

Monthly Meeting Minutes 8/4/21

3:15 pm, via Zoom video chat

Ventura Social Services Task Force

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, James Boyd, Jim Duran, Sonja Flores; Jaydon Gaines, Jennifer Harkey, Meredith Hart, John Sanders Jones, Pam Kelley, Robert March, Pam Marshall, Sandra Meyer, Ella Moore, Cathi Nye, Kappy Paulson, Clyde Reynolds, Jan Schmutte, Elizabeth R. Stone, Summer Ward, Susan White Wood

- I. Welcome & Introductions - Judy Alexandre
- II. Call to order - Judy Alexandre
- III. Approval of the agenda for 8/4/21
- IV. Approval of the minutes for 7/7/21 - MSC
- V. Treasurer's Report - no change - \$2,316.46
- VI. Update from the City Council HOPES & Solutions subcommittee - Meredith Hart
  - A. Committee has new members, new timeslot - period of transition
  - B. Safe Sleep is coming back - working with Sandra Meyer.
- VII. Update and thank you regarding the 8/2/21 City Council meeting & next steps - Sonja Flores
  - A. Judy Alexandre - Special personal thank you to Sonja Flores for taking the lead, writing the letters, etc.
  - B. Sonja Flores - City Council agreed to:
    - 1. Add rentals to inclusionary housing.
    - 2. Participate in farmworker study.
    - 3. Workshops with reports on progress
    - 4. Included all recommendations in the draft Housing Element.
      - a) Council considers this as Housing Element v1.0.
        - (1) Council expects v2.0 coming out with the General Plan update.
          - (a) This could delay implementation of recommendations.
  - C. Need to add more sites to land inventory.
    - 1. Only listed 2 parcels: Pacific View Mall and Johnson Drive Corridor.
  - D. Judy Alexandre - Got note from Peter Gilli expressing appreciation that we thanked the city staff. Also noted his support for the council.
  - E. Meeting had 35 speakers (at 4 locations), mostly in favor of the recommendations.
  - F. Action Item: Figure out how to support strengthening language from "consider" and "may" to "will".
  - G. Next steps - Judy Alexandre
    - 1. Do we want for VSSTF and HFA to write a letter of thanks to each city council member? MSC.
    - 2. Sonja Flores - We should meet with each city councillor again to get strong language in place now, rather than waiting for v2.0 of the Housing Element.

- a) We should also send a letter to the city planners to exert extra pressure on the Housing Element updates.
- 3. We need to be ready to meet with the city council again, based on the draft Housing Element.
  - a) Sonja Flores - Within the next 1-2 months.

VIII. Agency Updates.

- A. Salvation Army - Sandra Meyer
  - 1. Open house on 8/19 from 1145-1300 at 155 Oak Street.
    - a) Opportunity for the public to see what the Salvation Army does.
- B. Safe Sleep - Sandra Meyer
  - 1. Working with Meredith Hart.
  - 2. Reduced demand during pandemic.
  - 3. New partner on 5/1/21 - Now have 5 slots filled.
  - 4. Meredith Hart - We need to find more spots, including ones that can take RVs.
    - a) Asked VSSTF participants to look for good parking spots.
      - (1) Cathi Nye - What about the mall?
  - 5. Participants require case management.
- C. Whole Person Care / One Stop - James Boyd
  - 1. Hope to reopen One Stop by first or second week of September.
  - 2. One Stop - Program where service providers in the county come together & give services in one location.
    - a) Ventura - Tuesdays from 1000-1300.
  - 3. Whole Person Care - Provides food, clothing, showers.
- D. Continuum of Care - Jennifer Harkey
  - 1. Project Roomkey - receiving referrals from various service providers (via 2-1-1)
    - a) Salvation Army, Turning Point, HSA, etc.
    - b) Operating at full capacity - nearly 300 people.
      - (1) Includes Oxnard site.
  - 2. Emergency Housing Vouchers (EHVs)
    - a) Working to figure out placements.
    - b) People need a place to use the vouchers.
      - (1) Working with United Way to engage with local landlords.
      - (2) Looking for alternate solutions, like roommate opportunities.
  - 3. Housing Is Key - state run COVID rental relief program
    - a) Making referrals.
    - b) Getting calls from people at-risk of eviction.
  - 4. Submitted application for grant to help transitional age youth (18-24)
    - a) If CoC gets the grant, they will be open to proposals from local providers.
  - 5. Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Program
    - a) Going into 3rd round of funding this fall.
    - b) Will let providers know when they are accepting proposals.

