

Minutes of the Ventura Social Services Task Force Meeting of June 1, 2022 via Zoom

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, Denice Barr, Marta Brown, Sue Brinkmeyer, Kyler Carlson, Kevin Clerici, Michael Dunn, Sam England, Jenn Harkey, Mike Johnson, John Sanders Jones, Pam Kelley, Rebecca Kofman, Pam Marshall, Sandra Meyer, Maria Navarro, Cathi Nye, Kappy Paulson, Clyde Reynolds, Debra Schreiber, Lee Sherman, Susan White Wood

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:20 pm
2. Those attending introduced themselves. Susan White Wood added information about the role of VC Behavioral Health housing; the information is attached below*
3. The agenda was approved as presented MSC (Pam Kelley/Kappy Paulson)
4. The Minutes of 5/4/22 were approved as presented MSC (Jennifer Harkey/Kyler Carlson)
5. Jan Schmutte was not present to give a financial update; Judy noted that there have been no expenditures, so last month's amount is still correct.
6. John Sanders Jones indicated that the booth at the Ventura Street Fair on July 4 is on track. John will send out a request for volunteers soon. Judy thanked Kevin for arranging for a table for us.

Action Items

7. Traditionally VSSTF has had a candidates' forum on the topic of housing and homelessness. District 1, 4, 5, and 6 are up for elections. The group approved having a candidate forum. MSC (Kappy Paulson/Kyler Carlson). Church of the Foothills has agreed to host it on a Wednesday. They can seat 100 people, can provide a sound system, and can record it. Four people are needed to coordinate the forum, prepare questions, organize the forum, etc. John Jones, Maria Navarro, Debora Schreiber and Judy Alexandre will serve. Homes for All may join and co-sponsor. It will be planned for the first part of October.
8. The group has considered combining VSSTF and Homes for All and meeting on 7/6/22 with the General Plan Housing Element consultant. They would also invite other groups such as NAMI, and other stakeholders' groups. Clyde suggested that Vulnerable Populations might also join in that meeting. Mike Johnson added that the General Planning group is moving on from housing to transportation; Mike added that he thinks it is important that advocacy groups be involved and that their input is listened to. Judy added that there is a lot of land space in East Ventura, but it lacks resources for shopping and transportation, so if housing is located there, then infrastructure must also be added. Having a combined meeting and inviting the consultant on 7/6/22 was approved. MSC (Kyler Carlson/Clyde Reynolds)
9. Maria Navarro gave an update on the West Ventura Casa del Pueblo eviction and said that no action from VSSTF was needed. City Council passed an ordinance but it was not retroactive and so did not cover the tenants of Casa del Pueblo. Those tenants have been connected with County and City services. They have been connected with a lawyer from the Latino Bar Association as well. Mike Johnson added that it was an urgency ordinance, which requires 6 affirmative votes. It was difficult to make it retroactive. Mike said that everyone on Council took it very seriously and spent 5 hours talking about the issue. It was contentious, sloppy, and messy, but it was the best meeting Council has had, in his view. He reported that some of his colleagues say that this is just a band-aid and the root problem is that there is not enough housing. Mike says he will be sure they remember that. Many questions were raised at the council meeting that council did not have the information needed to answer. Data gathering is needed on things like how often there are remodeling-related evictions. Judy added that the Ventura Homeless Prevention Board will be discussing what they may or may not be able to do in such situations going forward. Debora asked if there is a record kept currently of landlords drawing permits and evicting tenants. Mike said that there is currently no such record kept and that someone currently could evict tenants and then never do the work. With the new ordinance, they will at least have to draw the permit before they can evict the tenants.
10. Jennifer Harkey, who is working out of the County Executive Office to lead the Continuum of Care, which oversees most of the grants that come to the County related to homelessness, said she will be presenting the homeless count data to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday and share the concerns of the COC with regard to

