

DRAFT Minutes of May 6, 2015 Meeting of Ventura Social Service Task Force

Present: Judy Alexandre, Neal Andrews, Jerry Breiner, Brian Brennan, Sue Brinkmeyer, Peter Brown, Kevin Clerici, Elizabeth Egelko, Susan Everett, Jill Forman, Mary Haffner, Tim Hawkins, Amanda Herrera, Tim Hockett, John Jones, Steven Karnazes, Camilla Lee, Christy Madden, Arlene Martinez, Kate Mills, Kathy Powell, Melissa Ramirez, Dave Schmutte, Jan Schmutte, Karol Schulkin, Doug Stanton, Ben Unseth, Daniel Zapata Huerta

1. Meeting was called to order by Chair Judy Alexandre at 3:17 pm
 - All present introduced themselves and shared something they were looking forward to in the year ahead around ending homelessness. Among ideas shared were
 - Ending the stigma of mental illness
 - Increased permanent supportive housing so no one has to be homeless
 - Increased connections with the business community
 - Increased focus on children and youth
 - Completing construction at Castillo del Sol and housing 38 deserving residents and then building more units
 - Partnerships that move the issue forward
 - Partnering with surrounding cities and all departments
 - Working more closely together
 - Assisting families to find housing
 - 6-8 new recuperative care beds for people transitioning out of hospital
 - Growing H2H team
 - Seeing homeless count continue to drop
2. Judy welcomed Jeremy Sidell, Chief Development Officer of PATH (People Assisting the Homeless), based in L.A., but now working in San Diego, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara too.
3. Judy reminded all to bring their own copies of materials emailed to them prior to the meeting: agenda, minutes, and other handouts. Volunteers will bring 6-8 copies for guests, as follows:
 - Camilla (thanks to Salvation Army) for June
 - Ben (thanks to Project) for July
 - Peter (thanks to City) for August
 - Karol (thanks to County HSA) for September
 - Kevin (thanks to DVA) for October
4. The minutes of April 1, 2015 were approved as submitted.
5. Agenda was revised to take oral report from City first so that guest, Jenny from HOMES/CDBG, could leave to get to another meeting.
6. Thanks to Susan Everett at Housing Authority for all the years managing the VSSTF budget. The Task Force has asked that funds be transferred to the non-profit arm of this body: VSSTF, Inc. dba Ventura Homeless Prevention. There

are currently \$5,453.94 in the account, so no additional funds were requested for this year.

7. Report from City (Peter and Jenny)

- An invoice for 70,000 for the VSSTF Grants program for the period July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016 needs to be sent to Peter by email. Dave Schmutte of VSSTF, Inc. agreed to do this.
- The grant committee (Kevin, Karol, Kate, Judy and Peter) recommended the following awards for this cycle:
 - Lincoln Elementary School programs for homeless children and their families – \$4,000
 - El Patio Supportive Services – \$8,000
 - Interface Youth Crisis Outreach Program – \$8,000
 - City Center Transitional Living Program – \$8,000
 - H2H Project Understanding – \$14,000*
 - H2H Salvation Army– \$14,000*
 - H2H Turning Point – \$14,000*

* Distribution pending outcome of joint agency management meeting
- Council Committee on Homelessness will meet Thursday, May 7 at 4 p.m. Adjusted zoning map to create/expand areas where shelter and day services might be offered in one location (most likely shelter by right; services by CUP) will be addressed at June meeting because Christy Weir will be absent from May meeting. Staff will recommend allowing sheltering by right in MPD zone as well. The adjusted zoning recommendation from the Committee must then go to Council because it entails changes to the General Plan. The Council will not meet in August. Changes will most likely not take effect in time for this winter.
- River Haven’s 10–year anniversary will occur this fall; Judy will add this as a discussion item to the June agenda
- In the recommendations for CDBG funds going to Council for approval on Monday, over \$41,000 have been set aside for a replacement for the Winter Warming Shelter in whatever form it takes. This is in the CDBG category of public service, which has a cap. Whatever program is proposed must meet CDBG criteria and funding will be based on outcomes, how the program is run and outcomes (e.g., number of people to be served, etc. Funds must be used in period July 1, 2015–June 30, 2016. CDBG is a reimbursement program, so it is not pre-funded.