E. City Center / Tenderlife - Jim Duran

1. River Community
  - a) Serving 700 people/week with groceries.
  - b) Providing meals for people living in motels.
  - c) Housed 4 people in the last 30 days!
2. Tenderlife - shelter for homeless pregnant women & infants.
  - a) Implementing a mentoring program.
    - (1) Life skills instruction.
  - b) 2 open beds.
  - c) Raised \$40K this year.
3. City Center - families with kids (under 12 years)
  - a) Have to be clean and sober for 6 months.
  - b) Residents have to be willing to work.
  - c) In 7 years, graduated 72 families (285 people) out of homelessness.
  - d) Purchased a property, which helps save \$6500/month.
    - (1) Goal is to open more City Centers in Ventura.
4. Emergency Family Shelter - organized in partnership with Ventura County
  - a) Bridges the gap with City Center.
  - b) Allows for older kids.
  - c) Gets families sheltered in an apartment for 30-60 days while Ventura County works on their cases.
    - (1) Have 1 apartment currently, expect a 2nd soon.

F. Turning Point - Rob March presented info provided before the meeting

1. Our Place Safe Haven is a 90-day shelter and during that time we help create a housing plan for our residents and they also attend life skills groups Monday through Friday. Some of those groups are for substance-abuse, grief and loss, trauma, art and more. We are able to have a total of 14 residents which include 8 males and 6 females. The referral process is via our HMIS system throughout Ventura County, community worker referrals and walk-ins. Many clients are able to re-establish relationships with family members and friends while they are here bettering themselves.
2. River Haven is our semi transitional property located in the outskirts of Ventura located between Las Olivas Park and Harbor Blvd. This program allows clients to be there for up to two years and while they are there, they are still eligible to receive homelessness status while also learning life skills and independence. Clients work with a Case Manager for support and get assistance with resources in our community. Most clients that go through this program are referred to our COC program where they are able to receive permanent supportive housing. Currently we have 21 tuff sheds that are in use by clients from many areas throughout Ventura County. They have solar power energy and a community kitchen to prepare their meals. Clients are also eligible to participate in our Quality-of-Life groups held at Safe Haven 1x per week

3. Stephenson's Place Is a Permanent Supportive Housing program with 10 units. Clients have their individual room and have a community kitchen and bathrooms available to them. Clients have an on-site case manager that provides weekly meetings and individual counseling and support. Clients are referred via the COC program. Clients are also eligible to participate in our Quality-of-Life groups held at Safe Haven 1x per week
  4. Wooley House Is a Permanent Supportive Housing program with 15 units. Clients have their individual room and have a community kitchen and bathrooms available to them. Clients have an on-site case manager that provides weekly meetings and individual counseling and support. Clients are referred via the COC program. Clients are also eligible to participate in our groups held at our Wellness Center in Oxnard daily.
- G. Vulnerable Populations Housing Network - Clyde Reynolds
  1. General meeting on 7/30.
  2. Efficiency housing program progressing.
  3. Legislative - housing elements.
    - a) Looking at the housing elements for each city in Ventura County.
- IX. Report on the Everyone Needs Housing Workshop by the VSSTF Faith Subcommittee - Pam Kelley
  - A. Continuing to prepare for 9/30 event.
    1. Agenda and speakers finalized.
    2. Still need a sponsor for liability insurance.
  - B. Have a bigger space this year for better COVID protocols.
  - C. Judy Alexandre - working to update mini-blue book
- X. Legislative update - Pam Marshall
  - A. VSSTF currently takes no positions.
    1. We can move to have VSSTF take positions on specific bills.
    - B. SB 477 - will require local governments to keep track of the data needed to evaluate the impact of state laws on local housing availability and affordability.
    - C. AB 1401 - will eliminate parking mandates for homes and commercial buildings near transit, or in neighborhoods with low rates of car use in counties with more than 600,000 residents.
- XI. Other
  - A. Judy Alexandre met with Chamber of Commerce
    1. CEO with support of their board wrote a letter in support of nearly all (10 of 11) of the recommendations that we presented to the city.
      - a) Our efforts are part of a broad coalition.
- XII. Adjourn meeting. Not meeting in person next month.

Next meeting is 1 September, 3:15PM on Zoom.