housing. She said that most of the people currently in the Housing is Key program could qualify for supportive housing. Jennifer is requesting that the Task Force work on advocacy with regard to supportive housing proposals and Home Key projects. Jenn indicated that we need to have places for people to go, especially when people are transitioning out of Project Room Key and this must be a collaborative approach, so the City must be on board; the County cannot do it without such a partnership. We have approximately 120 residents in Project Room Key who are Ventura residents. They are very vulnerable and need a transition out. This could be a motel transition, and there is state money that could help with the purchase, and additional funds could be applied for relative to ongoing operations. A third floor at the Arch or an empty building that could be leased are other possibilities. Jenn asked that VSSTF advocate with the City for additional supportive housing, for them to work with the County for ongoing operations as they have done with Mercy House, and for a budget to address homelessness, with homelessness being a higher priority. Clyde added that a non-profit partner needs to be identified as well, and Jenn indicated that a Request for Proposals would be done when a location is identified. She said the biggest barrier is funding. Project Room Key can go through the end of the year, but we need to begin thinking about the transition out. Clyde spoke about interest in doing a tiny home community, and Jenn said the County is open to any creative solution. Judy summarized that Jenn is asking for VSSTF to do 4 things: 1. support working with the City to pursue options to receive 3rd round funding from Project Room Key; 2. work with the County to open up the 2nd and 3rd floors of the ARCH; 3. look at the budget to address the need for the housing, and insure the budget includes adequate funding for homeless services and housing; 4. support the issuance of an RFP to secure a partner agency once sites are identified. MSC (Kappy Paulson/Pam Kelley)

11. Sam England, representing James Boyd of Health Care for the Homeless and Backpack Medicine, reported that they run events throughout the County 4-5 times per week, including food, clothing and showers, linking the most vulnerable people in our county with health care, including vaccines. They are expanding more to the East County. In Ventura, there are still new people appearing on the street. He said it is important to get the word out about the existence of the street outreach programs and about the services that are available. He wants to identify additional areas for outreach and places to expand the program. Sam asked members of VSSTF to help identify places where outreach is needed. Judy indicated that in Oxnard there is intensive follow-up with individuals who are open to coming in to One Stop each week for intensive case management, and James would like to expand that to Ventura. Both the City and Downtown Partners have street outreach programs, and Judy asked for input on the expansion proposed by James. Rebecca Kofman indicated that she would support additional outreach as well as follow up intensive case management. Judy will bring back additional information as to the name of the program and its funding source and ask James Boyd to put something in writing with a clear description of the program and a clear statement of what he is asking VSSTF to do.
12. Gap needs proposal was reported on by Kappy Paulsen and John Jones). John Jones met with the Our Lady of Assumption outreach group, and they appear open to supporting the work of Laundry Love, and perhaps partnering with other houses of faith; it currently runs 2nd Saturday of the month from 9-11. Kappy reported that Elizabeth has left the committee, and so it has scaled back what it is doing. They are looking for grants for storage space for people's important papers, which Elizabeth has already started. They will work more on the peer program. Judy asked that the program be expanded city-wide and not just downtown. Debora suggested Project Understanding on Johnston as a site in order to reach the East end. Kappy will follow up with Project Understanding. Kappy will be out of the country until the end of August, so the committee will be somewhat inactive until she returns. The group would like to have the peers monitor the bathrooms downtown, rather than the Ambassadors. Kappy will follow up with Kevin regarding that and regarding the number of Ambassadors we currently have and potential budget. The gaps group also wishes to work on a charging station for phones downtown. Salvation Army and others are also interested in being involved with the charging stations. James is getting charging stations made available at One Stop as well; he will give them to individuals who ask for them. Judy suggested that they be given to the outreach workers. Finally, Kappy reported on work to create an RV pump station. She said installing one can apparently cost anywhere from \$50 to \$500,000. In some other states, and in California up near Mammoth, there are free pumping stations along the highway, she added. Judy will speak with Matt Lavere about that. Kappy suggested that one be installed at the maintenance yard on the East end. Judy will also speak with Brian Brennan, who has said he thought he could be helpful, and with Mike Johnson about the role the City might take. Jenn suggested that perhaps a waiver could be provided, similar to what we do for folks who need an ID. She suggested it might be possible to pay for such waivers out of street

outreach funds. Judy and Kappy will talk more about RV dump stations, which is also important to take care of because of environmental concerns. Clyde indicated that all that is needed is a location with access to a sewer line.

