

Monthly Meeting Minutes 9/6/17

3:15 pm, 300 N. Ventura Ave, Ventura, CA 93001

Ventura Social Service Task Force

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, Jerry Breiner, Gane Brooking, Peter Brown, Kevin Clerici, Sonja Flores, Jennifer Harkey, John Jones, Robert March, Kate Mills, Manuel Minjares, Melissa Ramirez, Clyde Reynolds, Jan Schmutte, Karol Schulkin, Tony Serrano, Sandra Troxell

- I. Call to order
- II. Introductions
 - A. Kevin Clerici - There have been 146 successful reconnects (with family)
 - B. Melissa Ramirez - There are 2 new social workers at VC Homeless Services
 - C. Judy Alexandre - already getting applicants to Step Up Ventura
- III. Approval of or changes to the agenda for 9/6/17 as emailed - MSC
 - A. Karol Schulkin would like to add update about Oxnard Homeless Commission to agenda if there is time.
- IV. Approval of or changes to the minutes for 8/2/17 as emailed - MSC
- V. Treasurer's Report (Dave Schmutte) - Balance is \$3,271.46
- VI. Old Business
 - A. Discussion of talking points for v. affordable & extremely affordable housing
 1. Judy Alexandre read the letter that was sent to the Continuum of Care (CoC)
 - a) Notes that there is a meeting of the City of Ventura Homeless & Housing Subcommittee on 9/13 at 4pm at City Hall
 2. Kate Mills - we need to base our talking points on shared values
 - a) Provided a handout with suggested talking points
 - b) Noted that we need to join up with advocates of complementary issues (e.g. environmental, labor, farm worker rights)
 3. Jenn Harkey & Game Brooking suggested adding a value that focuses on caring for our aging population (i.e. seniors).
 4. Kate Mills - The proposed values become a preface to whatever we say about homelessness & housing.
 5. Clyde Reynolds - These values apply to all economic levels.
 - a) The working poor cannot afford housing in Ventura.
 - b) We need 26000 units of extremely affordable housing in Ventura.
 6. Judy Alexandre - We can target groups to help & frame their issues within the proposed values (e.g. homeless people, vets, families, elderly, disabled)
 7. Kate Mills - Notes that we are all in this together.
 8. Karol Schulkin - Silicon Valley campaign for housing has slogan "Housing for all, and we mean all."
 - a) UN Document - "Housing is a right, not a privilege."

9. Kate Mills - We need to be ready to emphasize solutions, not just talk about problems.
- B. Vote on talking points - MSC, with note to add a value regarding the elderly.
- C. Action Strategy
 1. Getting buy-in from other groups.
 - a) Clyde Reynolds - Need broad coalition of advocates
 - (1) County wide (Continuum of Care)
 - (2) Judy Alexandre - Our mission is to focus on Ventura.
 2. Judy Alexandre - We should include facts from CoC Crisis Resolution emergency language in our communications/presentations
 3. Judy Alexandre - someone besides herself should write Letters to the Editor & Op-Eds.
 - a) Manuel Minjares - will work to get letter written by City of Fillmore & also by Turning Point.
 - b) Judy Alexandre may also write something to be signed as a group.
 4. Need volunteers to speak at City Council about CoC crisis letter.
 - a) Need to speak at county supervisors' meetings as well.
 5. Talking to Chamber of Commerce about how the business community can help.
 6. Karol Schulkin - Consider the power of an individual's story.
 - a) Make things personal, but make sure that you get client permission before telling any stories.
 7. Clyde Reynolds - We need to have consistent attendance at open meetings to keep light on homelessness & affordable housing.
 - a) Judy Alexandre asked for (and got) volunteers to attend the next several months to attend City Council meetings:
 - (1) September - Sandra Troxell
 - (2) October - Melissa Ramirez
 - (3) November - Kate Mills
 - (4) December - Manuel Minjares

VII. New Business - Measure O Response

- A. Regarding the staff recommendations to the Measure O oversight committee
 1. Judy Alexandre - No money until 2020 about anything beyond simply policing homeless people
 - a) Nothing to help move people into shelters.
 - b) Would like to see 3.8% of O funds each year allocated as follows:
 - (1) \$250K/year - housing development
 - (a) Zoning changes, permits, waivers; all help with building extremely & very affordable housing.
 - (2) \$250K/year - sheltering
 - c) Many in faith community voted for O because it was addressing housing & homelessness

