. Thoughts shared included: federal government is siding with homeless people; the winter warming shelter opened; thanks to St. Vincent de Paul, Rescue Mission, Downtown Ventura Organization, County of Ventura, and Cities of Ventura and Oxnard; there seems to have been a softening in the approach we are taking in helping people who are homeless; progress with inclusionary housing; increased awareness in the city is being brought to soften hearts; STEP Up is opening in March; there will be over 1,000 nativity scenes at *No Room at the Inn* with proceeds going to homeless programs; there are new faces in the work; new social worker at SVDP; awesome staff at Turning Point; collaboration; the ability to disagree peacefully; to live in this county, where so many are working to end homelessness.
2. MSC to approve the agenda as presented.
3. MSC to approve the minutes as presented.
4. Treasurer's Report - \$4,620 remain in account
5. New Business
 - 5.1. Elections: MSC to approve slate of officers: Melissa Ramirez as Secretary, Sue Brinkmeyer as Vice Chair, and Judy Alexandre as Chair. Many thanks to Kathy Powell for dedicated service as Vice Chair in past year.
 - 5.2. Approval of expenditure: MSC (3 abstentions Brennan, Brown and Andrews) to spend up to \$500 on January 14 event at Poinsettia Pavilion. It is being organized by the Faith Subcommittee and is part of the Partners for Change series. It will be called Roofs for All. The goal is to generate additional informed members of the faith community who can act as advocates for best practice and the need for housing.
 - 5.3. A meeting designed for business leaders is still in the planning stages.
6. Reports on ongoing work
 - 6.1. Laura's Law - continued as Mary Haffner is out of town
 - 6.2. Ventura Homeless Prevention Fund - \$2,280 paid out to keep 5 households from becoming homeless. So far this year the Fund has kept 41 households in their homes, 61 adults and 37 children, a total of nearly 100 people. Thanks to case managers at Salvation Army for most recent help and to Project Understanding as well. The Fund operates because of donations from houses

of faith and individual, and since inception in 2007, has helped nearly 1,000 people. We will contact press when we reach 1,000, perhaps before the end of the year.

6.3. Winter Shelter -

6.3.1. Thanks to funding from the County, SVDP, and the Cities of Oxnard and Ventura, the shelter opened Dec. 1. The shelter has served 57 individuals so far and all has run smoothly; 1 individual was asked to leave and 1 medical emergency was handled by on-site staff. TB tests were available at the shelter at first; those without clearance were red-banded, quarantined and tested with a 24-hour turn-around blood test. The flyer has a list of locations where TB tests can be obtained. Shelter is running on a limited budget and has saved money thanks to the Rescue Mission, which is providing meals at a cost of \$3.25 each vs. the cost last year of \$4.25.

6.3.2. The shelter can hold up to 140 -- 125 comfortably.

6.3.3. Shelter needs help with transportation and could use donations of oatmeal for breakfast or groups willing to serve breakfast and provide food.

6.3.4. There will be a 2nd training in December; volunteers mostly help with meal service between 5 and 8 pm. Volunteers must pass background check and have TB clearance.

6.4. Community Action has extended hours until 4:30, and many from the shelter are making their way there during the day. Additional interns will help with case management. - See press release at Appendix A

6.5. Continuum of Care

6.5.1. Application for funding has been submitted -- 4 days early, which garners bonus points. Application reallocates some shelter beds to crisis housing; funding is sought for coordinated entry, rapid rehousing. Many Mansions submitted the bonus project. Immediate goals are to focus on coordinated entry systems for CoC funded beds and then other beds as well; all must take VISPDAT vulnerability survey so we can house the most vulnerable first; must improve data in HMIS and make it open and transparent so that all decisions can be based on data.