13. Kyler Carlson reported that the Planning Commission met on May 25 to receive an Inclusionary Housing update; we are currently out of compliance, since our plan is not yet approved. Apparently the City needed to update its plan with more actionable goals, and then should receive the needed stamp of approval. They listed a heavy list of programs that they hope to implement in the next year, largely as a result of the advocacy of VSSTF and HFA. Judy indicated that Pete Gilli was fairly optimistic that all of the items that VSSTF asked for will be included. Clyde indicated that every city in the County is out of compliance, and he expects the state to be understanding as long as the cities respond quickly. The County does have a compliant Housing Element. Mike indicated that, based on the letter from HCD, there are a great many items that we still need to do to be in compliance, and much state funding requires that we have a compliant Housing Element, which we do not. He said he is pessimistic.
14. Kyler reporter that Inclusionary Housing update will come before the Planning Commission in July. They are awaiting input from the consultant. Kyler will report on it when it comes to the Planning Commission and then to Council.
15. Kyler reported that the General Plan team is currently taking the input that they received at the meeting in May and is working on coming up with three scenarios to implement that feedback. They will be going to neighborhood councils to discuss the land use scenario possibilities. The consultant will tell us more at our July VSSTF meeting.
16. Judy reported that the budget for homelessness within the City will be finalized within the next several weeks, and letters are needed to support adequate budget. Judy will send out a template letter. Mike indicated that in his view the budget is done. What is coming in three weeks is the final budget. According to Mike, funding for the ARCH is the same; Safe and Clean is going away; there will be an analyst position. There will not be someone of the caliber of Rebecca Kofman or Meredith Hart in that position. Judy reiterated that we will need to be very vocal. Jenn Harkey indicated that she studied the budget to see where homelessness funding was located, and found it difficult to locate. She said that a much better explanation of the budget is needed and asked to be involved with Judy in asking for more information on what the funding is going to be spent on, other than the one analyst position, which is combined with the grants management position. In Mike's opinion, the City is backing out on homelessness. Judy said she understood that 4 councilmen spoke out asking for more information on the budget regarding homelessness. Maria Navarro also offered to work with Judy and to meet with City Council, and Mike said we have until June 14. John Jones also offered to meet after 2 pm. Susan Wood asked why the City did not partner with a developer on "No Place Like Home." Mike said he believes the current City Manager thinks we are spending too much on homelessness. Clyde indicated that the Chief of Police said at his housing group that the greatest challenge facing the police now is homelessness. Judy indicated that many still erroneously believe that most of those who are homeless in the city come from someplace else. *** (More information provided later by Kyler Carlson is attached below.)
17. Pam Kelley reported on the Faith Subcommittee plans. They have been working on gathering those who are providing services for the unsheltered. Rabbi Lisa of Temple Beth has offered to open the Temple for the event, currently planned for August 30 from 5:30 -7:30 pm. A basic overview of services, Laundry Love, winter warming shelter, gap needs, intro to new manager for housing and the unsheltered will all be part of the program. Some funding will need to be authorized by VSSTF later.

Reports

18. Mike Johnson reported that he is incredibly discouraged because homelessness no longer seems to be a priority for the city.
19. Rebecca reported that the next meeting of Hope and Solutions will be June 14 at 3:00. All of homeless services now are funded out of Measure O. The City currently spends 1.5 M on shelter, \$190,000 for rent. Additional funding for Safe Sleep program and River Haven, and camp clean ups in the river bottom. Camp clean ups are not about displacing people but about removing environmental hazard. Social workers are part of the process. She reported that it is possible that grants that might have been applied for were not as part of the transition of

Meredith out of the position and Rebecca transitioning into it. Judy indicated that budgeting should be a major part of our advocacy at the next HOPE committee. . ** (See notes from Rebecca Kofman on Measure O budget below) *** Also see below the breakdown of the Housing and Homelessness services in the new proposed budget. A net increase \$729,300, according to Kyler Carlson

20. Vulnerable populations and County coalition (Clyde Reynolds, Maria Navarro) - Advocacy committee is continuing to meet and has recently sent a letter to all planning directors requesting their annual reports. Peter Gilli has not yet responded. The City has agreed to have a workshop every year going forward.

