

Monthly Meeting Minutes 10/6/21

3:15 pm, via Zoom video chat

Ventura Social Services Task Force

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, Jerry Breiner, Brian Brennan, Sue Brinkmeyer, Kyler Carlson, Kevin Clerici, Jim Duran, Sonja Flores, Cary Glenn, Jennifer Harkey, Doug Jensen, Mike Johnson, Pam Kelley, Jacob Lesner-Buxton, Robert March, Pam Marshall, Maria Navarro, Kappy Paulson, Jan Schmutte, Summer Ward, Susan White Wood

- I. Welcome & Introductions - Judy Alexandre
- II. Call to order - Judy Alexandre
- III. Approval of the agenda for 10/6/21 - MSC
 - A. Judy Alexandre and Jennifer Harkey have announcements to make.
- IV. Approval of the minutes for 9/2/21 - MSC
- V. Treasurer's Report - no change - \$2,316.46
- VI. Follow-up and action plan to the Housing Element that is to be submitted (Sonja Flores).
Sharing of action taken in the name of VSSTF and plan/needs of future action.
 - A. Peter Gilli gave update on Housing Element at recent workshop
 1. Covered basics.
 2. Responded to talking points.
 - a) We want more committed language and date commitments from the city.
 3. Ventura doesn't have enough funds for all of the recommendations.
 - a) Sonja Flores - Then Ventura should choose a few and assign dates.
 - b) Housing Element v1.0 versus v2.0 (likely in 8 years)
 - (1) Make commitments now in v1.0.
 - B. Sonja Flores - We need to ask for dates and commitments.
 - C. VSSTF sent our letters and recommendations for the Housing Element along to the Housing & Community Development Department for CA (HCD).
 1. Almost no changes made in Housing Element v1.0.
 - a) No changes to the 5 most important recommendations (of 11 offered)
 2. We need to follow up with HCD to let them know that no significant changes have been made to the Housing Element.
 - D. Kyler Carlson - Within one week, HCD should provide comments to the Housing Element draft that the city submitted to the state.
 - E. Mike Johnson - Feels that the Housing Element draft is noncompliant with state law.
 1. V2.0 did not get a budget.
 2. HCD is unfortunately certifying lots of noncompliant housing elements.
 - a) One consequence of noncompliance is that developments would be required to have 20% of low income units.

- G. Judy Alexandre - Peter Gilli heard from HCD.
 - 1. Looks like HCD will certify the housing element with minimal changes.
 - a) Peter Gilli is having a meeting on 10/8 to discuss. Limited attendance.
 - (1) Follow-up meeting on 10/15 with more open attendance.
 - b) Sonja Flores - It's still worth communicating with the HCD about the lack of any real changes to the Housing Element.
 - 2. VSSTF will work with Homes For All to engage the city council.
 - a) 6 council members were at the workshop.
 - 3. We need to press city council to fund Housing Element implementation.
 - a) Please write to city council members individually.
- VII. Request for someone from VSSTF to attend the finance/budgeting committee meetings (Judy Alexandre)
 - A. Joe Schroeder, Jim Friedman & Mike Johnson are the council members on the committee.
 - B. Mike Johnson - Committee meets on an as-needed basis.
 - 1. Next meeting is 10/19/21 at 1pm.
- VIII. Updates
 - A. City of Ventura - Cary Glenn
 - 1. Working with Meredith Hart and Daniel Wall.
 - 2. Foul Weather Shelter
 - a) Continuing with last year's plan.
 - b) Triggering conditions:
 - (1) $\leq 40^{\circ}\text{F}$
 - (2) $\geq \frac{1}{2}"$ rain
 - c) Intake at the River Community Church (Jim Duran)
 - (1) Will put people up in 20 motel rooms.
 - (a) Prioritize by age or vulnerable health conditions.
 - (2) Will have stay-warm packs for those who are turned away.
 - (3) Dinner and breakfast will be provided.
 - d) Having a meeting on 10/20/21 to discuss operations.
 - e) Jim Duran - The Foul Weather Shelter only activated 3 times last winter, so it might be worth changing the parameters.
 - 3. Peer Support Outreach
 - a) Hired Elizabeth R. Stone.
 - b) Engaging with local unhoused people.
 - B. Continuum of Care - Jennifer Harkey
 - 1. Project Room Key is still at full capacity
 - a) Funding ends in December.
 - b) Vagabond Inn and Best Western in Ventura.
 - c) Working with One Stop, Turning Point, Salvation Army, Downtown Ventura Organization.

