

Monthly Minutes 11/4/2020 @ 3:15PM. via Zoom video Chat

Ventura Social Security Task Force

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, Jerry Breiner, Brian Brennan, Sue Brinkmeyer Jane Brooking, Kyler Carson, Kevin Clerici, Jim Duran, Jaydon Gaines, Jennifer Harkey, Meredith Hart, Brian Hollander, Jacob Lesne-Buxton, John Jones, Pam Kelley, Mary, Kerrigan, Miguel Marquez, Pam Marshall, Clyde Reynolds, Jan Schmutte, Rafael Stoneman, Juan Torres, Summer Ward, Susan White Wood, Late arrival – Elizabeth R Stone. There may be two others whose name I did not catch

I. Call to Order: Judy Alexandre

II. Logistics – Kevin Clerici

III. Approval of Minutes: Move to approve: Kevin Clerici & Seconded: Jerry Breiner

IV. Approval to add item to Agenda – Add Palm Ave/ Upper Avenue Parking. Move to approve Kevin Clerici, Second: Jenn Harkey.

V. Financial Report: No Change from last month - \$2,356.46. Prob won't spend funds until we have a need for another workshop

VI. Report on letter from Homes for All and VSSTF need for affordable housing overlay and the City's update to the Housing Element and allowing "by right" housing permits to identified parcels. Judy thanked Kyler Carson, Karen Flock, Sonja Flores and several others in the housing business. Was to go to city on Monday but will hold for a couple days if agencies or individuals want to sign (Kyler Carson)

- Question - why was it not distributed to whole list? Didn't ask government agencies, and didn't want it to reach the city before we send it
- Judy thanked Kyler Carson, Karen Flock, Sonja Flores and several others in the housing business
- Was to go to city on Monday 11/9 but will hold for a couple days if agencies or individuals want to sign

VII. Upper Avenue Parking - Discussion about Board of Supervisors letter regarding RV and car camping permitting along Palm Drive. Brian Brennan reported.

- Informal overnight area for RVs and car camping set up after Thomas Fire. Police even refer people there.
- Due to COVID 19 and using CDC & CA guidelines, the effort focuses on not having people moving around the county. Also lawsuits in LA and Orange County re nowhere to go for vehicles
- It is a 12-month program that will have a second reading 11/10/2020 and should start on 12/01/2020 if passes.
- People will have to be registered with the city. There will be sanitation, fire and trash and in designated parking areas.
- There will be a mobile pumping truck for registered vehicles.
- Backpack Medicine for HCH meets on Thursday 1-5 PM; With a shower pod.
- *Possible Future Agenda Item – Permanent RV parking in the city for people with low incomes*
- The sheriff & Highway patrol have jurisdiction over the area, not the City of Ventura.

VIII. Agency Updates:

- Homeless Prevention – (Sue Brinkmeyer) - Report included as an appendix. After the meeting Sue discovered the need for a volunteer to do correspondence especially thank you letters to donors.
- Tender Life – (Jim Duran) 25th baby in 3 years; Associate Managers has moved out due to marriage; A former City Center resident has moved into her position; They have one opening at Tender Life. City Center has 3 opening and is renovating 3 rooms. They will have 6 rooms by the end of December. City Center will have had 17 people move into permanent housing this year!
- Salvation Army (Juan Torres) – not ready to report yet
- Step -up Ventura – (Mary Kerrigan) – The program supports places in preschools for children; Ages 0-5 years who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Easter Seals preschool has a waiver from Public Health to operate but Happy Ventures is not yet starting up. Step up has 4 families in the Easter Seal site now. They would like some support from people for the following – work with individual children in the classroom and family support, also enrichment programs – music, cool, storytelling, gardening, etc. Right now volunteers would be Zoom but eventually in person.
- Turning Point – Try next month

