

Monthly Meeting Minutes 2/7/2024

3:15 pm, via Zoom video chat

Ventura Social Services Task Force

Attendees: Judy Alexandre, Kevin Clerici, Leah Coming, Sonja Flores, Noreen Hartzell, Jeffrey Lambert, Robert March, Lauren Prater Mex, Cathi Nye, Kappy Paulson, Cole Prime, Leona Rollins, Debora Schreiber, Jacklyn Sicilia, Dolores Suafo'a, Claire Triplett, Anna Varela, Javier Villa Solis, Susan White Wood, Susie Wilson

- I. Welcome & Introductions - Judy Alexandre
- II. Approval of the agenda for 2/7/24 - MSC
 - A. Changes:
 1. Added a 10 minute presentation by Jaclyn Sicilia.
 2. Sonja Flores wants to frame discussion of tenant protections.
- III. Approval of the minutes for 1/3/24 - MSC
 - A. Correction - Laundry Love on Seaward is from 3pm-5pm every 4th Sunday.
- IV. Financial Update - Judy Alexandre
 - A. No changes.
- V. Upcoming Advocacy Needs & Plan - Judy Alexandre
 - A. Measure O for homeless needs funding - Leona Rollins
 1. Recent meeting was canceled because a quorum was not achieved.
 - a) Looking at a new date in March.
 - b) Judy Alexandre - we need to advocate for funds here!
 - B. Housing Element implementation - Sonja Flores
 1. Adopted by Ventura city council & approved by the state.
 - a) Some ideas have already been implemented.
 2. This year's focus is tenant protections
 - a) There was a goal setting meeting with the city council on 2/3/24.
 - (1) Jaclyn Sicilia, Susie Wilson and many others showed up in support of tenant protections.
 - (2) 5 of 7 council members showed supported for protections.
 3. Looking for a cap on rental increases.
 - a) Oxnard and Ojai already do this.
 - b) It will be helpful to have people attend the 2/27/24 city council meeting to show support.
 4. Via Ventura Apartments Tenant advocates - Jaclyn Sicilia
 - a) Via Ventura Apartments - 192 residences housing >200 people
 - b) In 9/2023, advocates found many violations of renters' rights in conversations amongst tenants.
 - (1) Illegal parking fees.
 - (a) Including people with no car or license.

- (2) Incorrectly charge utilities.
 - c) Immediate goals:
 - (1) Remove the illegal parking fees.
 - d) Found little to no support when reaching out locally.
 - e) Reached out to the residents of another local apartment complex, finding similar problems.
 - f) Advocacy goals:
 - (1) How to inform people about rights violations?
 - (2) How to ask the city to adopt tenant protections when the city council doesn't seem to understand them or the need?
 - (3) Lawsuit pending.
 - (a) Could include elder abuse.
 - (i) Elders got the highest rent increases.
 - (ii) Illegal parking fees.
 - (b) Want to help keep people in their homes.
 - (4) Want the city to extend services at the Housing Rights Center (HRC) to include providing legal services to people in conflict with their landlords.
 - (a) Currently, HRC only provides guidance.
 - g) Judy Alexandre - We need VSSTF to vote on supporting Jaclyn Sicilia, Susie Wilson and other tenants. Their landlord is exploiting over 500 people.
 - (1) Does VSSTF choose to support this group and Homes For All to actively pursue tenant protections? - **MSC**
 - (2) Will we ask city council to expand the existing contract with HRC to include legal services? - **MSC**
 - (a) What would the cost be?
 - (i) Leona Rollins - don't have a number right now. Could be \$100K=
 - (b) Jaclyn Sicilia - it's very difficult to find an attorney to take on the case.
 - h) AB 1482 - 2019 Tenant Protections Act
 - (1) On buildings 15+ years old.
 - (2) Abuse of renters is primarily by corporate landlords.
- C. Homes For All - Sonja Flores
- 1. No further discussion items.
- D. Gap Needs - Anna Varela
- 1. Foul Weather Shelter - Got cost to go from 20 to 40 rooms.
 - a) \$120K for just rooms and security.
 - b) Eventual goal is 3 months.
 - (1) The Winter Warming Shelters at the armory cost \$200K.
 - (a) Leona Rollins - First step would be to find a location.

- (i) Building rental and food probably will cost \$200K.
 - (a) Javier Villa feels that the total cost will probably be double that (\$400K).
 - c) Judy Alexandre moves:
 - (1) VSSTF to advocate for exploring the possibility of a full shelter available for the whole winter season, while simultaneously pushing for doubling the number of rooms in the current foul weather shelter approach. - **MSC**
 - E. Planning Commission - Leona Rollins
 - 1. Commission will get the Ventura County Homelessness Plan on 2/28/24
 - a) City Council will get it on 3/26/24
 - 2. 2/13/24 - Discussing the expansion of street outreach services.
 - 3. 2/14/24 - Discussing the Valentine Road project
 - 4. More coming on the Housing Element in March & April 2024.
 - F. Vulnerable Persons Housing Network - Judy Alexandre
 - 1. Meeting with the city in February 2024 to discuss efficiency housing.
 - a) Tiny homes
 - 2. Cole Prime - on 1/23/24, Ventura city council passed an ordinance further restricting the hours for parking for oversized vehicles.
 - a) Goes into effect on 2/23/24.
- VI. Valentine Road project update - Jeffrey Lambert
- A. The new apartments will be permanent supportive housing.
 - 1. Vast majority will be Single Room Occupancy (SRO)
 - B. Waiting on funding still.
 - 1. Got \$32 million from Homekey Project.
 - 2. Should close escrow around the end of March 2024.
 - 3. 2 phases for funding:
 - a) Homekey Funding.
 - b) Tax Credit Funding.
 - C. Currently planning the renovations.
 - 1. Goal is kitchenettes in all units.
 - D. Hope to start moving people into apartments in Summer 2024.
 - E. Ventura is partnering well on the project.
 - F. Looking to transition Roomkey clients to the apartments.
 - G. Working through the permit process
 - H. 32 Section 8 vouchers will be attached to the project.
 - I. Set up a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH)
 - J. Staffing is expected to be 9 people.
 - 1. 2 apartments will be available for staff.
 - a) Property manager.

b) Lead caseworker.

