

Monthly Meeting Minutes 6/7/17 3:15 pm, 300 N. Ventura Ave. 93001

Ventura Social Service Task Force

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, Karyn Bates, Sara Bavar, Jerry Breiner, Brian Brennan, Gane Brooking, Peter Brown, Kevin Clerici, David Deutsch, Jim Duran, Sonja Flores, Jennifer Harkey, John Sanders Jones, Robert March, Miguel Marquez, Pam Marshall, Kate Mills, Manuel Minjares, Clyde Reynolds, Jan Schmutte, Karol Schulkin, Debora Schreiber, Tony Serrano, Cynder Sinclair, Barbara Suggs, Michele Surber, Sandra Troxell, Susan White Wood, Dana Worsnop

- I. Call to order
  - a. The Mercy House tour has been rescheduled for 6/29 or 6/30
- II. Introductions (brief statement about what you are doing to help end homelessness and/or thoughts about affordable housing in Ventura)
  - a. Sonja Flores - RFP for Veterans Home in Saticoy going out in mid-June
  - b. Jan Schmutte - asked about container homes as option for temporary housing
  - c. Pam Marshall - currently at crisis point for extremely affordable housing
  - d. Michele Surber - Want cities to join county in acknowledging homelessness problem & getting commitment towards concerted action
  - e. Karyn Bates - Oxnard is working on starting a Safe Sleep program
  - f. David Deutsch - Focusing on helping people just coming out of jail/prison
  - g. Kevin Clerici - 4th of July booth space is open, could have other groups use the space
  - h. Debora Schreiber - Believes that we need a paid position established to support to emergency shelter program in Ventura
  - i. Dana Worsnop - Safe Sleep in Ventura may be expanding (working with Salvation Army & City of Ventura on this)
  - j. Miguel Marquez - Currently developing a class for teaching how to work with people who have physical and/or mental disabilities. Tentatively scheduled for 8/21.
  - k. Jennifer Harkey - Having difficulty getting landlord engagement for using VASH (Veterans Administration Supportive Housing) vouchers.
  - l. Sandra Troxell - Recuperative Care starts on 7/5; Salvation Army is investigating expanding into permanent supportive housing'
  - m. Clyde Reynolds - Presenting a proposal to get a homelessness crisis declared in Ventura County
    - i. There is a huge gap between the amount of housing and the number of homeless people
- III. Approval of or changes to the agenda for 6/7/17 as emailed - MSC
- IV. Approval of or changes to the minutes of 5/3/17 - MSC
- V. Treasurer's report (Dave Schmutte)
  - a. No change to balance (\$3,837.51).
- VI. New business:
  - a) Budget cuts made or proposed (county, state, national) and probable impacts (Kate Mills) - After the discussion, Judy Alexandre summarized the conversation.

- a. Kate Mills presented a summary of the impact of proposed cuts to various social services - Judy Alexandre will distribute the summary via email.
  - i. We should be in disaster planning mode. How do we handle the “what ifs”?
  - ii. Be ready to pull together individuals and organizations
  - iii. Will not end homelessness with housing alone
    - 1. Concentrate on what causes homelessness
    - 2. Push to relax zoning requirements for creative housing options, like traditional developments, tiny homes,, container homes, reusing old rundown motels.
    - 3. Create jobs so people can afford housing
  - iv. Proposes establishing more focus groups for various issues (jobs, food housing, etc.)
  - v. In Ventura - 10.9% of population living in poverty
  - vi. Homeless people are either underdocumented or being pushed to other communities
    - 1. Ventura’s homeless count went down when other communities are increasing.
    - 2. The count is only a snapshot and not a full accurate count.
- b. Pam Marshall - Notes that the faith community will need to lead the way
  - i. Will have to talk publicly
- c. Judy Alexandre notes that the faith community needs to collaborate better
  - i. Asks if there is coordination between food pantries for scheduling hours
    - 1. It was noted that Food Share maintains a list with providers
      - a. Times are subject to change as they are managed by congregations & non-profits.
      - b. Judy agreed to contact Food Share and sent out the current list.
- d. Miguel Marquez - Proposes more town hall meetings at which multiple (and often related) issues are discussed
- e. Karol Schulkin - Need to apply lessons learned during previous crises & problem solving. Identify needs, resources and proposed solutions/actions.
- f. Gane Brooking - Important to note that the budget proposal is only a wishlist and extremely unlikely to be implemented
  - i. Others noted that many reductions could still happen, even if not at the draconian levels proposed.
- g. Jennifer Harkey - Advising cities to look at Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), and where the funding goes.
  - i. Medical/Medicaid cuts would likely not go into effect until 2020
    - 1. Gives some time to prepare
- h. Clyde Reynolds - Everyone needs to be more active

