

Monthly Meeting Minutes 1/4/17 3:15 pm

Ventura Social Service Task force (VSSTF)

Catholic Charities building, Family to Family Center

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, Jerry Breiner, Brian Brennan, Sue Brinkmeyer, Peter Brown, Kevin Clerici, David Deutsch, John Jones, Erin Locklear, Miguel Marquez, Arlene Martinez, Kate Mills, Ron Mulvihill, Melissa Ramirez, Miguel Rodriguez, Karol Schulkin, Steve Santini, Chris Russell, Robert March, Sandra Troxell, Manuel Minjares, Jason Meek, Jennifer Harkey

1. Call to order
2. Introductions
  - 2.1. Chris Russell - Indicated that a Permanent Supportive Housing Grant is coming in to support 25 individuals (not in one facility).
  - 2.2. John Jones - Mayor's Report released.
  - 2.3. Karol Schulkin - Westview Village Project groundbreaking on 2/2/17
3. Approval of or changes to the agenda for 1/4/17 as emailed (MSC, 2 abstentions).
4. Approval of or changes to the minutes from 12/7/16 as emailed (MSC, 2 abstentions).
5. Treasurer's report (Dave Schmutte)
  - 5.1. No report this month.
6. **New business:**
  - 6.1. Report on best practice and resources regarding mental illness and homelessness
    - David Deutsch
      - Focus on returning to kindness/dignity/respect
      - Need to work towards each individual's hopes/goals, not ours
      - Should be a collaborative process that uses county resources
    - Jason Meek
      - Need to be responsive (and quickly) when asked for help
      - Low/no-income & lack of affordable housing is major problem
      - Notes that you see reduction in mental health symptoms when people secure food & shelter
      - Need holistic care in primary care facilities that properly address mental health versus physical health symptoms
      - Need to get mental health care to people who need it (including those just coming out of prison)
      - Notes that Ventura actually does many things right
    - Discussion on Laura's Law
      - Need to have immediate answers when people ask for help (e.g. get into substance abuse programs immediately, not one month from asking for help)
      - How will we avoid losing track of people with no address?
      - Need to be able to keep track of people that get referrals for treatment.

- Too many barriers to get into programs
    - Need to already be sober or w/o symptoms, e.g.
    - Counterproductive
  - NAMI General Meeting on 1/10/17
    - 7:00-9:00 PM
    - 1320 Flynn Rd, Camarillo
    - Vineyard Community Church
    - Laura's Law Presentation
    - VCBH, Public Defender, Telecare
- 6.1.4. General discussion on fostering trust with people in need
- Repeated interactions and exposure help people get comfortable enough to ask for help
- 6.2. Sabbath weekend addressing homelessness (Rabbi Lisa; Jim Duran)
- Scheduled for last weekend in February (2/25 & 2/26)
  - Congregations are asked to deliver a short video and/or sermon/homily that focuses on homelessness and homeless education with a local perspective
    - Intended to be motivational/educational
  - Rabbi Lisa & Pastor Jim Duran are developing the materials
    - No update on current status
- 6.3. Report from the sheltering/housing and services subcommittee including survey update (Ron Mulvihill, Jerry Breiner)
- Jerry Breiner
    - Looking at locations in newly delineated zone.
    - 13 locations available, 5 being strongly considered.
  - Ron Mulvihill - Survey Monkey Response on Homelessness (advertised to Venturans mostly through various congregations)
    - ~145 responses to date
    - Based on responses, an op-ed piece has been drafted to summarize the results, incorporating survey comments
      - Intended as first of several articles in various local publications
      - To focus on people without housing or shelter
      - Hope to use it as a lead-up to the March Council Meeting
      - Current draft read aloud at meeting (MSC to approve in principle, 2 abstentions)
      - Requested for people to submit letters to editor as response to op-ed piece. Sign-up sheet was passed around.
        - General Message: We want sheltering and services with long-term housing
          - A more specific focus for letters will be provided by next meeting.

- 6.4. Judy Alexandre announced that the Magic Carousel Pre-School has gifted Step Up Ventura with 3 classrooms for providing trauma-informed childcare to homeless children ages 0-5..
- Condition is that service be made available to students at the school as well (e.g. daycare, mental health services)
- 6.5. Leewood Hotel Fire on 1/3/17
- Pushed 43 people out of housing.
  - Red Cross & Ventura Fairgrounds stepped up to provide relief.
  - ~23 people stayed at the Red Cross shelter.
  - Before residents can return, the property must be inspected for issues with lead and asbestos and repairs must be made.
  - Hotel has recently changed owners, and they appear ready to perform upgrades.