8. New and Current Business items were discussed.

- A. Prior to discussing the 2015 Point in Time Homeless Count Report, Judy read the current Mission Statement of the VSSTF:

The mission of the VSSTF is to create and implement an integrated community strategy to end homelessness in the City of Ventura.

The VSSTF will accomplish this mission by:

- Involving a broad cross section of the community, including representatives from elected officials, governmental agencies and departments, law enforcement, businesses, social service agencies, charitable foundations, faith-based organizations, community groups, public and private housing developers, homeless individuals and concerned citizens.*
- Developing a common understanding of the root causes and circumstances of homelessness, how persons are affected, and the impact of homelessness on the community.*
- Identifying the most effective solutions to these problems and their related costs.*
- Creating a Strategic Plan, which identifies measurable objectives, timelines, responsibilities, budgets and sources of all resources, including funds.*
- Overseeing the implementation of the plan.*
- Evaluating progress of plan objectives and making modifications as needed.*

Recognizing the need to address emerging issues, the VSSTF will include opportunities for networking, advocacy, public education, and action in the community.

Judy will add a discussion of the Mission Statement to the June agenda and asked that any with proposals for revisions send them to her prior to the meeting.

B. The Homeless count report was discussed; among the items that stood out for VSSTF members were that:

- numbers dropped dramatically in Ventura
- 63% of people we found and spoke to were unsheltered
- 56% of Ventura homeless are chronically homeless; this indicates we've housed the people who wanted to help themselves, and now we need to figure out what we are going to do with the chronically homeless
- the number of unsheltered homeless did not decrease
- there was a 20% reduction over two years, and a 10% reduction per year is pretty good

C. The Homeless count report raised a number of questions for people, including

- We are low on permanent supportive housing, so where are the people who are unsheltered to go? Where are these individuals to be besides the parks?
- What is the percent of increase in homeless children and what's behind it?

- If the vacancy rate for all housing in the city is less than 2%, what is the vacancy rate in housing people moving out of homelessness can afford (in the \$500 – \$800 per month range)?
- Why don't the recommendations include anything about shelters when creating small shelters in each city is Recommendation #7 in the 10-Year Strategy?
- Are we working to create housing engagement center(s) or bridge housing?
- How can we call what we might set up bridge housing if there is no permanent housing to move them into? High performing communities exit people from bridge housing within 20 days. Where are people to go?
- More than half of Venturans housed by H2H have not been housed in Ventura, and those that have been were placed in hotel rooms at the Hamilton or Mission; what is to happen now that even those locations have been fully utilized?
- What is considered adequate housing?
- Do we, in fact, have a false drop in homeless numbers because we have talked people into being housed by finding a couch to sleep on or by doubling up? One Stop sees many more people who are homeless than were counted, so what are the real numbers?
- In estimating the amount of housing needed, are we taking into account all of the people who have a place to live only by doubling up?

9. Reports:

- **Housing People Can Afford** – The group is studying in detail zoning maps, SB 2, and the Housing Element. Meetings are 3rd Mondays at 3 at the Salvation Army Board Room, 155 Oak Street. The next meeting is May 18. To learn more about the housing situation in Ventura a number of reports were requested:
 - Camilla Lee prepared a report (see attached Addendum #1) showing where H2H has housed Venturans from July 1, 2014–April 30, 2015. Highlights include:
 - ◆ 51% of Venturans have been housed outside Ventura
 - ◆ Of those housed in Ventura, 36% have been housed at Hamilton or Mission Hotels (total capacity 56 rooms. More SROs are needed. The Peppertree was a viable place until two months ago when rent increases priced H2H clients out.
 - ◆ What is needed are many more units in the price range of the Hamilton and Mission Hotels.
 - ◆ For the most part, clients are staying housed, but that means those units are off the market.
 - ◆ Case managers are doing an excellent job, but when clients are housed outside city, response time is longer.
 - ◆ Work is being done to build relationship with landlords, but, if clients can't afford the available units, it is still not an option.