- i. Make sure that your government reps know how you feel.
  - ii. Look for non-government solutions.
- i. Judy Alexandre - Summary of discussion
  - i. We need to talk in multiple settings
    - 1. Be active.
    - 2. Maybe hold townhall meetings to develop community strategy.
  - ii. Services may be stressed/overused
    - 1. What is backup plan for the community when/if that happens?
  - iii. We need increased political involvement at all levels.
  - iv. Look at where cuts to services may happen.
  - v. There is a need for strategy for dealing with budget cuts.
  - vi. Don't just focus on the negative.
    - 1. How can we creatively solve issues outside of government?
  - vii. What is the action plan that VSSTF wants to take?
    - 1. What is our focus in the City of Ventura?
- b) Next Steps: Beginning Strategy planning for housing
  - a. Judy Alexandre starts by:
    - i. Noting that City of Ventura has a housing plan
      - 1. some parts implemented, others not
    - ii. asks: What do we want to do about very & extremely affordable housing?
    - iii. asks: What is our need?
  - b. Jerry Breiner says that we need zoning changes
    - i. Many commercial areas could change to residential/income zones
    - ii. The city permitted rezoning for the proposed shelter
    - iii. Investors would be interested if they were welcomed by the city
      - 1. Current zoning and policies are not welcome to investors.
  - c. Peter Brown - Now is the time to make zoning changes
    - i. City is currently going through General Plan Refinement (GPR) process
      - 1. Whereby elected officials make changes to land use
      - 2. Approved in next 18-24 months
  - d. John Jones - 2005 General Plan took an NGO first approach
    - i. Currently see 400-600 housing units coming online in the near term
      - 1. Have seen more units in last 18 months than previous 7 years, so some improvement in process
      - 2. New units are not extremely affordable, but people moving into them might open up some of the very & extremely affordable housing currently occupied
  - e. Clyde Reynolds noted that workforce housing is an approach to consider
  - f. Manuel Minjares - we need a statewide effort to coordinate over larger areas

- i. Also need to be aware of water issues
- g. Sonja Flores - Current GPR is proposing to remove residential use from some existing zones
  - i. This needs to be opposed.
- h. Judy Alexandre closed the discussion:
  - i. Housing Sub-committee & Continuum Of Care Housing Sub-committee are working on the problem
  - ii. Need to look at zoning changes to allow for mixed use
  - iii. Need to figure out how to influence city council regarding the GPR
  - iv. Be persistent - more people need to start attending every monthly city council meeting
  - v. Look at price points
  - vi. Be ready to address water issues
  - vii. Identify developers & encourage the city to cooperate with them
  - viii. Look at housing options
  - ix. Advocate for maintenance of the existing mixed-use zones in GPR.

