

Monthly Meeting Minutes 2/1/17 3:15 pm

Ventura Social Services Task Force

300 N. Ventura Ave

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, Jerry Breiner, Peter Brown, Erin Locklear, Miguel Marquez, Kate Mills, Ron Mulvihill, Melissa Perezchica Ramirez, Karol Schulkin, Robert March, Sandra Troxell, Jennifer Harkey, Jim Duran, Jan Schmutte, Ben Unseth, Pam Marshall, Robin Lerner, Tony Serrano, Mary Haffner, Lynn Geller, Steven Karnazes, Sabrina Moore, Kathy Powell, Karyn Bates

- I. Call to order
 - Judy Alexandre emphasized that the VSSTF is not political group, but rather an advocacy group focused on the issue of homelessness
- II. Introductions
 - Ben Unseth - witnessed a disturbing trend for victims of domestic violence to normalize it
 - Multiple people noted that there is an immediate stigma related to homelessness that can cause prejudice
 - Steven Karnazes - Where will people go when the Winter Warming Shelter (WWS) closes?
- III. Approval of or changes to the agenda for 2/1/17 as emailed (MSC)
- IV. Approval of or corrections to the minutes of 1/4/17 as emailed (MSC)
- V. Treasurer's Report (Dave Schmutte)
 - Current account balance = \$3,837.51
- VI. New business:
 - Laura's law presentation (Mary Haffner)
 - Law intended to support Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT, i.e. front end treatment)
 - To reduce involuntary hospitalization and repetitive crisis events
 - Ventura County Board of Supervisors approved funding & implementation of the law in 3/2016
 - SAMHSA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) provided a \$4 million grant in 9/16 (\$1 million/year for 4 years).
 - Voluntary outreach to be run by Telecare
 - Trying to get clients to be partner in their own treatment
 - No housing associated with treatment
 - Treatment referrals must be from very specific groups:
 - Family, roommate, law enforcement, licensed therapist, hospital director, agency director
 - Treatment intended to last 6 months, but can be extended (w/court approval?)
 - Action: Forward any questions about program to Judy Alexandre, who will

compile and forward them to Mary Haffner.

- Report on the homeless count (Peter Brown, Jennifer Harkey, Tara Carruth)
 - Final report expected in 4/17, to be discussed at VSSTF May meeting
 - Survey data was sent to Urban Initiative
 - Jennifer Harkey & Tara Carruth led the effort in Oxnard
 - Most people were cooperative
 - Made effort to count people living in their cars
 - Peter Brown led Ventura effort
 - Had plenty of volunteers and was able to send overflow to help out in Oxnard
 - Homeless youth survey - Jennifer Harkey
 - Difficult because many volunteers called in sick
 - Did not see unsheltered youth, but found many couch surfers
 - Inquired as to circumstances leading to situation (fleeing violence or other)
 - Got additional surveys from juvenile probation and some of the local schools
- Plan for March Ventura City Hall meetings: talking points
 - Planning Commission meeting on 3/8/17 at 6 PM
 - To discuss the zoning plan for allowing shelter beds in Ventura
 - Need people to attend the meeting to support the new plan
 - Important to offer encouragement
 - Ventura City Council meeting on 3/20/17 at 6 PM
 - To vote on the zoning change
 - Mayor Nasarenko desires a unanimous decision
 - Need to develop a plan for a limited number of speakers to offer up non-repetitive talking points.
 - Will be a focus on the next VSSTF meeting in early March
 - Important to be positive and to thank the city council for taking action

VII. Old business:

- Winter Warming Shelter Report (Sandra Troxell, Salvation Army; Melissa Ramirez, HSA; Steven Karnazes, ATTI, operator of the shelter)
 - Steven Karnazes - for December and January
 - Total End Users (with at least 1 stay) = 430
 - Total Stays = 5,027
 - Total meals served = 10,054
 - On-Site Partner Service Agencies:
 - County of Ventura Human Services - Homeless Services: 4 nights/week
 - Salvation Army: 1 night/week
 - County of Ventura Community Services - Food Stamps, Medi-Cal, Veterans: 2 nights/week