- Susan Everett prepared a report on the Housing Authority (see Addendum #2). Highlights include:
 - ◆ 576 Public Housing units
 - ◆ 266 non-HUD units
 - ◆ 144 Rental Assistance Demonstration units
 - ◆ 26 TRIAD properties
 - ◆ 1286 Section 8 Housing Choice vouchers
 - ◆ 95 VASH vouchers
 - ◆ 140 RAD project based
 - ◆ In June, 100 Public Housing units will convert to RAD project-based vouchers non-tax credit investments; HA will continue to own and manage
 - ◆ There will be a total of 1,634 vouchers, with a percent set aside for people experiencing homelessness; there currently none available
 - ◆ There is a 6-7 year waiting list for Section 8 vouchers, with 7,000+ on the list
 - ◆ The Public Housing list currently has a 5-year wait
 - ◆ Individuals must know that they need to apply for every program at the Housing Authority

Homeless 2 Home's experience is that all too frequently people with voucher cannot find a landlord willing to accept it.

All are asked to send questions about housing and housing numbers to Judy so that she can consolidate them and forward to Peter or Jenny for answers.

Karol Schulkin is working on a flow chart of services and government programs with guidelines about who qualifies for each to be presented in August.

- **Education/Advocacy** – The group is gathering information and research to develop talking points and back what others committees are doing. Next meeting is Wed., May 13 at 3:30 p.m. at Judy's, 914 Utica Ave.
- **Housing Engagement Center**– The group is studying the Housing Element and SB2, talking to folks in community, and looking at locations in city.
- **Faith Committee** – The committee is still following up on March 12 "Partners for Change" event. Clergy who regularly attend the Faith Committee meeting have written a letter inviting other ministers or their representatives to attend and become part of the process. A VSSTF brochure and Faith Committee brochure are being enclosed. Members are calling individually those who attended the March 12 event. The next meeting is May 27 at Ventura Church of Christ, 5401 Bryn Mawr.

- **Homeless Prevention** – In April a total of \$1,328 in donations came in from Sacred Heart, Ventura Missionary Church, Ventura Church of Christ, Church of the Foothills and Esther & Ira Sorkin, and Judy Alexandre. We provided rental assistance in the amount of \$1,600 to 4 families consisting of 5 adults and 3 children. The Fund has less than \$1,057 at the moment. So far this year we have kept 21 families, consisting of 35 adults and 23 children in housing. Since 2007, it's a total of 352 families and 932 people kept housed.
- **Winter Warming Shelter/Shelter options**
 - ◆ Ben Unseth of Project Understanding has told the Council's Committee on Homelessness that congregations are concerned and committed to there being winter/weather-triggered shelter. He has a location that has showers and a kitchen and may fall within shelter-by-right area (or be 1 block outside).
 - ◆ Steven Karnazes met for a year with Peter and Rob and a group representing faith groups. They currently have two plans: either a single location or multiple locations with shelter rotating among congregations. Either would cost approximately \$40,000 to operate with one staff member. The group cannot move forward because of zoning. The City has no plan of its own. If no shelter is opened and conditions arise that occasion a weather emergency, then county emergency services will step in. Mission Church opened a single-site shelter when the Armory closed and that plan would work again. Best practices with an overnight shelter coupled with day services will not work for 2015-16 because of delay in zoning changes.
 - ◆ **Motion:** MSC (2 abstentions): The Task Force is strongly supportive of plans for an inclement weather shelter for this year while we work on a long-term solution.
- **Single-use line (Coordinated entry)**
 - ★ There were 57 calls this month (3 of them repeats). Five were from hospitals.
 - ★ Mission Church has found that the single-use line is no longer getting them satisfactory results; they have developed their own care teams that are getting some 5 people per month housed and employed.
- **County Human Services** –
 - ★ Housed 62 people in April countywide; 16 from Ventura were permanently housed, though not all in Ventura

