

Ventura Social Service Task Force  
DRAFT MINUTES  
January 7, 2015

Present: Judy Alexandre, Amy Balchum, Steve Bennett, Jerry Breiner, Sue Brinkmeyer, Peter Brown, Miguel Cardenas, Kevin Clerici, Elizabeth Egelko, Susan Everett, Jill Forman, Tim Hockett, John Jones, Camilla Lee, Arlene Martinez, Kate Mills, Alicia Morales, Kathy Powell, Prescilla Quiroz, Clyde Reynolds, Karol Schulkin, Dave Schmutte, Jan Schmutte, Daniel Zapata Huerta

Meeting was called to order at 3:24 PM

- I. Those present introduced themselves.
- II. The minutes of December 4, 2014 meeting were adopted as presented (Alexandre/Powell)
- III. The agenda was revised without objection to move the special report from Amy Balchum, Executive Director of Jewish Family Services, to the top of the agenda.

IV. Special Reports and Committee Updates

A. Special Report: Jewish Family Services (Amy Balchum)

Jewish Family Services is the oldest charities in California. It began in 1850 in San Francisco and 1850 in Los Angeles. It has been in Ventura since 1987. Offices are located on Main, between Ash and Kalorama. They provided 5,000 counseling sessions last year on a sliding scale. One donor sponsors services for women and children at risk of homelessness, and they see a few hundred each year in that area. They also provide bilingual outreach at the Healthy Start Center at Sheridan Way, senior case management in Thousand Oaks, Marriage and Family Therapists, and MSW students. They serve 1,800 children in public schools each month with drug, alcohol, and LGBTQ counseling. All services are non-denominational, though there is some intensive senior vade management that is for Jews only. Not all counselors and certainly not all clients are Jewish. There is no wait list for counseling. An appointment usually can be scheduled within one week. They have evening hours and can do home visits, though most services are provided at their offices.

B. City of Ventura Report (Peter Brown)

- **The** Point In Time Homeless Count will be January 27<sup>th</sup>. There are 6 spaces open in the afternoon in Ventura, and 35 open in Oxnard, both morning and afternoon. Trainings are January 20 at noon and Jan 21 at 5:30 in the Catalina Conf. Room at City Hall. Training usually lasts 45 minutes. The only place to register is at the United Way website [volunteerventuracounty.org](http://volunteerventuracounty.org).
- The City Council Homelessness Committee meets Thursday, 1/8/15. On the agenda are an update on RiverHaven, City Good Neighbor policy, Recommendations on the 10-Year Strategy, Granting calendar, Report on Oxnard. The next meeting is Feb. 15.
- Leslie and Rob Orth will be honored 1/23/15 from 6-9 pm at the VCCF Board Room, 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Camarillo as they depart for Idaho.
- Turnout at the Winter Warming Shelter (WWS) has been huge. There were 2,972 stays and 345 unduplicated persons in December; 150 of the unduplicated 34 were 50 or older. The highest number on any one night was 128; capacity is 130. There were 20 families with 38

children total, and all received motel voucher and began to work with St. Vincent de Paul social workers. One family was permanently housed.

- Steve Karnazes is heading up the committee looking at future sheltering. Peter is attempting to identify churches that could shelter by right because they are in M1 or M2 zone, industrial areas designated for sheltering under council's SB2 decision. One major industrial zone is south of 101 freeway toward the Beach from the Mall to the River. Churches in that area include Southcoast Fellowship, Reality Church, Love International, and Community Bible. All asked to send to [pbrown@cityofventura.net](mailto:pbrown@cityofventura.net) names of other houses of worship in commercial zones for possible participation in future shelter program.
- Churches not in commercial zone, like Mission Ventura Church, which hosted shelter before, would need a conditional use permit to operate a shelter, and the application fee for such a permit is \$7,500. Sue indicated that other houses of worship that do not have facilities that would work for a shelter could join together to pay the application fee and provide volunteers for the shelter.
- In response to a question from Sue Brinkmeyer, Peter indicated that the decision has not been made to have churches serve as future shelter. Sue indicated that the ideal would be to lease a property in the industrial zone and to use that same space during the day as a counseling/housing/job search center, where clients could work with case managers and others toward individualized permanent solutions. Peter indicated that a zoning change would need to be approved by the council, as there is currently no zone within the city where both shelter and day services could be provided. Any staff member or any member of the council could place an item about such co-location on a council agenda for consideration.
- The current shelter at the armory costs \$425 per night, or \$57,000 per year. For that same funding, a space could be leased for \$4,750 per month. Peter indicated that funding for the current shelter came from SVDP, which has re-allocated much of the funding to case management, and from CDBG monies from city and county and EFSP money, and there is no guarantee that all of that funding would be there in the future. Total funding was \$320,000 for 4 months.
- Karol Schulkin pointed out that the current shelter serves all cities, and if each city creates its own answer, the Ventura shelter would not need to be so large.
- Judy Alexandre pointed out that, when suitable sites for shelters have been located in the past (e.g., property at Donlon & Transport), they have been purchased out from under service providers. Jerry Breiner pointed out that with a lease agreement there is no need for it to be made public, unless a conditional use permit is needed.