- d) No housing available or landlords willing to accept Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers.
 - 2. 2 Requests For Proposals (RFPs) out - until 10/13
 - a) Asking for new providers or for existing ones who are expanding
 - (1) Permanent supportive housing
 - (2) Rapid rehousing
 - (3) Transitional housing
 - 3. CoC board meeting on 10/28
 - a) More state funding will be announced at this meeting.
 - 4. Open CoC positions:
 - a) Management Analyst - Focus on housing
 - b) Management Analyst - Focus on homelessness
 - c) Administrative Assistant
 - 5. Judy Alexandre - When Project Room Key shuts down, we go from 100 full-time rooms to 20 Foul Weather Shelter rooms.
 - a) Jennifer Harkey - the RFPs may bring some solutions here.
 - b) Judy Alexandre - We need to figure out how to help people.
- IX. Response to the Housing workshop (Pam Kelley)
 - A. 82 Signups, but had more attendees.
 - B. Very positive event for the community.
 - C. Video of event: <https://vimeo.com/632152697>
 - D. Purple Book (service provider directory) updated.
 - 1. <http://vsstf.org/misc-docs/PURPLEBOOK.pdf>
 - E. Judy Alexandre - Pam Kelley did a great job!
 - F. Kappy Paulson - Writing an article about the workshop for The Breeze.
 - G. Questions from the event:
 - 1. In addition to the usual NIMBY objections, now we constantly hear “there isn’t enough water how can we be building more housing.” What is the brief answer to this?
 - a) A few years ago, Council established Net Zero fees for water. These are pretty hefty fees for development. In simple terms, Net Zero fees cover the costs of providing water to that project. So every project that was approved since Net Zero fees went into effect are covering their costs, thus there is no water issue with new development.
 - 2. What is or has the City done to ensure low-income housing at all future housing developments – RE: close the loopholes for developments to get around laws/ordinances. Are condos or townhomes exempt to a percentage to include affordable/low income housing?
 - a) The City’s existing inclusionary housing ordinance requires all projects that add 15 ownership units like condos, townhomes and single-family homes, built outside of downtown, to provide affordable units. But the citywide ordinance does not apply to rentals. Downtown has special

rules that require affordable units for ownership and rental projects. Every project being built is meeting these City requirements.

The City's new inclusionary housing ordinance will make citywide rules that ownership and rental projects have to provide affordable units in the project. State law requires the City to allow alternatives though, such as in-lieu fees or agreements to provide the units elsewhere. In-lieu fees can go toward supporting affordable housing projects. Local housing advocates want the in-lieu fee to be high enough to actually cover the cost of providing a unit. Staff fully agrees.

- X. Focus discussion on renters now that the moratorium has ended:
 - A. A 1 bedroom apartment in Ventura currently costs ~\$1800/month.
 - B. What are creative ways to increase stability for renters?
 - C. Ventura Homeless Prevention Fund (Sue Brinkmeyer)
 - 1. <https://venturahomelessprevention.org/>
 - 2. Happy to work with any local agencies.
 - 3. Checks are mailed directly to landlords.
 - 4. Maria Navarro - Can tenants with verbal agreements get help?
 - a) Sue Brinkmeyer - Case managers can work directly with landlords.
 - D. Renting initiative (Maria Navarro, CAUSE)
 - 1. Working with tenants all over 805 area code.
 - 2. CAUSE is getting lots of complaints about rapidly rising rents.
 - 3. Survey in May 2019.
 - a) 5 cities - Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, Santa Paula, Ventura, Oxnard
 - b) Tenants are having trouble keeping up with rent.
 - (1) Forced to make difficult financial decisions.
 - 4. Proposes a Rent Stabilization campaign in Oxnard-Ventura.
 - a) Create a Rent Board where tenants can access info.
 - 5. Judy Alexandre - Can CAUSE work with the county on countywide initiatives?
 - a) There are lots of unincorporated areas, too.
 - 6. AB 724 - requires rental property registry
 - a) Mike Johnson - would require landlords to submit info on rental properties and the rates.
 - b) Judy Alexandre - Asked Maria Navarro to work with Mike Johnson and Homes For All to come up with some creative options to help renters.
 - (1) How is Jim Duran helping people get housed?
 - (a) Jim Duran - People are having a hard time paying rent now, because rents are rising so quickly.
 - c) Pam Marshall - Are the people not self-advocating out of fear for losing their housing?
 - E. Any follow up to the ILRC workshop?
 - 1. Jacob Lesner-Buxton - The workshop went great.

- XI. Legislation update - passage of SB 9 and 10 (Pam Marshall)
 - A. Governor Newsom signed SB 8, SB 9 & SB 10.
 - B. Email from Judy Alexandre on 10/5/21 includes a document summarizing current housing and homelessness related legislation.
- XII. Agency Reports
 - A. Lift Up Your Voice To End Homelessness (LUYV) - Kappy Paulson
 - 1. Memorial for our homeless neighbors - 12/19/21 at 3:30pm in Plaza Park, Ventura
 - a) Concurrent memorial happening in Oxnard.
 - b) Trying to get unhoused people involved in planning and participation.
 - B. Family To Family - Jan Schmutte
 - 1. Continuing with bagged lunches.
 - 2. 5 meals/week, many hot, served outside.
- XIII. Other
 - A. Judy Alexandre - Subcommittee work to look at employment program training.
 - 1. Want to find businesses willing to take risks in hiring people.
 - 2. Stephanie Caldwell - Chamber of Commerce head
 - a) Support the subcommittee.
 - B. Judy alexandre - VSSTF needs new leadership
 - 1. Potential focus for next year:
 - a) Service for those experiencing chronic, persistent mental illness and also experiencing homelessness.
 - b) What can we do about rental increases?
 - (1) E.g. Crystal Lodge raised monthly rents from \$1000 to \$1800(!).

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