- d) Faith subcommittee of VSSTF proposes that the staff recommendations be rejected.
 - e) "People matter more than asphalt."
 - 2. Kevin Clerici - We need to provide details about how to use the proposed 3.8% to address housing & homelessness
 - a) Be careful about taking a hardline position, as it may marginalize VSSTF
 - b) Kevin is volunteering to help flesh out details on spending
 - (1) Jenn Harkey - CoC is looking at the costs to set up & operate a shelter
 - c) The City's position is that they will not be managing the shelter (whenever it is finally established)
 - 3. Judy Alexandre asked Kevin Clerici & Clyde Reynolds to work together to provide details to the Measure O Oversight committee on 9/21 (Kevin notes that this may not be possible to complete in time). Jenn Harkey will also assist.
 - a) Judy was told at the stakeholders' meeting that there would be \$500K set aside for addressing homelessness.
 - (1) No social services gave presentations at the Measure O meeting.
 - 4. Jerry Breiner - Measure O language indicates that it is intended to "Effectively address the issue of homelessness."
 - 5. Sandra Troxell - It feels like people don't care about this issue.
 - 6. Kevin Clerici - We need to start a narrative that Measure O is not fulfilling its mandate.
 - 7. Kate Mills - If we can get Measure O Oversight Committee to support our goals, then we can work on City Council
 - a) Advises against speaking at City Council without oversight committee support
 - 8. Karol Schulkin - This kind of new money can supplant what jurisdictions are already spending, instead of being extra money (which is the intent of the measure).
- B. Recommended responses/actions:
- 1. Went around the table asking for reaction to the proposed 5 year budget
 - a) In general, everyone expressed deep disappointment that the promise to work on housing & homelessness has been broken
 - b) Clyde Reynolds - We need to provide a plan with how to spend money effectively
 - (1) If we address homelessness, the need for Safe & Clean money should go down.
 - c) Melissa Ramirez - wants to know how the staff came up with the budget.

- d) Karol Schulkin - advocated strongly for the tax, and fears a repeat of what happened in Oxnard where no money went towards addressing housing/homelessness.
- e) John Jones - A failure to address housing/homelessness could affect public trust.
- f) Kevin Clerici - Supports call for funds to be set aside for permanent shelter
 - (1) There is a need to demonstrate the commitment of the community to working on homelessness
 - (a) Expand Riverhaven (capital costs)
 - (b) Initial funding could help entice a shelter developer
- g) Gane Brooking - Budget is a disgrace; Wants us to be vocal and fight.
- 2. Judy Alexandre summarized discussion. As a group, VSSTF:
 - a) Is not supportive of Measure O funding allocation as recommended to the oversight committee.
 - b) Wants specific percentage of budget for efforts to reduce homelessness
 - (1) Sinking fund for permanent shelter
 - (2) Funds for development of extremely & very affordable housing.
 - c) We want the city to address homelessness because that is why many people voted for Measure O.
- 3. Judy Alexandre - We need people to attend the 9/21 Measure O meeting
 - a) Judy has spoken to Mayor Nasarenko, and felt that her concerns were heard
 - (1) The mayor indicated support for redirecting funds to address homelessness.

VIII. Winter Warming Shelter (WWS) Status

- A. Sandra Troxell - No news on shelter.
- B. Karol Schulkin - News from City of Oxnard % Karl Lawson
 - 1. No determination of location for WWS as of 9/4
 - 2. Serious questions about readiness of Ventura armory
 - a) Upgrades might make the armory "too nice" for use as an armory (and consequently a shelter) anymore.
 - 3. Rumor that Oxnard armory may be phased out (by state)
 - a) Money invested in Ventura armory may be a sign that the Oxnard armory is going to be shut down.
 - 4. Oxnard will definitely not host WWS this year.
 - 5. May use a warehouse for WWS this year
 - a) Facility not yet secured; operator not yet chosen
 - 6. Still anticipating funding from Oxnard, Ventura, Ventura County
- C. Jennifer Harkey - working on finding a site for WWS
 - 1. Hard to find a location to lease

2. A County property would work (& be free), but haven't found anything suitable yet
 - a) A lot in Saticoy was proposed, but would require use of tents.
 - (1) Supervisor Bennett opposes the site for a number of reasons.

IX. Announcements

- A. Jan Schmutte - Family To Family fundraiser on 10/27 at Poinsettia Pavilion from 5:30 - 8:30 PM. Intended to cover various repairs.
- B. Kate Mills - Coffee & Conversations series sponsored by Ventura county libraries
 1. At E.P. Foster library on 3rd Monday of every month
 2. First event on 9/18, with Jason Meek presenting.
- C. Kate Mills - Ventura Region Community Conversations
 1. Intended to discuss vision for Ventura community.
 2. Meetings on 9/13. 9/27. 10/19.
- D. Jennifer Harkey - 9/16 from 9 AM - 12 PM is United Way Day of Caring
 1. Will be working on various repairs/improvements at Riverhaven.

X. Adjourn; Next meeting is October 4, 2017, 3:15 pm; 300 N. Ventura Ave.

XI. Meetings:

- A. Faith Sub Committee of VSSTF Sept. 27, 3:00 pm Church of Christ Bryn Mawr and Telegraph Pam Marshall pojcat@verizon.net
- B. City of Ventura Homeless and Housing Subcommittee City Hall, Sept 13, 4 pm
- C. Sheltering and Housing subcommittee of VSSTF Sept. 19 3:00 pm library of Orchard Community Church (Telephone and Placid) Ron Mulvillhill ron@housinginnovationsanadsolutions.com
- D. Homeless Prevention Fund Sept 20 4:00 PM, Unitarian Universalist Church (Ralston) new point person is Roland Barrio.
- E. Continuum of Care Housing and Services Committee Sept 21, 10am-12noon, Ventura community Foundation Building, 4001 Mission Oaks Blvd, Camarillo Clyde Reynolds cbreynolds@roadrunner.com
- F. Continuum of Care Board of Directors (Discussion and or Action on the Housing Resolution Sept 13, 1:00pm Ventura Community Foundation Building Tara Carruth tara.carruth@ventura.org
- G. Homes for All, check with John Jones johnsandersjones@gmail.com.
- H. Open mic at City Council Sept. 11