6.5.2. A CoC stand-alone website is in the works.

6.5.3. Housing & Services Committee is meeting Dec. 10 at 3. There are 3 subgroups:

6.5.3.1. Sustainability (job training and internships, etc) chaired by Kate Mills and Judy Alexandre;

6.5.3.2. Services - chaired by Clyde Reynolds

6.5.3.3. Housing - chaired by Ron Mulvihill - plan is to pinpoint specific goals for each city and coordinate across continuum

6.6. City of Ventura report from Peter Brown

6.6.1. The Council's Subcommittee on Homelessness will meet Thursday, 12/3; on the agenda are the WWS, the Mayor's Ending Veteran Homelessness Challenge; the format and structure of open workshop on homelessness; and mapping of services in West and East county

- 6.6.2. The Point In Time Count will take place January 26. Please sign up at volunteerventuracounty.org. Training for Ventura count will take place Jan 12 at noon and 5 pm at City Hall; and Jan 13 at 5 pm at City Hall.
- 6.6.3. Kevin and Peter are working with Downtown Ventura Organization to reinvigorate endowment fund concept to cover the gap between income and the cost of housing
- 6.7. Crisis Housing/Bridge Housing Committee - the next effort will be to identify what we are spending to NOT shelter people and what other localities that have housed people/created bridge or crisis housing are spending. See examples at <http://www.csh.org/fuse>. See similar cost studies at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/blog/entry/study-data-show-that-housing-chronically-homeless-people-saves-money-lives#.VoyeuyhqJV4>
- 6.8. Volunteers are needed to gather information in each area:
 - 6.8.1. Costs of NOT sheltering people
 - 6.8.1.1. law enforcement (court, police, incarceration, park ambassadors, overseeing approved and unapproved feeding programs, shopping cart enforcement, safe and clean policy/ordinances)
 - 6.8.1.2. medical services (hospital, ambulance, emergency room, mental health)
 - 6.8.1.3. emergency services (fires, 911 calls related to homelessness)
 - 6.8.1.4. homeless camp cleanups
 - 6.8.1.5. impact on businesses and tourism
 - 6.8.1.6. shelter services
 - 6.8.1.7. homeless services
 - 6.8.2. Costs of best practices (can likely acquire from PATH):
 - 6.8.2.1. crisis housing development, whether by building new or remodeling
 - 6.8.2.2. ongoing operations costs
 - 6.8.2.3. funding sources
 - 6.8.3. The following individuals will do research in the following areas:
 - 6.8.3.1. Andy Mack - costs of mental health care/ current shelter costs
 - 6.8.3.2. David Deutsch - costs to hospitals
 - 6.8.3.3. Judy Alexandre - best and worst shelter practice
 - 6.8.3.4. Brian Brennan - river/camp clean up
 - 6.8.3.5. Doug Stanton and Jerry Breiner - site identification
 - 6.8.3.6. Tara Carruth - costs of best practices and of ongoing services
 - 6.8.3.7. Peter Brown - material gathered under FUSE project that was begun a year or more ago
 - 6.8.3.8. Tim Hawkins will contact Mike at MAR Management
 - 6.8.3.9. Debora Schreiber will make some contacts at CSUCI and Pepperdine to see if this could be part of student projects

- 6.8.4. Assistance and tools are available to assist with calculating the costs of sheltering high-frequency service users at Corporation for Supportive Housing's FUSE Resource Center <http://www.csh.org/fuse>
- 6.8.5. The Committee is proposing something like the old concept of the Gateway. It proposes a central intake and multi-agency resource center; this could be all in one location or dispersed. See sample diagram created by Nick Deitch as Appendix B.
- 6.8.6. The Committee recognizes that part of a Gateway or Crisis Housing or Bridge Housing solution must be opportunities for people who are experiencing homelessness to be engaged in meaningful activity during the day: this might include something like the old ARC Muffin Man Cafe, or City Corps.
- 6.9. Family to Family - over 180 people are still being served 3 lunches and 2 breakfasts each week by volunteers from over 26 organizations.