K. Presenting an update on the project to Ventura city council on 2/13/24

- VII. Point In Time Count 2024 - Leona Rollins
 - A. The operation went well - good turnout (65+ volunteers)
 - B. Preliminary numbers available by mid-late March 2024
 - C. Final report expected in April 2024.
 - D. Leona Rollins' experience:
 - 1. Lots of newly homeless people.
 - a) Due to rapidly increasing rents.
 - 2. Many seniors and families.
- VIII. Foul Weather Shelter Update - Leona Rollins
 - A. Activated 5 times this season.
 - 1. Most recently between 1/31/24 - 2/7/24.
 - 2. Have seen some families and some couples.
 - 3. Ventura paid for extra rooms at Motel 6 for the latest opening of the shelter.
 - B. Kappy Paulson - is there enough coverage from the faith community?
- IX. HOPES Committee update - Leona Rollins
 - A. Next meeting 2/27/24 at 3pm in the community meeting room.
 - 1. Topics:
 - a) Changing Safe Sleep requirements to be less restrictive.
 - (1) We should have an advocate for this topic.
 - b) Meeting schedule for the committee.
- X. Continuum of Care - Judy Alexandre
 - A. Ventura County received a little over \$3 million from grants.
 - B. 2/7/24 COC meeting - Susan White Wood
 - 1. HUD grant renewals
 - a) HUD approved all applications and even increased the funding to some.

FY2023 U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) Awards
CA-611 Ventura County CoC

State	CoC Number	Organization Name	Project or Award Name	FY 2023 Amount
California	CA-611	Coalition for Family Harmony	Coalition for Family Harmony DV Bonus 2023	\$741,934
California	CA-611	County of Ventura	LSS Its A New Day RRH FY23	\$223,295
California	CA-611	County of Ventura	Oxnard/East County and Santa Paula CoC Consolidated	\$487,661
California	CA-611	County of Ventura	Salvation Army RRH FY23	\$58,842
California	CA-611	County of Ventura	VC CoC FY23 CA-611 Planning	\$225,081
California	CA-611	County of Ventura Human Services Agency	Choices Permanent Supportive Housing 2023	\$494,187
California	CA-611	County of Ventura Human Services Agency	HMIS Expansion-Coordinated Entry System 2023	\$402,631
California	CA-611	County of Ventura Human Services Agency	Ventura County Rapid Re-Housing 2023	\$81,829
California	CA-611	Many Mansions, a California nonprofit corporation	MM Supportive Housing - Mountain View Fillmore 2023	\$44,592
California	CA-611	Many Mansions, a California nonprofit corporation	MM Supportive Housing - Simi Valley 2023	\$141,941
California	CA-611	Many Mansions, a California nonprofit corporation	MM Supportive Housing - Thousand Oaks/Oxnard 2023	\$188,804
California	CA-611	The Salvation Army	The Salvation Army Ventura PSH	\$169,907
California	CA-611	Turning Point Foundation	Our Place Safe Haven 2023	\$168,977
California	CA-611	Turning Point Foundation	Rapid Re-Housing 2023	\$172,132
California	CA-611	Turning Point Foundation	Stephenson Place Permanent Housing 2023	\$37,905
California	CA-611	Turning Point Foundation	Wooley House I Permanent Housing 2023	\$46,726
California	CA-611	Turning Point Foundation	Wooley House II Permanent Housing 2023	\$39,857

Total **\$3,726,301**

XI. Agency Updates

A. Mercy House - Dolores Suafo'a

1. ARCH - All 55 beds are full
 - a) 4 beds are set aside for referrals.

B. Ventura County Behavioral Health (VCBH) - Susan White Wood

1. Have funding to provide family rental assistance countywide for up to 3 years.
 - a) 10 vouchers
 - b) Families, homeless people, willing to engage with services.
 - (1) Enrolled in Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

C. Project Understanding - Lauren Prater Mex

1. Expanded rental assistance to include Oxnard.

D. Cathi Nye - **looking for help**

1. Needs readers to help with reviewing grant applications.

E. Ventura Homeless Prevention Fund (VHPF) - Kappy Paulson

1. 2/24/24 - That's Amore fundraiser at Unitarian Universalist Church of Ventura from 1230pm to 230pm.
 - a) Italian Lunch and auction
 - (1) <https://venturahomelessprevention.betterworld.org/auctions/tat-s-amore-online-live-auction?fbclid=IwAR2UcYIMH7l0p09dxeUaE1hNIJpxSVQFyZjY9BhbumGV81xehagaOVQyDjM>

Meetings:

Planning Commission

City Council

Measure O

HOPES Subcommittee

VSSTF Faith Subcommittee 3rd Friday of each month, 3pm, Anna Varela / John Jones, via Zoom