#### C. Faith Subcommittee

- The guiding principles prepared by Peter Brown that had been presented to VIMA and the Council's Committee on Homelessness were discussed. The committee prepared a draft version of principles that the faith community might support (attached to these minutes as Addendum !). It was also pointed out that there are guiding principles within the Recalibrated 10-year strategy (attached as Addendum B).
- An event entitled "Partners for Change" is planned for 6-9:30 p.m. on March 12 at Poinsettia Pavillion. It is hoped that 5 people from each house of worship will attend as well as social

service agencies. There will be dinner, a summary of what services are being provided and what gaps exist and then faith groups will meet to prepare action plans. Dr. Arriaga will MC.

D. Homelessness Prevention Subcommittee – Jill Forman & Sue Brinkmeyer

December was a good month for the Fund, as donors completed year-end giving, with a total of \$4,095.36 donated in December. A total of 5 households were helped in December, consisting of 9 adults and 11 children. That brings the total for the year to 55 adults and 59 children who were kept in housing by the Fund, and 873 total individuals since Fund inception in 2007. With the new 501(c)3 in place, checks are mailed out within 2 days instead of 2 weeks under United Way, and the Board will work on additional funding opportunities (like Amazon Smile and Ralphs) while the Committee continues to send out thank you notes and do its traditional fundraising activities. An additional \$2,450 was donated to the Homeless Prevention Partnership designed to increase the number of rental units available to those who are homeless. We hope to have the \$5,000 we need to get it off the ground soon; we have applied for a grant from the UU Church of Ventura, and any amount received there will be matched by one of our Board members.

E. H2H Community Solutions – Alicia Morales and Camilla Lee

- The coordinated assessment is working to incorporate the vulnerability index using the 100,000 homes model. Had only 20 phone calls in December a steep decline from the 50 phone calls in November. Of the 20, 5 were church referrals, and the remainder individuals; 11 were duplicates.
- St. Vincent de Paul, Turning Point Foundation, and Salvation Army have received a grant which will provide a health navigator to help individuals make their way through the health system.
- For Ventura, from January - December 2014 a total of 256 were housed through rapid rehousing; in County 391 were housed. Since August, H2H has been practicing Housing First, focusing on housing the chronically homeless without first insisting on behavioral compliance. Case managers are doing a great deal of hand holding and working closely with landlords. At least half of the clients will need supportive housing for the rest of their lives; for others, case managers are spending a great deal of time teaching self care and how to be good tenants.
- H2H is also focusing on housing families.
- Peter Brown indicated that the Feds have taken away funding for transitional housing, but he knows of studies that show that housing is more successful with transitional housing first. Case managers are having to do transitional housing in place.

F. The stats of One Stop were distributed. See Addendum “c”

G. Other updates: City Center: Jim Duran sent an email reporting that City Center has 8 rooms that will be ready for occupancy by end of January.

V. Business

A. Asked to propose priorities for the VSSTF for the coming year, looking at the recommendations in the Recalibrated 10-Year Strategy, or looking beyond it, members proposed the following:

1. Very affordable housing advocacy (Judy Alexandre)
2. A day program/engagement center (Kathy Powell)

3. Access to entry-level employment (Karol Schulkin) (Sue suggested people look at DOE.org as a model for this)
  4. Winter Warming/Foul-Weather/Year-Round Shelter (Steve Bennett)
  5. Homeless Prevention (Steve Bennett)
  6. If advocacy, then changing current city prioritization of parks and infrastructure over affordable housing (Kate Mills)
  7. Good idea to look at what belongs to VC Together and CoC and see what's missing
- Discussion to be carried over to February agenda.

B. Peter Brown took over the meeting to conduct election of the new steering committee, and the following were elected:

- Chair - Judy Alexandre (Nonimated by Brinkmeyer/ seconded by Powell)
- Vice Chair - Kathy Powell (Nominated by Alexandre/seconded by Forman)
- Secretary - Sue Brinkmeyer (Nominated by Powell/seconded by Clerici)

Judy Alexandre took over as chair. Kathy Powell and the general body thanked Susan Everett for her work as secretary and Sue Brinkmeyer for her work as chair.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:55 PM

Respectfully submitted, Sue Brinkmeyer

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#### Addendum "A"

DRAFT: Principles that communities of faith support in efforts to end homelessness:  
(created by members of the Faith Subcommittee - not yet approved)