Other

21. Adjourn 4:57 pm
22. Next meeting is on 7/6/22 at 3:15pm. Joint meeting regarding the General Plan and Housing Element with the consultants.

Meetings:

23. Faith Subcommittee: Fri 6/24 3pm (Pam Kelley pamjks@msn.com)
24. HOPES Tues 7/14 3p City Hall (Mike Johnson, councilman, chair)

Respectfully submitted: Sue Brinkmeyer (filling in for Rob March)

ATTACHMENTS TO THE MINUTES:

*** Information on VCBH housing provided by Susan White Wood**

VCBH Housing Programs at a Glance

Permanent Supportive Housing

All of VCBH PSH projects are reserved for low-income clients with mental health disability. Most client residents are required to pay 1/3 of their income towards the cost of rent and VCBH or HUD pays the rest.

- 14 site specific properties totaling 181 units (mostly 1 bedrooms, however, we do have some 2 bedrooms and at least two 3 bedroom units)
- 1 Scattered site grant serving 26 households
- 107 additional PSH units in the pipeline (NPLH)

VCBH provides supportive services for a minimum of 20 years for each PSH unit.

Contracted Adult Residential Facilities

- 5 Board and Cares (18-59 yrs) totaling 126 beds
- 2 RCFE (60+ yrs) totaling 90 beds

Note: Residents at ARFs receive 24 hour care, including all meals, transportation, medication management along with social and recreational activities. The 7 contracted ARFs agree to accept client's SSI in lieu of rent and VCBH provides some supplemental funding.

Non-Licensed, Independent Community Based Living

VCBH provides funding in the form of "loans" to clients seeking to live in non-licensed shared living situations such as sober living homes and room and boards. VCBH does not inspect these homes nor do we place clients in them or recommend one over another. Although funding is in the form of a loan to the client VCBH pays the property manager directly.

Motel stays are not considered "housing" although we do make motel placements and pay for them on occasion.

VCBH Case Managers provide housing navigation for all clients with housing need, a very complicated, non-linear and lengthy process.

****Notes from Rebecca Kofman on Measure O Funding for homeless services:**

PROACTIVE OUTREACH WORKER (\$56,536)

- Funded ½ by Measure O and ½ by County
- Program started December 2019 and is continuing with great success
- Christina directly reaches out to the unsheltered population within the City limits
- In a 5-month period, from December 1 to April 1, Christina made...
 - 184 contacts
 - Placed 2 individuals in shelter
- To date over 1,600 contacts

SAFE SLEEP (\$30,000)

- Managed by Salvation Army
- Have capacity for 30 cars
- Only one participating church with 5 spots available, 4 spots being used
- Another church that was formerly engaged in the program agreed to start participating in program again & open lot up to RV's participating in the program
 - Starting with 3 RV's for first 3 months

RIVER HAVEN (\$32,500) (\$40,000 for on-site case manager)

- Transitional living program managed by Turning Point Foundation
- 23 tiny homes at River Haven
 - 1 is for case manager
 - 22 units available for clients
 - Currently 3 units vacant
 - 3 units with 2 people living in them
 - 22 total clients
- On-site case manager was funded by CBDG funds last FY
 - HUD hasn't released 22/23 CBDG allocation yet
 - FY 22/23 CBDG funding TBD

ARCH (\$1,550,000)