IX. Regular (and important reports and information)

- City of Ventura, Safe and Clean, Housing and Homeless Committee (Meredith Hart) – Peter Gilli, Director of Community Development mentioned he has a capacity and staff program and was to reported on inclusive housing. Didn't. He will report during the 30 November meeting or January. The Subcommittee will have 2 new members at the next meeting.
 - School district – trying to get wifi and computers for children without homes
 - There are increasing fires in the river bottom - 6 fires/week; the city is doing an education program and fires reduced for a week then increased again.
 - The city identified 2 locations for people to meet emergency crews to lead the crew to the site of the emergency: (1) Landing at Main Street Bridge and (2) Santa Clara River Bottom near River Haven w a possible third at Emma Woods.
 - Encampment Cleanup – by 10/28/2020, got four 30-ft roll off containers at ONE camp.
 - Reinstated the once a month trash collection. Names on the bag had a good return of the filled bags
 - The city is developing a Policy & Procedure system with a point system to determine which sites to clean up. Increased points for permanent structures, abandoned camps, proximity watershed or depressions. They won't take people's stuff but will clean out the site. The city contacts the person four times before cleaning up. Tent & Tarp permitted.
 - Foul Weather Shelter – The city had \$15k and \$10k from unused CBDG funds from Mercy House. This will allow coverage for only 8 nights. The city is going to use 20 rooms/night. The people will be processed at The River Church and transported to Motel 6. The trigger criteria will be 48-hours ahead – ½" of rain OR less than 40 degrees F. Client room criteria – 65+ or chronic health issues. If there are extra

spaces other people will be housed. Volunteer Opportunities: The city could use 6 volunteers from 3-7 PM Also - direct donations/ Sponsor a hotel room \$110/ night.

- Stay Warm Packs – for those who don't get rooms. Volunteer Opportunity – looking for groups that will furnish needed items: Blankets, Poncho, Socks, Toiletries Meredith will create a flyer. People can drop everything the people at the ARCH will sort the clients
- Continuum of Care - (Jen Harkey) Room Key is still at full capacity of 150 people through 30 December, expecting FEMA to provide an extension. Also waiting for HUD to release NOFA Grant funds. Area Agency on Aging is providing meals and food to people who want it. Whole Person Health care is providing case management and Behav health is helping. Still taking applications and go through the regular channels, 211, Turning Point, etc.
 - Homeless Count – They have no idea how it will work; it will probably be an observational vs. full count, probably the end of January, Lean heavily on staff not volunteers, 3,000 Bombas Socks
- Vulnerable Populations Housing Network (Clyde Reynolds) - Efficiency Housing Task Force – looking at Tiny Homes, The Merriweather property is now unavailable.
 - Vagabond hotel in Oxnard is proceeding
 - Developing a partner for the Quality Container Housing development in Oxnard. Working with Mercy House
 - Determining which county cities have an inclusionary housing plan & internet site
 - Develop model template for inclusionary housing for cities w/o a plan.
 - Backing off on asking for waiver of government impact fees even for low income providers. Cities rely on those funds
 - Looking at each city's housing element updates – Camarillo is pretty open, other cities are hard to find (not as open or are not doing it).
 - Looking for groups like VSSTF in other cities to work with
 - Tentative Meeting of Task Force Steering Committee and Vulnerable Populations Advisory Network during 3rd week of November
- Action Ventura County – 5 Christmas Shops one will be at Orchard Church - Toy collection is going on servings 300 low income families
- Project RAIN is seeking individual supporters to adopt a family or single for the holidays Contact Libby Garcia

X. Seeking Nominations for 2021 Chair, Co-chair & Vice Chair – Need nominations for Chair, Co-chair & Vice Chair; Rob March will continue as Secretary (Kappy Paulson & Sue Brinkmeyer will back up)

XI . Future Agenda item – Permanent RV Parking area for folks who want to stay in vehicles. Loke Safe Sleep w/o requitement to be seeking housing.

XII Move to adjoin by John Jones and seconded by Susan White Wood

Addendum 1 Report to VSSTF from Ventura Homeless Prevention 2020

Ventura Homeless Prevention continues to do the work we began in 2007, keeping residents of the City of Ventura in their homes by paying up to \$1,500 one time for rent they temporarily are unable to pay due to loss of pay or to large medical or car repair bills. Case managers at our partner agencies make sure those we help will be able to pay their own rent in the future and help them overcome ongoing financial challenges through improved budgeting and better utilization of assistance programs for which they qualify, such as food banks, low-income utility rates, and free phones. As a result, over 90% of those we help remain in their homes one year later.