**7. Old Business:**

- 7.1. Winter shelter update and information (Steven Karnazes, Peter Brown, Kevin Clerici)
- Have raised about \$5K recently.
  - At current spend rate, funds will run out by 2/23-2/24.
    - Does not include EFSP grant money that may come in.
    - Still haven't been paid back for part of last years EFSP grant.
      - Held up by federal paperwork requirements.
  - Will require ~\$100K to keep the shelter open until 3/31.
  - It is hard for people in Ventura to get to the shelter even with bus passes (takes up to 2 hours to navigate between the 2 bus systems).
    - As a consequence, there are many people still sleeping outside in Ventura.
  - The solution is to have shelter and services in both Ventura and Oxnard.
    - It is especially difficult for people who are homeless, while still working, as they cannot get from Ventura to Oxnard for work at hours buses do not run.
- 7.2. Homeless count (Peter Brown, Tara Carruth or Jenn Harkey) - 1/24/17 (nationwide coordinated effort)
- Ventura - Training on 1/17 & 1/18 at noon & 5:30 PM at Ventura City Hall
    - Need 34 volunteers still (according to email from Peter Brown).
  - Oxnard - Training ?
    - Need 25 volunteers still (according to Jenn Harkey at meeting).
  - Homeless youth count is planned for 1/27
- 7.3. Report regarding the March City Council Meeting and the Stakeholders Task Group (Peter Brown, Neal Andrews, Karol Schulkin)
- Proposed zoning overlay is going to planning commission in February
- 7.4. Leadership of VSSTF (elect Chair and/ or co-chair, secretary)
- Judy Alexandre, Robert March & Steve Santini nominated for VSSTF board & were elected (MSC, 2 abstentions).

- 7.5. Faith subcommittee newsletter (Pam Marshall)
- Articles are written. It is currently being formatted and will be sent out soon. It includes an article on the Sabbath Weekend.
8. **Oral Reports:**
- 8.1. Continuum of Care Report (Tara Carruth, Jenn Harkey)
- No update.
- 8.2. Homeless Prevention Fund (Brian Brennan, Sue Brinkmeyer)
- The Fund is spending grant money received from the Ventura Federal Credit Union.
- 8.3. Family Promise (Robin Lerner)
- Recently received grant for \$2500. Three congregations appear nearly ready to sign up to be hosts; 10 additional congregations are needed.
- 8.4. Housing report from SVDP, Project Understanding, Turning Point Foundation, Salvation Army)
- Turning Point
    - # placed in housing in 12/2016 - 8
    - # housed for  $\leq$  6 months - 40
    - # housed for up to 12 months - 50
9. **Next Meeting**, Feb. 1, 2017; 3:15 ; 300 N Ventura Ave
- 9.1. Focus on
- Laura's Law
  - Prep for March City Council Meeting
10. Upcoming meetings:
- Faith Subcommittee of VSSTF, Jan. 25, 2017, 3:00 pm; Ventura Church of Christ (Bryn Mawr and Telegraph) Pam Marshall, [pojcat@verizon.net](mailto:pojcat@verizon.net)
  - Family Promise, Jan. 5; Orchard Community Church Library, 8180 Telephone Rd (Telephone and Placid), 7:00 pm.; Rick Pearson [rpearson@rhetrick.com](mailto:rpearson@rhetrick.com)
  - City of Ventura Housing and Homeless subcommittee, date not set, Neal Andrew, Deputy Mayor, chair
  - Shelter, Housing and Services Subcommittee, Jan. 17, 2017, 3:00 pm, Orchard Community Church Library, Ron Mulvilhill, [ron@housinginnovationsandsolutions.com](mailto:ron@housinginnovationsandsolutions.com)
  - Continuum of Care, Jan. 19, 2017, Ventura County Community foundation Building, 400 mission Oaks Blvd, Camarillo; 10:00-12:00 noon ; Tara Carruth [tara.carruth@ventura.org](mailto:tara.carruth@ventura.org)
  - VSSTF, Inc. (Homeless Prevention Fund), Jan. 18, 2017, 4:00 pm.; Unitarian Universalist Church, Ralston St.; Sue Brinkmeyer, [sbrink@glendale.edu](mailto:sbrink@glendale.edu) or Brian Brennan, [brian.brennan@ventura.org](mailto:brian.brennan@ventura.org)
  - Training for the Winter Warming Shelter, Jan. 7, 2017, 8:00 am- 12:00 noon at all Saints Episcopal Church, 144 S. C St, Oxnard Ca; Steven Karnazes, [atti@roadrunner.com](mailto:atti@roadrunner.com)