- ★ Updated webpage at vchsa.org -- can apply for benefits, check status, map routes, find links, etc.
- **One Stop** – A report giving numbers from July – May will be presented at June meeting. Experience is that individuals with income cannot find housing. The working and the elderly are the new homeless.
- **Laura’s Law** – There will be a vote on May 27. VSSTF sent a letter in support, as did the City and Turning Point. Mary Haffner will speak on behalf of VSSTF.
- **VSSTF Grants** – For next fiscal year council voted to strip \$30,000 out of VSSTF granting. Judy is in regular dialog with mayor on this topic. Judy will review tape of meeting to see what was said (4 hours and 21 minutes into the meeting) and will raise issue about what the council wanted grant program to be doing if it is not clear there.

10. Networking/Upcoming events

- The Dependent Adults & Seniors Homeless or at risk of Homelessness Working Group is now focuses on transportation; next meeting is May 11 at 9:30 at VCAAA office.
- All are invited to participate May 28 from 2–4 pm at Community Action’s Community Needs Assessment and Ice Cream Social at 621 Richmond, Oxnard. The goal is to identify gaps in services and where the community is hurting; it serves as a basis for the strategic plan update.
- Thanks to all partners for helping in getting a client transportation back to area where he has family and a job waiting. The Hope Worth Giving breakfast went well. Thanks to all.
- The non–profit arm of this body, VSSTF, Inc., dba Ventura Homeless Prevention received \$50 from Ralphs and an additional amount from Amazon Smile. Sue will send an email with links to these programs again. If all signed up, we could keep many more people housed or help people get into housing.
- A new program is picking people up at Plaza Park at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays and taking them to One Stop. They get a bus pass for their trip back “home.”
- There is a new phone number for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Social Services countywide: 805–754–2089.

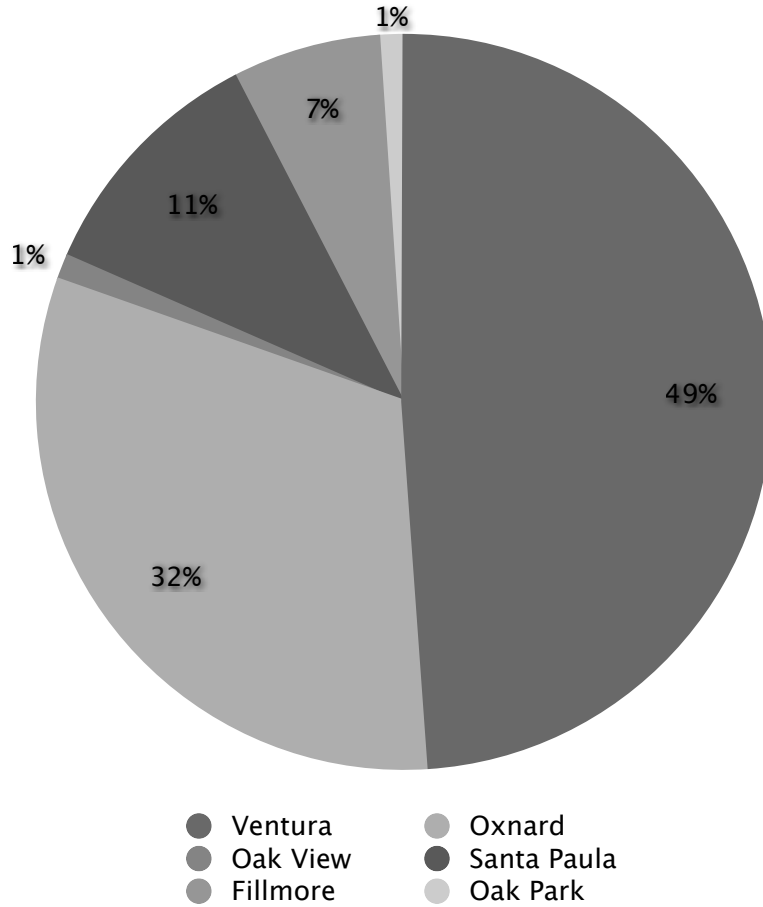
The meeting was adjourned at 5:18 pm.