7. Announcements

- 7.1. Dec. 4 from 6 a.m. to sunset all in the Santa Clara River bottom from Johnson Dr and the 101 out to the ocean will be removed. They have been warned twice by SVDP and HSA that they are trespassing on conservancy, private, and county land and that because of concern for their safety and safety of first responders, they must leave. Service providers have spoken with 43 people and there may be 10-12 more living in the area. There are at least a dozen dogs and at least 1 cat. The only shelter available is the winter warming shelter during the day and community action in the day. Some have SSI or are working part or full time but do not have enough income for rent. We will continue to work with folks one by one. Some have already moved somewhere else.
 - 7.1.1. A question was raised as to whether another Riverhaven (approved camping area) could be established. Neal Andrews explained how difficult it was to get RiverHaven started, moving the group of individuals 17 times from campground to campground and wearing out their welcome at Lake Casitas and State of CA campgrounds.
- 7.2. National Alliance to End Homelessness annual conference is Feb. 18-19 in Oakland. Focus is Family and Youth Homelessness. Scholarships are available for those who are homeless. Deadline is Dec. 9; fees will be waived for volunteers.
- 7.3. City Center will have its annual Life Worth Living breakfast Jan 28 at 7:30 a.m.
- 7.4. The Housing People Can Afford committee meets the 3rd Monday of the month at 3 pm at the UU Church on Ralston.
- 7.5. NAMI is holding its annual holiday party Dec 8 from 5-8 at Oxnard Elks Club where 400-500 people will receive gifts.
- 7.6. No Room at the Inn with over 1,000 nativity scenes this year is Friday from 9-5. Proceeds will go to homeless services.
- 7.7. City of Ventura has been presented with a proposal for a sports center on RiverHaven site one year from now. That would require moving RiverHaven
- 7.8. The Hamilton and Mission hotels have been purchased and remodeled and upgraded and rents have gone up.

- 7.9. The new County Services for Homeless Persons brochure is available. West County is blue; East County is yellow.
- 7.10. The VSSTF would like to explore a new website. Please email your suggestions to Judy as to what website should do for whom. Stacie Galang and Andy Mack volunteered to help with design and development.
- 7.11. John Jones will bring copies for visitors at January meeting. Ben Unseth will bring copies in February, and Miguel Marquez will bring in March.
- 7.12. All those who have events scheduled during the month should send flyer to Judy, who will distribute each month with agenda.

Adjourn 4:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sue Brinkmeyer

Appendix A



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

12/01/2015

Media Contact: Ron Irwin, Director of Community Services
(805) 436-4015 or (805) 890-5496, Cell

TRANSITION CENTER TO OPEN FULL DAY Offering Services to Homeless and Community

(OXNARD, CA)—With the Ventura County Winter Warming Shelter opening this week in Oxnard, Community Action of Ventura County (CAVC) will be extending the hours of the daily transition center to provide additional access to services during day time hours, when the shelter is closed. The new hours will begin Thursday, Dec. 3, 2015 and the center will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Oxnard is expecting to see a rise in homeless individuals, as many will come from around the county seeking warm night time shelter during this forecasted harsh winter. CAVC is hoping that during the day our case managers and center staff may be able to provide access to services that may lead individuals out of homelessness.

“Services in our transition center range from basic needs, such as showers, bathrooms, and basic hygiene, to being an entry point back in to society by helping the homeless secure identification, social security documents, and basic healthcare,” said Ron Irwin, Director of Community Services. “During these extended hours we are also looking to work with our community partners to offer, expanded services.”

Irwin said CAVC is grateful for the community and business support CAVC has been receiving as we work together to address the issue of chronic homelessness.