- Ventura County Health Care Agency - The Mobile Clinic: 2 nights/week
 - Ventura County Behavioral Health: 1 night/week
 - FoodShare Donations catered meals are well received by the clients.
 - Safety: ZERO assaults on staff and clients.
 - Increased number of female clients (~35 beds lately)
- Sandra Troxell (Salvation Army)
 - Having successes at WWS
 - Housed 4 people at Salvation Army
 - 1 person permanently housed
 - Another person close to permanent housing
 - Reunited client with mother in Alabama
- Melissa Perezchica Ramirez
 - Social workers see 2-6 clients per evening
 - Served 8 families: 13 adults, 17 children
 - Got family into RAIN transitional living center
 - Also working with Lighthouse for Women & Children
- Peter Brown
 - Need \$30K to keep shelter open through February
 - Need additional \$75K to keep open through March
 - Fundraising this season is \$12K versus \$30K in 2015-1016
 - Still waiting for \$65K of Emergency Food & Shelter Program (EFSP) money (from Dept. of Homeland Security) promised last year
 - Peter covered this amount from local funding; doesn't expect to recoup his money even if the funding arrives
 - Total rental costs = \$50K
 - Ventura provided \$30K as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
 - Oxnard provided \$30K as CDBG
 - Only have \$14K on hand right now to pay January & February expenses
 - For every 5 clients at shelter:
 - 3 from Oxnard
 - 1 from Ventura
 - 1 from elsewhere
- Op-ed responses
 - Op-ed published on 1/15 in Ventura County Star
 - Getting good feedback
 - from Mayor Nasarenko and others
 - Robin Lerner wrote a Letter to the Editor which is being published
 - Still possible to respond to the op-ed with more letters.
- Sabbath Weekend (Rabbi Lisa, Rev. Jim Duran) - planned for 2/25 - 2/26
 - Video for presentation - "Finding A New Way Home"
 - To show what homelessness is about to temples/congregations

- To bring awareness
 - To help focus on the importance of getting permanently housed
- A link to the video will be provided soon for distribution
- Current recommendation to extend the period for discussing homelessness with congregations through 3/18/17
- Recuperative Care
 - Going to Board of Supervisors next Tuesday (2/7/17)
 - Looking for proposed approval of National Hospital Association and Salvation Army to offer recuperative care
 - Want a (TBD) number of beds for homeless people released from the hospital who need additional recovery time
 - Plan to offer assistance in finding housing while people are using the recuperative care service
 - Sandra Troxell will provide an update at next VSSTF meeting.

VIII. Reports:

- Faith Subcommittee (Pam Marshall)
 - Continuing to put out newsletter
 - Coordinating with churches around the city
 - Pushing outreach to get more people involved
- City of Ventura (Peter Brown)
 - Homeless subcommittee now Andrews, LaVere & Monahan
 - Next meeting on 2/9/17 at 4 PM
 - 139 Wall St. was red-tagged (declared not livable) yesterday
 - ~20 people lost housing
 - Will get money equal to 2 months of market rate rent
 - Leewood Hotel Fire (early January)
 - Residents have been getting their deposits back as well
- Continuum of Care Report (Jennifer Harkey)
 - Working on Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) applications for shelter, rapid rehousing or street outreach
- Project Understanding (Ben Unseth)
 - Operating a trial program for mobile showers
 - multiple agencies collaborating
 - going well so far
- Step Up Ventura (Judy Alexandre)
 - Need \$50K
 - Have agreement with Magic Carousel (Pre-school)
 - School is offering 3 classrooms for therapeutic treatment, trauma, special education
 - Hope to be operating by first week of April
 - 20 spots for 0-5 year old children experiencing homelessness
 - If this program is successful, potential to expand into Oxnard

IX. Other

- Kevin Clerici (downtown Business Partners Organizaton) and the Homeless Prevention Fund plan to run another booth during 4th of July Ventura Street Fair
 - Thanks to Kevin for being willing to pay for the booth.

X. Adjourn

XI. Next Meeting on 3/1/17, 3:15, 300 N. Ventura Ave Need someone to bring minutes and agenda's for guests.

XII. Meetings:

- Faith Subcommittee of VSSTF , Feb. 22, 3:00 pm Church of Christ (Bryn Mawr and Telegraph) Pam Marshall pojcat@verizon.net
- Family Promise, March 2, 7 p.m., Orchard Community Church, 8180 Telephone Rd (Telephone and Placid), Library Rick Pearson rpearson@rhetorick.com
- City Of Ventura Housing and Homeless subcommittee, Feb. 9, 4:00 pm City Hall?????
- Shelter, Housing and Services subcommittee of VSSTF 3:00 pm, Feb. 21, Orchard Community Church, library Ron Mulvilhill ron@housinginnovationsandsolutions.com
- Continuum of Care Housing and services and Income Sustainability Committees, Feb. 16, 10:a,-12 noon; Ventura County Community Foundation 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Camarillo Tara Carruth tara.carruth@ventura.org; Clyde Reynolds cbreynolds@roadrunner.com
- Homes for All contact John Sanders Jones johnsandersjones@gmail.com
- Homeless Prevention Fund contact Sue Brinkmeyer sbrink@glendale.edu; Brian Brennan brian.brennan@ventura.org
- other