VII. Reports:

- a) City of Ventura (Peter Brown)
  - a. Homeless Committee Meeting discussing:
    - i. Safe Sleep expansion
    - ii. Winter Warming Shelter status
    - iii. Day Storage Program - on Front St.
      - 1. **NEED VOLUNTEERS** every day, twice per day
        - a. 0800-1000 drop off
        - b. 1700-1900 pick up
      - 2. Only have 25 shifts covered of 61
        - a. need more commitments and volunteers
      - 3. Plan to provide training at the end of June
- b) City Stakeholders (Karol Schulkin)
  - a. Need to clarify city's intention on creating a year-round shelter
- c) Homeless Prevention Fund (Brian Brennan)
  - a. Have written checks worth \$8,900 to keep people in housing
  - b. Kept 16 adults & 7 children in homes recently
  - c. Fund down to \$1,400
  - d. ~1200 individuals kept out of homelessness over last 7 years
  - e. HPF participated in a mission fair at the Ventura Missionary Church.
- d) Shelter and Housing subcommittee of VSSTF (Ron Mulvilhill, Jerry Breiner)
  - a. Still addressing potential operators & tenants
- e) Faith subcommittee of VSSTF (Pam Marshall)
  - a. Will send out notice asking for volunteers for Day Storage Program
  - b. Keeping faith community informed on the shelter
  - c. Maintaining a blue book of resources (on the VSSTF website)

- i. <http://vsstf.org/misc-docs/2015%20Local%20Resources%20for%20Ending%20Homelessness.pdf>
      - d. Planning a workshop on how the faith community will participate in shelter
    - f) Agency updates... new news, events, appropriate client update information (numbers, program success). Brief
      - a. Turning Point
        - i. Housed 5 in May
        - ii. Kept 70 people in housing for 6 months
      - g) Housing Authority - Sonja Flores
        - a. RFP released in mid-June for veterans site in Saticoy
          - i. Proposals due in September
- VIII. Information: not participating in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Street Fair this year
  - a. Thanks to Kevin Clarici for putting out the funds to provide the booth.
  - b. Cannot participate due to illness, so another non-profit could step in.
    - i. Contract Kevin Clerici at the Ventura Downtown Partners if interested.
- IX. Other
  - a. There is a GoFundMe campaign for kitchen repairs at Catholic Charities.
    - i. Jan Schmutte will provide more details.
  - b. David Deutsch thanked the community for strong support during NAMI walk
  - c. VC Reporter is looking for nominees for a Hero Award
    - i. Harold Dale Cartlidge has been nominated & this should be seconded.
      - 1. Contact [editor@vcreporter.com](mailto:editor@vcreporter.com)
- X. Adjourn. Next Meeting is July 5, 3:15, 300 N. Ventura Ave
- XI. Meetings:
  - Faith Subcommittee of VSSTF June 28, 3 pm.; Church of Christ (Bryn Mayr and Telegraph). Pam Marshall [pojcat@verizon.net](mailto:pojcat@verizon.net)
  - Family Promise of W. Ventura County, July 6, 7pm. Orchard Community Church (Telephone and Placid) library, Rick Pearson [rpearson@rhetorick.com](mailto:rpearson@rhetorick.com)
  - City of Ventura Homeless and housing subcommittee, tentatively 4pm. June 14, city hall
  - Shelter and Housing subcommittee of VSSTF June 20, 3pm. Orchard Community Church, library Ron Mulvilhill [ron@housinginnovationsandsolutions.com](mailto:ron@housinginnovationsandsolutions.com) . Trip to Mercy House, Anaheim, June 8, 9 pm
  - Homeless Prevention Fund (VSSTF, Inc.) June 21, 4pm., Unitarian Universalist church, Ventura, Ralston Ave. Sue Brinkmeyer [sbrink@glendale.edu](mailto:sbrink@glendale.edu)
  - Continuum of Care Housing and Services subcommittee of the COC, June 15, 10am-12 noon; Ventura County Community Foundation building, 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd., Camarillo, Clyde Reynolds [cbreynolds@roadrunner.com](mailto:cbreynolds@roadrunner.com)
  - Homes for All, John Jones [johnsandersjones@gmail.com](mailto:johnsandersjones@gmail.com)
  - Justice for All, Economic Equity July 8, 9:30-11 am Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf (Main and Telephone)

Need volunteers to bring copies of agenda & minutes to the July and August meetings.