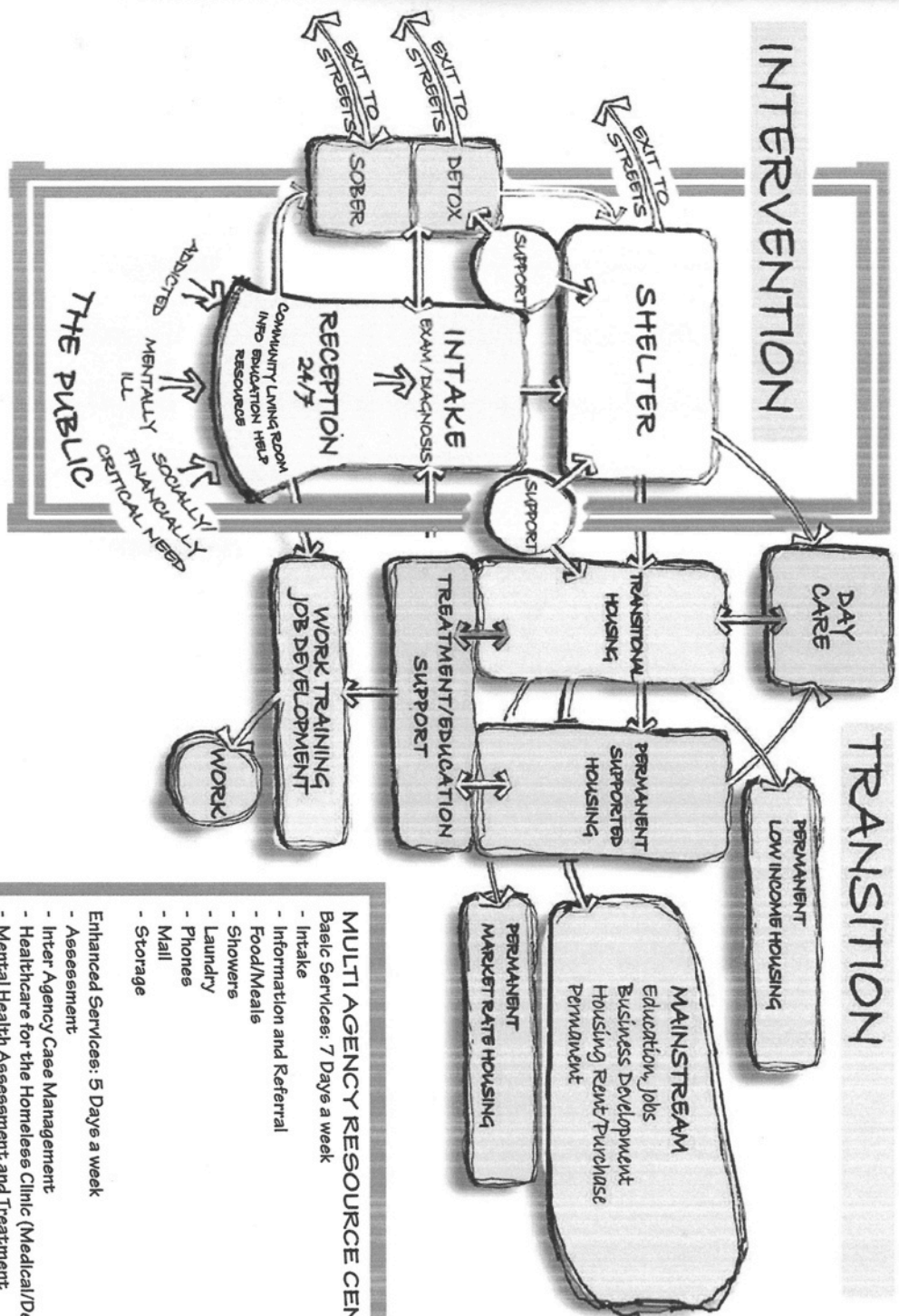
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A Multi-Agency Resource Center Emergency Shelter and Short Term Transitional Housing

a conceptual proposal for



- MULTI AGENCY RESOURCE CENTER**
- Basic Services: 7 Days a week
 - Intake
 - Information and Referral
 - Food/Meals
 - Showers
 - Laundry
 - Phones
 - Mail
 - Storage
 - Enhanced Services: 5 Days a week
 - Assessment
 - Inter Agency Case Management
 - Healthcare for the Homeless Clinic (Medical/Dental/Vision)
 - Mental Health Assessment and Treatment
 - Drug and Alcohol Assessment and Counseling
 - Veterans Services
 - Legal Services/Homeless Court
 - ID Assistance (Birth Certificates/ Ca ID/ Soc Security Cards)
 - Homeless Shelter and Short-Term Transitional Housing
 - Emergency Shelter (up to 30 days)
 - Short term transitional housing
 - Veterans Program