The year 2020 started out normally, with Ventura Homeless Prevention helping five households in January and four in February. We had helped two households in March when the lockdown began and large numbers of people lost their jobs. Some were able to continue to pay rent using expanded unemployment funding or rental relief funding that became available through the CARES Act and County programs. Others who sought rental assistance had no way to pay their rent going forward and so did not qualify for immediate help. However, they were protected from eviction by various local, state, and federal eviction moratoriums, and we provided them with the information and forms they needed to qualify for that relief. We continued to pay rent, as always, for those who had returned to work or overcome their temporary financial setback and so could pay their rent going forward if we helped one time; on occasion we helped with back rent up to our maximum of \$1,500 when that was necessary in order to keep people eligible for the moratoria. We assisted one household in April, three in July, one in September and one in October.

We are grateful for the donations that have allowed us to help seventeen households this year, keeping a total of 21 adults and 15 children in their homes. Sixty of the households we helped were extremely low income, 35% were very low income and 5% were low income. Together they paid an average of 62% of their income for rent. The average cost so far this year has been \$1,154 per household, or \$545 per person.

We have about \$25,000 on hand, far less than what we anticipate will be needed to handle all of the need we anticipate will come our way once the various moratoria expire. We have prepared policies that we hope will allow us to help the greatest number of people when that occurs, taking into account, for example, the requirement under AB 3088 that, in order to be protected forever against evictions for rent missed from September through December 2020, people must have paid 25% of their rent for those months and staying aware of other programs that have been or will be established to help during these extraordinary times.

Addendum 2

Volunteer Opportunities

Step up Ventura – Preschool program for families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with children aged 0–5 years. ***Need enrichment providers*** to work with families via Zoom now and in person later. Could be storytelling, gardening, cooking, arts and crafts, whatever. Also, ***eventually onsite assistance*** with the children to help them settle down while at school during their chaotic lives. Website is <https://www.stepupventura.org/contact>

City of Ventura – Safe and Clean and Homelessness & Affordable Housing Subcommittee – Contact Meredith Hart at mhart@cityofventura.ca.gov

- Emergency Winter Shelter volunteer staffing, Shelter triggers when forecast is for more than ½ inches of rain OR temp goes below 40 degrees. Setup starts 48 hrs before forecasted event.
 - ***intake at River Church*** – 6 people needed – Set up from 3-7PM
 - Clients qualify for room if over 65 OR have underlying medical condition; Lineup starts @ 5:00PM, unclaimed rooms go to first come first served
 - ***transportation needed*** to the Motel 6 from River Church, masked & windows open okay.
- Emergency Winter Shelter Funding – ***fund 1 room 1 night for \$110***. Donate through The River Church. The city has enough funding to support 8 night of 20 people/night. This winter is forecasted to be extremely cold but not as rainy.

- Stay Warm Packs – for people not making the cut of the first 20 – Packs include Blanket, poncho, jackets, socks, toiletries. *Looking for groups who will buy of these items in lots (prefer 100 and okay with smaller lots) Drop off at the ARCH*

VSSTF – Homeless Prevention Fund – Keeps people who are already in housing manage a temporary setback by paying \$1500 for one months rent. They *need a person who will write thank you notes to donors*. Contact Sue Brinkmeyer.

Project RAIN - Since 1997, RAIN Transitional Living Center (RAIN) has provided housing and services to families and single adults in Ventura County, to help with the transition from homelessness to permanent housing. They are looking for folks who will *adopt a family or individual for the holidays*. Contact Libby Garcia at lgarcia@raincommunities.org at (805) 816-3057

ACTION VC is a different kind of non-profit in Ventura County. We are individuals, churches, businesses and agencies who come together to serve the vulnerable in our communities. Throughout the year, we connect volunteers with local service projects Our annual events, Love VC and Community Christmas Shoppe, meet the needs of thousands of under-resourced seniors, low income families, and people with disabilities.

Orchard Church on Telephone is one of 5 sites in Ventura. They plan to serve 300 low income families. *Need toys*. If individuals want to donate a toy, contact judyalexandre@gmail.com

Holiday Meal Offerings

- River Church – Have 100 full Turkey dinners in a box. Sign up on website <https://therivercommunity.org/thanksgiving-basket-registration/>
- River Church also has bags of groceries anytime. Given out ~ 300 since March 2020. Register, same as above
- Community Presbyterian – Reaching out to Pantry users for boxed dinner
- Salvation Army – will be giving out dinners (I think, couldn't hear the speaker well) not sure if they are limiting recipients

Addendum 2 – Volunteer Opportunities

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Addendum 3

Flyer for Needed Items for the Stay Warm Packs during Foul Weather