

Monthly Meeting Minutes 10/3/18  
3:15 pm, 300 N. Ventura Ave, Ventura, CA 93001

Ventura Social Services Task Force

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, Jerry Breiner, Brian Brennan, Gane Brooking, Kevin Clerici, Betsy Erickson, Sonja Flores, Jennifer Harkey, Iain Holt, Jeffrey Lambert, Robert March, Pam Marshall, Dina Pielaet, Kathy Powell, Melissa Ramirez, Clyde Reynolds, Laurel Robinson, Jan Schmutte, Karol Schulkin, Sandra Troxell, Michael Tweet, Dave Ward, Dana Worsnop

- I. Call to order
- II. Introductions (Name, Organization, brief sentence about 9/24 city council meeting or 1 concern)
  - A. Judy Alexandre - Saddened that it took a tragedy plus the potential for state money for progress to be made on shelter.
  - B. Kathy Powell - Proud of the speakers who went through the recent training.
  - C. Karol Schulkin - Thinks that advocacy work helped us make progress on various issues.
- III. Approval of or changes to the minutes for 9/5/18 as emailed - MSC
- IV. Approval of or changes to the agenda for 10/3/18 as emailed. - MSC.
  - A. Judy Alexandre - Added item about discussing how to recognize Neal Andrews' efforts. - MSC.
- V. Treasurer's Report - \$3076.46.
- VI. Quick summary from city council meeting on 9/24/18 - Judy Alexandre
  - A. Good turnout in audience.
  - B. Crisis declaration passed.
  - C. Approval for priority to be 6-month pilot program for winter/foul weather shelter with Oxnard.
  - D. Approval of funding for winter shelter.
    1. Understanding that Knoll Drive (site of proposed year-round shelter) renovations are ~\$4 million (some city, some county funding).
      - a) Renovations need to be completed before opening.
      - b) Unlikely to open before 9/19.
  - E. Countywide MOU (Memorandum of Understanding)
    1. Calls for every city in county to do their part to address homelessness.
      - a) Not expecting Oxnard/Ventura to do it all.
    2. Addresses year-round shelter & increasing housing.
    3. Oxnard, Ventura & the county have all signed on.
      - a) But not asking for other cities in county to help pay for their shelters.
  - F. Year-round shelter - Beginning discussions about using upper floors on Knoll Drive for transitional & supportive housing.
- VII. Quick follow-up on the educational workshop on 9/6/18 - Pam Marshall
  - A. Largest gathering on this subject ever in Ventura.
    1. City, county, police all had presence.
    2. 3 homeless speakers shared stories.

- a) Makes a difference for people to hear their stories.
  - B. Seeing more people getting involved.
    - 1. In VSSTF, faith subcommittee, more!
- VIII. Opportunity for input into General Plan (housing concerns) - Dave Ward & Iain Holt (lead planners from city)
  - A. Updating General Plan is multi-year (minimum 3) effort
    - 1. Trying to re-engage with community
      - a) Getting local feedback for 6 months before presenting findings to city council.
      - b) Partly to provide education about what the General Plan is.
      - c) Want to answer question "Where do we want to see growth occur?"
        - (1) Infill? Expansion?
    - 2. Since implementing previous General Plan in 2005:
      - a) New legislative mandates
        - (1) Cities need to address disadvantaged communities
          - (a) Ventura has 2 disadvantaged census tracts (both on west side)
    - 3. First phase is getting community feedback by 4/19.
      - a) What does state require us to do?
      - b) What does community want us to do?
      - c) What parts of 2005 General Plan still apply or need changing?
    - 4. After 4/19, start refining General Plan focus based on community input.
  - B. Pam Marshall - How will district elections affect General Plan?
    - 1. Dave Ward - Should be positive impact as it will give a voice to all parts of the city.
  - C. Dana Worsnop - Concerned about having more housing and more very & extremely affordable housing.
    - 1. Environmental concerns - water, traffic.
    - 2. Wants to see diversity of all kinds - economic, racial, ethnicity, education, etc.
    - 3. Wants to live in a humane city - the housing element can help reach this goal.
  - D. Laurel Robinson - need to address extremely affordable housing
    - 1. Need safe bathrooms for homeless people.
  - E. Clyde Reynolds - Look at alternative housing options
    - 1. Container houses, tiny houses, etc.
    - 2. Might require zoning changes.
  - F. Karol Schulkin - Need to involve affordable housing developers.
    - 1. Create natural spaces where communities can meet/gather, especially across socio-economic and other lines.
  - G. Pam Marshall - Will we get updates about the process?
    - 1. Dave Ward - Yes, they will communicate regularly.
      - a) Judy Alexandre - Any updates can be forwarded to mailing list.
  - H. Judy Alexandre - While looking at alternative housing, look at ways to help people create equity/ownership.