- \$1,440,267 from Measure O
 - FY 21-22 \$463,405 from CBDG/CBDG-CV funds offset
 - Mercy House applied for CBDG funding, \$100,000 FY 22/23 allocation
- Permanent year-round shelter
- Contract with Mercy House to operate the shelter
- Operating costs are split evenly between the City/County
 - City will pay \$775,000
- Opened February 2020 with 55 beds
- In March 2020, had to go to 32 beds due to County Public Health mandates for COVID protocols at congregate shelters
- Has served 159 clients total (76 in 2022)
- 23 have exited to permanent housing (5 in 2022)

COUNTY RENT (\$90,000)

- ARCH shelter is in a County building, so we have to pay the County rent

ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAN UP EFFORTS IN THE RIVER BOTTOMS (\$250,000)

- Monthly cleanups started in January 2021
- No one is displaced during cleanups, we focus on outreach, removing debris, and downsizing built structures
- Individuals are only allowed temporary camping equipment
- Identify camps to clean and individuals are given one month notice.
- Anything they want to keep is placed to the side and not touched
- Consistent engagement and debris removal has helped with maintaining the area, keeping hazards away from the waterway and encouraging services.
- Removed almost one million pounds of debris in 2021

OTHER ITEMS

- Safe & Clean Manager
- Resource Fairs/Initiatives (\$10,000)
- PortaStor (\$2,040)
- Conference/Workshops (\$4,000)
- Office supplies/printing (\$1,500)
- Security (\$500)
- Employee Recognition (\$1,000)

***** Breakdown of budget on homelessness provided by Kyler Carlson**

Funding for Housing and Homelessness

Attachment 1

Fund	Department	Project	Project Name	FY 22/23 Budget	FY 23/24 Budget
GENERAL	Community Development Department	31159 HOUSING		388,577	765,599
		34390 HOUSING PRESERVATION PROGRAM		5,300	7,982
	Parks and Recreation	77725 SAFE AND CLEAN PARKS		195,274	36,282
		77729 BEAUTY AND MAINTAIN (BAM)			672,299
	Public Works Department	68300 STREET SWEEPING,SAFE AND CLEAN		349,849	337,159
			GENERAL Total	938,999	1,807,780
CDMG & Home Grants	Community Development Department	94090 CDBG HOUSING PRESERVATION		175,000	135,000
		94234 CDBG ADMINISTRATIVE		190,782	136,495
		94630 FAIR HOUSING		10,000	10,000
		94611 HOME PROGRAM & ADMINISTRATION		38,528	47,488
		94625 PDHHC - Homeless Prevention		20,000	20,000
		94644 HOMELESS PROGRAM SERVICES		490,000	650,000
		94687 HOMEOWNER OCCUPIED HOME REPAIR		27,500	27,500
		94699 HOME HOUSING DEVELOPMENT OTHER		333,743	355,740
		94725 River Haven - Extra Support Services		60,120	60,120
			HCDA ACT OF 1974 PROGRAM Total	1,295,882	1,290,938
MEASURE D	City Manager Department	19061 SAFE AND CLEAN 2.0		1,879,404	
	Community Development Department	38003 SAFE & CLEAN 2.0 - HOUSING SERVICES			2,106,671
	Parks and Recreation	79000 SAFE AND CLEAN 2.0		1,126,983	405,887
		79033 BEAUTY AND MAINTAIN (BAM)			703,341
	Police Department	49004 SAFE AND CLEAN 2.0 - POLICE P/T		589,440	616,567
			MEASURE D TRANSACTION AND USE TAX Total	5,077,811	3,971,467
SUCCESSOR AGENCY ADMINISTRATION	Community Development Department	98200 RDA SUCCESSOR AGENCY ADMINISTRATION		115,182	46,722
			SUCCESSOR AGENCY ADMINISTRATION Total	115,182	46,722
SUCCESSOR HOUSING AGENCY	Community Development Department	98230 SUCCESSOR HOUSING AGENCY ADMINISTRATION		47,596	49,767
		98233 SNA Housing Preservation Program			7,500
		98271 Ventura Springs Affordable Housing Development		439,000	10,000
			SUCCESSOR HOUSING AGENCY Total	546,596	67,267
			Grand Total	6,424,473	7,153,775