1. All human beings have inherent worth and dignity.
2. Everyone has a right to the basics of human life: adequate housing, food, health care, and work.
3. Providing refuge (food, hygiene, clothing and shelter) is a precursor to Recovery, Restoration and Results; sites of refuge should be co-located with comprehensive service programs.
4. Homelessness must be prevented whenever possible.
5. Public resources are best used, whenever possible, to create the conditions people need to flourish instead of to punish them for behavior that is created, to a large extent, by the failure of other systems and institutions. Ticketing or jailing individuals for infractions that are a result of being homeless (e.g., sleeping in their car or in the bushes) is counterproductive in efforts to end homelessness.
6. A coordinated entry system is needed to improve access to available housing and services and ensure the type and level of assistance provided to households is tailored to meet their specific needs.
7. People from every sector of the community—business, healthcare, education, government, faith, the arts, and those working to preserve the environment--- have a moral duty to care for each other and for the well-being of all members of the community..
8. Efforts to reduce homelessness must address the causes of homelessness and not simply the symptoms; among the causes are an inadequate supply of affordable housing, an inadequate supply

of jobs that pay a living wage, inadequate life and job skills, addictions, mental illness, and broken relationships.

9. Housing First, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Rapid Re-Housing are the best solutions for many segments of the homeless population; however, since homelessness is a multi-faceted problem that requires multi-faceted solutions, it can best be reduced one individual and one family at a time.
10. Establishing innovative, collaborative partnerships can create affordable housing and employment options that every individual and family can access.
11. In implementing Housing First, “income, sobriety and/or participation in treatment or other services are not required as a condition for getting housing. All services are voluntary and are not a condition for retaining housing.” ([http://usich.gov/usich\\_resources/solutions/explore/housing\\_first/](http://usich.gov/usich_resources/solutions/explore/housing_first/))

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Addendum “B”

**“Recalibrating for Results: A Five Year Evaluation and Update of the 2007–2017 County of Ventura 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness” dated January 2013, states on pages 3-5:**

The five “new” Guiding Principles include:

1. Shifting away from providing more and more shelter and transitional housing for chronically homeless persons and moving towards providing permanent housing as quickly as possible along with services needed while in their housing—this principle has served as the basis to the best practice model known as Housing First;
2. Minimizing the length of stay in shelters and transitional housing programs and aligning resources to help households obtain permanent housing as quickly as possible along with home-based case management as needed—this principle serves as the base of the best practice known as Rapid Re-housing;
3. Moving away from street “outreach,” which has traditionally focused on building relationships with homeless persons over time in order to refer and/or transport them to social services, to focusing on rapid engagement, support, and housing placement in order to implement the Housing First model—this principle combines the best practices known as Assertive Community Treatment and the National Street to Home Campaign;
4. Ensuring that rental and utility assistance is given to households that are most likely to become homeless if not for this assistance—best practices concerning homeless prevention have shown that helping households with rent and utility assistance who are behind in paying their bills but not likely to become homeless, increases the likelihood that there will not be enough financial resources to help households truly at risk of falling into homelessness;
5. Implement a service plan that helps persons placed in case managed transitional “re-entry beds” obtain permanent housing.

The “original” six Guiding Principles include:

6. Providing Permanent Supportive Housing which “ends” a person’s homeless experience instead of continuously “managing” their homeless experience with emergency food, clothing, and shelter— this principle supports the best practice of Permanent Supportive Housing, which provides subsidized rental housing with home-based supportive services as needed instead of street- or shelter-based supportive services that are meant to “ready” a homeless person for permanent housing;
7. Creating permanent affordable housing units for extremely-low and very-low income households that enables them to spend no more than 30% of their monthly income on

their basic housing needs which includes rent/mortgage and utilities—HUD states that if a household is paying more than 30 percent of its gross monthly income for rent and utilities combined, that there is a chance that household is overburdened and may run into difficulties paying for other necessities;

8. Providing homeless prevention resources such as rental and utility assistance in order to help at risk of becoming homeless households maintain their current housing, which is less costly and more effective than helping households obtain housing after they become homeless;
9. Preventing persons from being discharged from public and private systems of care (e.g., hospitals, jails/prisons, foster care) into homelessness, shelter, or transitional housing programs by implementing discharge protocols and procedures which includes a housing destination, which is less costly and more effective than helping individuals obtain services and housing after they become homeless again;
10. Gathering data in order to identify and monitor benchmarks and outcomes in order to focus funding and identify gaps in services;
11. Building upon a public and private partnership to end homelessness that includes business, corporate, and faith-based contributions and engagement.

These guiding principles were used by the Steering Committee to significantly shape the recommendations [in the Recalibrated Plan].

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Addendum “C” - One Stop Ventura Stats for December

Ventura	Streets	Temp Shelter	Temp Housing	Doubled Up	Housed	Institution
New 51	10	1	9	14	10	1
Returning 58						

Total Service Contacts	439
Case Management	106
Child Support	5
Covered CA/MediCal	41
Disability App Assist	3
Doctor	25
Food Stamps	23
GR	9

Homeless Services	
Lunches	223
Matrix	64
Medical Case Mgmt	28
Pix IDs	56
Re Entry	24
STAR	16
Turning Point/H2H	32
Veteran Assistance Sys	6