1. We have an increasing population with monthly income between \$600-1500.
  - a) They deserve quality homes too!
- I. Sonja Flores - Funding is often tied to minimum density (usually 30 dwellings/acre).
- IX. Representatives from the homeless community sharing actions that they are taking to change the Riverbottom living conditions - led by Kathy Powell
  - A. Lift Up Your Voice (LUYV) recently hosted speaker training
    1. 16 people - mostly homeless, but also some pastors.
    2. Core group of 6-7 - meeting at least monthly
      - a) Great mentors - Veronica James & Sue Brinkmeyer
  - B. Michael Tweet (one of trainees) - There is trash everywhere!
    1. Has been cleaning trails & camping spaces, river bottom.
      - a) He & his team have filled 800-900 trash bags.
      - b) Trying to self-organize.
        - (1) Want to help the city help the homeless community.
      - c) Public Health donating gloves, bags, dust masks.
      - d) Having success in getting river bottom folks cooperate.
    2. Homeless community has issues with sanitation & hygiene.
      - a) Michael Tweet - got ill from exposure to trash dust.
        - (1) Need supplies.
  - C. Kathy Powell - Talking about forming a homeless community council.
    1. Hope to create partnerships.
  - D. Judy Alexandre - asks Jeff Lambert to get Michael Tweet onto Council agenda to talk about how to empower people.
    1. Kathy Powell - Need to be careful to not overexpose our homeless neighbors.
      - a) Sometimes heat comes with visibility.
  - E. Judy Alexandre - Asked Michael Tweet to tell us how we can help.
  - F. Dina Pielat - What happens to the trash?
    1. Michael Tweet / Jeff Lambert - Safe & Clean program collects it.
  - G. Michael Tweet - 3M masks would be really good at protecting people doing cleanup.
  - H. Pam Marshall - This sort of engagement does lots to humanize homeless people.
- X. Reports
  - A. City of Ventura - Jeff Lambert
    1. City endorsed Foul Weather Shelter (FWS), not Winter Warming Shelter
      - a) Not a permanent solution, but still a game changer.
      - b) Oxnard owns their armory now (Ventura doesn't)
      - c) Pilot shelter for 4-6 months.
        - (1) Expect Oxnard to approve in October (secretary's note - approved on 10/16)
        - (2) 100-110 person capacity
        - (3) 24/7 operations with services.
        - (4) Funding by county/Oxnard/Ventura - \$550K - split evenly
          - (a) Ventura funding suggested to come from Measure O funds

- (5) Will be call to faith leaders & broader community to support (donations, volunteers, etc.)
- 2. Year-round shelter
  - a) Need \$4 million tenant improvements (conservative estimate)
    - (1) To accommodate men, women, couples, pets.
  - b) City and county will split costs.
    - (1) County may fund up front & get paid back over time.
  - c) Best case would be opening in 12 months (9/19)
  - d) Operators - Interviewed 3 candidates.
    - (1) Hope to select operator in October.
      - (a) \$1.2 million/year to run shelter.
        - (i) Split evenly between city/county
    - (2) Asked each candidate about running pilot FWS
      - (a) All said maybe - required more details.
  - e) Shelter will cost considerably more than initially approved.
    - (1) Still need final funding decision once more details are worked out.
  - f) Dina Pielat - Why can't we renovate the whole building?
    - (1) Jeff Lambert - Need to take an incremental approach.
      - (a) We want to use the whole building, but it is too much money to do so right now.
- B. Continuum Of Care (CoC) - Jennifer Harkey
  - 1. 2 great opportunities (see website) - Requests for Proposals (RFPs)
    - a) California Emergency Solutions and Housing (CESH) - for shelter, street outreach, prevention
      - (1) Recommendations to CoC board next Wednesday.
    - b) Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) - emergency funds to be expended by 6/21 - One time fund
      - (1) Creative housing & shelter solutions.
      - (2) Trying to spread word about this funding.
      - (3) Jurisdictions can apply for funding if it goes to shelter operators.
  - 2. Applications submitted to HUD for domestic violence funding.
  - 3. Laurel Robinson - creative housing comments
    - a) Be aware of lessons learned from disaster relief efforts.
      - (1) E.g. Toxic trailers.
- C. Salvation Army / Safe Sleep - Sandra Troxell
  - 1. Still working to expand Safe Sleep, but confident that it will happen.
  - 2. Kathy Powell - Keely Brown is operating showers for safe sleepers 2x/week.
    - a) [www.thesoapbox.love](http://www.thesoapbox.love)
- D. Honoring Neal Andrews - Judy Alexandre
  - 1. Asking for 3 people to form committee
    - a) Brian Brennan proposes naming the year-round shelter after Neal.
- E. Homeless Prevention Fund - Brian Brennan

1. Got \$9k from Family Promise last month.
2. Kept 5 households (7 adults & 5 children) from homelessness in September.
3. Since 2007, HPF has kept 471 households (736 adults & 485 children) in their homes.
4. Average cost per household has risen to \$1001.
5. On average, assisted households are paying 56% of income in rent, with average rent of \$1184.

XI. Adjourn: Next meeting is **November 7, 2018, 3:15 pm, Catholic Charities Building.**

XII. Meetings:

- A. Shelter and Housing VSSTF Sub-Committee - 11/20, 3pm Orchard Community Church library Telephone and Placid. Contact Judy Alexandre, [judyalexandre@gmail.com](mailto:judyalexandre@gmail.com) . Committee needs a chairperson. If interested in the meeting contact Judy.
- B. VSSTF Faith subcommittee - 11/28, 3pm Seventh Day Adventist Church conference room Pam Marshall [pam@pojcat@verizon.net](mailto:pam@pojcat@verizon.net)
- C. Homeless Prevention fund, VSSTF Inc. - TBD, contact Sue Brinkmeyer for information at [sbrink@glendale.edu](mailto:sbrink@glendale.edu)
- D. Homes For All - by invitation John Jones [johnsandersjones@gmail.com](mailto:johnsandersjones@gmail.com)
- E. Continuum of Care - contact Tara Carruth at [tara.carruth@ventura.org](mailto:tara.carruth@ventura.org) for date and time and location or go on their website for complete information
- F. Ventura City Council Open mic, city hall 1st Monday of the Month