

Monthly Meeting Minutes 2/3/21

3:15 pm, via Zoom video chat

Ventura Social Services Task Force

Attendees: Denise Adams, Judy Alexandre, Jerry Breiner, Emily Bridges, Gane Brooking, Tara Carruth, Kyler Carlson, Kevin Clerici, Amanda Cruz, Jim Duran, Jaydon Gaines, Meredith Hart, Mike Johnson, John Sanders Jones, Pam Kelly, Kelly Kivlahan, Jacob Lesner-Buxton, Staci Mallett, Robert March, Miguel Marquez, Pam Marshall, Sandra Meyer, Carl Morehouse, Kappy Paulson, Jessica Petrillo, Justin Ruhs, Chris Russell, Jan Schmutte, Elizabeth R. Stone, Rafael Stoneman

- I. Welcome & Introductions - Judy Alexandre
- II. Call to order - Judy Alexandre
- III. Approval of the agenda for 2/3/21 - MSC
- IV. Approval of the minutes for 1/6/20 - MSC
- V. Treasurer's Report - Jan Schmutte
 - A. Current balance - \$2,316.40 (no change).
- VI. **VSSTF still requires a co-chair. Seeking a volunteer to step up!**
 - A. Email judyalexandre@gmail.com if interested.
- VII. Update from City Council - Mike Johnson (city council member)
 - A. Currently only 6 council members (of 7)
 1. Potential for appointment/election of new member from district 4
 - B. Goal setting meeting on 1/25
 1. Strong support to accelerate timetable for inclusionary housing and affordable housing plan.
 - a) Want to complete prior to 10/2021, when the next housing element is due
 2. Expect report on meeting from city staff by 2/8
 3. No formal motions taken.
- VIII. Update on Shelters in Ventura (The Arch, Turning Point, Salvation Army)
 - A. The ARCH - Staci Mallett
 1. Lots of work during the latest pandemic surge.
 2. Housed 19 people:
 - a) Got own apartments
 - b) Diversion (family reunification)
 - c) Skilled nursing facilities
 3. Total current capacity is 32
 - a) 25 currently sheltered
 - b) 5 beds are open for men right now
 - c) New arrivals have to be quarantined in respite room
 4. Need more Zoom-based interactive programs
 - a) E.g. life skills, interview skills, resume writing
 5. No physical volunteers currently allowed at the shelter

- 6. Always need men's/women's underclothing, hygiene items
 - 7. Kappy Paulson - What are the plans for the upper stories?
 - a) Meredith Hart - 2nd - 4th floors are not appropriate for overnight use
 - (1) Planning to research construction upgrades for the 3rd floor.
 - (2) 2nd floor may be usable for social service providers to have offices
 - B. Salvation Army - Sandra Meyer
 - 1. Shelter in lockdown - first 2 COVID positive results.
 - a) Not taking in new people until the quarantine period is done.
 - (1) Have a couple of beds open.
 - 2. Recently housed 7 people (4 permanently in own apartment, 2 reunited with family, 1 in transitional setting)
 - 3. Street outreach & rapid rehousing programs are still active.
 - 4. No rental assistance is currently available.
 - C. City Center - Jim Duran
 - 1. 3 open rooms - for families with children under 12
 - 2. 1 bed open at Tenderlife Maternity Home
 - a) For a homeless person who is pregnant or has just delivered a baby.
- IX. Update on Winter Weather Response Plan (formerly Foul Weather Shelter) - Meredith Hart
- A. Activates when temperatures fall below 40°F or there is >½" of rain overnight.
 - 1. Activated 3 times from 1/25 to 1/29. Unitarian Universalist Church of Ventura provided the meals for these nights.
 - a) 22 individuals on first night
 - b) 24 rooms with 26 people on the second night.
 - c) Gave out 45 Stay Warm Packs.
 - d) Had plenty of River Church volunteers. Thanks to the church for use of their space!
 - 2. Currently need: beanies, tarps, hand warmers (for more warming packs)
 - a) Meredith Hart is sending supplies to River Community Church instead of The ARCH.
- X. Approval of VSSTF Goals for 2021 - Judy Alexandre
- A. Goals sent out in a email on 1/27
 - 1. MSC latest version.
 - 2. These goals will drive VSSTF advocacy in 2021.
 - B. Ventura City Council needs to receive letters (from more than just the usual organizations and people).
 - 1. Ask for implementation of our short term housing goal
 - a) Expand the City of Ventura's current inclusionary housing policy to include new rental projects citywide. Projects would be required to provide 15 percent affordable units as follows: 5% very-low income and 10% low-income.
 - 2. Jerry Breiner suggested sharing the email addresses for all of the city council members with the VSSTF mailing list

- XI. Initial plan for achieving goals discussion (some of the goals) including update on work done by Veronica Garcia and Jerry Briener (Judy Alexandre)
 - A. No update.
- XII. Report on current housing legislation (Conner Finney, YIMBY)
 - A. No update.
- XIII. Reports
 - A. City of Ventura - Meredith Hart
 - 1. Eviction question - state moratorium extended to 30 June.
 - 2. General Plan update
 - a) Ended discovery phase
 - b) Schedule:
 - (1) 2021 - Winter-Spring - Visioning plan
 - (2) 2021 - Summer-Fall - Alternatives
 - (3) 2022 - Winter - Policy Development
 - (4) 2022 - Spring-Fall - Plan Development
 - (5) 2023 - Winter - Review and Adopt Final Plan
 - 3. River Bottom fires - still happening
 - a) Suspected to be arson.
 - b) City (& county) are doing brush removal
 - (1) Cleared brush to 100' away from River Haven as a fire break.
 - c) Reaching out to river bottom communities to let them know when fires are near.
 - 4. Safe & Clean, Housing & Homelessness subcommittee
 - a) New membership: Mike Johnson, Lorrie Brown, Doug Halter
 - B. Continuum Of Care - Tara Carruth
 - 1. Alliance meeting held last week - well attended
 - a) Discussed vaccines for congregant settings and service providers.
 - (1) Have seen recent outbreaks at shelters.
 - 2. Project Room Key - for 65+ or those with serious health conditions.
 - a) FEMA will now fund many COVID initiatives at 100% (normally 75%) **retroactive to the beginning of the pandemic.**
 - (1) Funding levels are good through September.
 - b) 200 people in the program, and still taking referrals.
 - c) Pushing hard to advocate for those in the program.
 - 3. Eviction Moratorium
 - a) Federal government made rental assistance available to communities.
 - b) State rental assistance - opting into the program
 - (1) But feels too much like a landlord assistance program
 - (2) However, citizenship is not asked when requesting assistance
 - 4. Grant Funds
 - a) Federal government auto-renewed all current grants, which are normally competed.
 - b) Homeless Housing, Assistance, & Prevention (HHAP) Program

- (1) Submitted application for funding (joint application by county and CoC).
- (2) Priority on rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing.
- (3) Working to develop local applications.

C. Vulnerable Populations Housing Advocacy Network - Judy Alexandre

1. Efficiency housing subgroup - meeting on 5 February.

a) Discussing:

- (1) Container homes in Oxnard
- (2) Ordinances
- (3) Tiny homes

2. Larger group meeting planned for March.

XIV. Adjourn meeting.

Next meeting is 3 March, 3:15PM on Zoom.