

Ventura Social Services Task Force
Meeting Minutes from August 4, 2010

I. Introductions

(32 present - Neal Andrews, Steve Bennett, Paul Bramson, Jerry Breiner, Peter Brown, Cathy Brudnicki, Brenda Byers, Cindy Cattle, David Christen, Michelle Dent, David Deutsch, Janine Dykstra, Bill Finley, Ken Finning, Todd L. Goehner, John Jones, Jeff Lambert, David Lantrip, Donna Mason, Loretta McCarty, Eileen McCarthy, Mike Merewether, Kate Mills, Ed Moses, Ken Porter, Clyde Reynolds, Revis Robinson, Debora Schreiber, Mark Stadler, Mary Stewart, Beth Sutherland, David Webb)

II. Subcommittee and Other Reports

A. Peter Brown - Update

On August 31st there will be a cleanup with CLU students (500-600 incoming freshman) of the homeless camps. On August 5th, signs will be posted for homeless residents notifying them of the cleanup and advising them to mark their belongings as either “trash” or “property.” On August 31st, there will be 16 group leaders for the project (if people want to volunteer, contact Peter Brown) with a goal of removing 10 tons of trash. The project will run from 1pm to 4:30pm and all homeless camps will be cleaned out.

The City Council action regarding City SB02 has been continued until November 15th. All homeless issues will be brought to the City Council and there will be Community Forums between now and November 15th.

B. VSSTF Faith Community Sub-Committee (Bill Finley)

The plans continue for the Thanksgiving meal; there will be a new method for coordinating volunteers. There is a new church about to participate in the Safe Sleep Program (the church was not named in this meeting).

The Gateway plans are moving forward; possible sites are being looked at (the site on Petit appears to be promising). Several organizations are on board, organizational services are being clearly identified. The next meeting will be on September 7th.

C. Homeless Prevention Sub-Committee (Cindy Cattle)

In the month of July, the Salvation Army handled the Homeless Prevention fund; they distributed \$2,135. Project Understanding will have the fund for August. The Homeless Prevention Sub-Committee is entering into a partnership with Lift Up Your Voice (an organization within the Unitarian Universalist Church in Ventura). The “mission statement” for the sub-committee is “Keeping People Housed, Period”. A flyer is being developed and the sub-

committee is trying to establish a message phone at a County office. Development of a web-page just for the Homeless Prevention Fund is being considered. The next meeting will be on August 11th at Catholic Charities.

D. Housing Options Sub-Committee (Loretta McCarty)

Construction will begin on November 1st for the Encato Del Mar project (corner of Oak Street and Thompson Boulevard). There will be no August 11th HUD Funding. Brochures for Homeshare were passed out; this is a program sponsored by the Area Agency on Aging. There are currently 25 home-seekers and 12 current home-providers. The next meeting is August 11th at Chapel Lane.

E. Community Education Sub-Committee (John Jones)

Jill Martinez will speak at the next meeting regarding housing for emancipated youth. The committee is lining up opportunities to speak in November for homeless/poverty awareness. The committee is seeking recommendations for people to speak. The next meeting is on August 10th at 4pm.

F. VSSTF Steering Committee (John Jones)

The Steering Committee voted to hire a web developer. The VSSTF was asked for suggestions or for bids for the job.

Discussion – Keys for November Initiatives

G. “One-Stop” (Kate Mills)

The One-Stop is moving forward well; people are encouraged to volunteer, please contact Kate. One-Stop is looking for a pharmacist for 8 hours, one day per week (paid). A new type of software called the Benefit Calculator is being used at the Ventura and Oxnard sites. This software prints out programs for which a person may be eligible. The information is not recorded, so privacy is respected. This can help with benefits, program locations, phone numbers and other valuable information. The numbers are growing at One-Stop; new clients are coming in regularly, especially in Ventura. Approximately 25 new people come in each week and there are approximately 15-18 patients at the follow-up clinic each week. They are helped with ACE and Certifications of Homelessness. There appears to be an upsurge in homeless young women at the present time.

Peter Brown – Funding

There are two forms of funding. One form is money from the City of Ventura for the VSSTF (this is grant money). The second form of funding is from the Community Partnerships

Granting Program (this funding is 12 years old). There were formerly 16 categories for applications for funds; this has now been narrowed to 5 categories. The homelessness category has been moved to the first form of funding (the VSSTF grant money). The money for that fund was raised from \$50,000 to \$70,000. The other fund has \$70,000. Both funds once totaled \$210,000; they now total \$140,000. Any funds that are given out will come with the requirement that measurable outcomes will be identified with dollars spent.

Neil Andrews – The City Council

The Council is concerned about improvements as a result of this grant (i.e., how have things gotten better)? What can be clearly identified as an improvement? Ken Belden's position was originally funded by the grant money, but the County eventually hired him as a Community Services Supervisor. The VSSTF will now pay part of Ken's salary.

Peter Brown – Adopt A Family Restaurant Program

There is a franchise owner of a pizza business who is suggesting an "Adopt A Family" program for restaurants in Ventura to feed a family in need. His concept is that each restaurant will adopt one family. He wants to start this by spending 12 hours in an RV suspended by a crane in front of his restaurant until he gets 365 restaurant owners to sign on.

Announcements – Networking

1. Kingdom Center Fundraiser – Jersey Mike's August 14th and 15th 10am to 9pm.
2. The National Conference on Homelessness in Washington D.C. was attended by Cathy Brudnicki, Daniel Zapata, and Christy Madden.
3. The 2010 Homeless Survey is available on the website (Cathy Brudnicki)
4. Flyers from Community Action for Legal Help were distributed.
5. On Sunday, October 10th from 2pm to 5pm, there will be a Kingdom Center benefit, their 2nd Annual Garden Party and Auction.
6. Project Understanding has produced an excellent DVD. – see <http://www.projectunderstanding.org/video/>
7. On August 21st at the WAVE, there will be a "musical production" entitled "Voices of the Homeless" at 2pm.
8. On September 11th, there will be a flag retirement ceremony at 12noon at the Veterans Home of California-Ventura at 10900 Telephone Road, Ventura, California 93004.

The next VSSTF Meeting will be on Wednesday September 1, 2010 from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM at Family to Family, 303 N. Ventura Ave. #E. Ventura, CA 93001.

Regular Meeting Schedules

Faith Community Subcommittee meets every 1st Tuesday, 4:00-5:00 PM, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 5654 Ralston, Ventura 93003, September 7

Homeless Prevention Subcommittee meets every 2nd Wednesday, 1PM (note change), Catholic Charities, 303 N Ventura Ave September 8

Housing Options Subcommittee meets every 2nd Wednesday, 4:30 PM, Housing Authority, Snapdragon Lane, Saticoy. September 8

Gateway Subcommittee meets third Friday at Salvation Army on Oak Street, at 2 PM, August 20