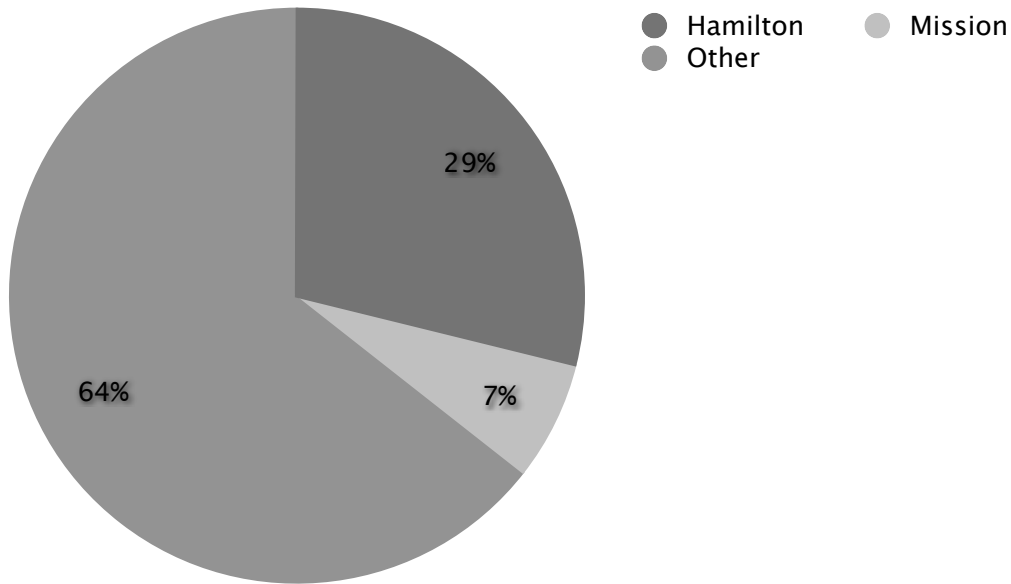
Next Meeting is June 3, 2015 at 3:15 at the Family to Family building, 303 N Ventura Ave #E.

Submitted by

Sue Brinkmeyer

Addenda # 1 Report prepared by Camilla Lee showing where H2H has housed people from Ventura from July 1, 2014 – April 30, 2015





Facts:

*Clients who enter the Ventura H2H program are generally from the City of Ventura and are reluctant to relocate, although in many cases they make the change.

*Case management challenges with clients being in other cities besides Ventura depend on the agency and how their staff structure is set up. For most agencies it is not a problem.

*What is being done? Continued relationship building with landlords, and property managers is effective, however soon our clients will be priced out of Ventura.

*Total Ventura H2H clients 67 households (some of which have more than one person)

*49% do get housed in the City of Ventura, but 36% of those are the Hamilton or the Mission Hotel.

Addendum #2 –

Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura

Numbers and types of housing as of 5/20/2015

Public Housing Units – 576

1,634 Vouchers – 1,286 Housing Choice Vouchers or HCV

95 VASH VA's Supportive Help

140 RAD Project Based Voucher or PBV

100 additional RAD PBV effective 6-1-2015

13 CoC (previously Shelter +Care)

Tax Credit Housing units	Soho	12 Family
	Encanto Del Mar	37 Family
	Chapel Lane	38 Senior/Disabled
	Vista Del Mar Commons	140 Senior/Disabled
	Castillo Del Sol (under construction)	38 Senior/Disabled
HACSB Non-Profit Properties	Rose Garden	14 Senior
	Vince Tri-plex	3 Family
	Olive St. Apartments	4 Family
	Seneca Condominiums	1 Family
	Saratoga Condominiums	4 Family
Non-PHA	1155 N. Olive St.	5 Family