

Ventura Social Services Task Force

Minutes of Meeting April 7, 2010

Attending - total of 29 (Neal Andrews, Ken Bonner, Paul Bramson, Jerry Breiner, Carolyn Briggs, Peter Brown, Cathy Brudnicki, Cindy Cante, Sherry Cash, Bill Finley, Ken Finning, Jill Forman, Todd L. Goehner, Daniel Hardy, John Jones, Shelli Locklear, Erika Manrique, Donna Mason, Ed Moses, Mayur Patel, Clyde Reynolds, Revis Robinson, Debora Schreiber, Karol Schulkin, Craig Shaw, Mark Stadler, Mary Stewart, Beth Sutherland, Daniel Zapata)

Meeting called to order by chair John Jones

Self-introductions performed.

Rick Pearson came to say goodbye. He is retiring from Project Understanding and his retirement party is April 22 (contact Project to attend). Rick was one of the early founders of VSSTF and has performed exceptional and outstanding service in our community to help homeless persons. Rob Orth will be the new Director.

I. County Update by Cindy Cante

On April 6, the board of Supervisors approved a 3.1 million one-time allocation to address problems of homelessness and further the objectives of the 10-year plan.

The 3 parts are

- 1) matching funds 2/1 up to \$2 million for cities to develop year round emergency shelters
- 2) \$600,000 for a pilot social detox program
- 3) \$500,00 for a County Housing Trust Fund contingent on matching funds from the state. (info on Housing Trust Funds:

<http://www.communitychange.org/our-projects/htf>

These proposals were introduced by Spvs Bennett and Long. Letters of thank you to all supervisors were circulated. Spv Peter Foy voted against all proposals, Spv Linda Parks voted against the detox center. Also introduced by Supervisor Bennet and passed (with Spv Foy voting against): convert the existing Hillmont House to a short-term social rehabilitation facility. Beds now located at Hillmont House for long-term care will be moved. Converting all fifteen beds at Hillmont House to short-term beds will help more individuals transition from hospitalization for mental health problems to living back in their own communities with appropriate outpatient care.

II. Report on City Activity by Peter Brown

1. Winter Warming Center now closed.
2. City Planning Workshop was held April 6 to discuss SB 2 and emergency shelters. It was clear that many of the Commissioners need education on the issues. Plans underway to offer study sessions.
3. Santa Paula had been hoping to transition to running a permanent shelter but ran into opposition from some downtown businesses. Peter attended meeting.

4. A Hidden Ventura tour was held with Beth Sutherland (Lift Up Your Voice)'s guidance by a private couple. Thirty of their friends attended and saw River Haven, illegal encampments, WAV, and asked questions of representatives. It was a very successful event.
5. Peter will report to Council April 12 on homeless issues, including OneStop, River Haven. Ken Belden will attend also. On agenda is criteria for Safe Sleep and how Council interfaces with VSSTF. Also, recommendation is to make the committee a standing committee which will subject it to the Brown Act and make all meetings open and publically noticed.
6. El Patio moving forward. Will eventually have 40 rooms.

III. Dan Hardy from Housing Authority

Dan presented on several projects that are moving forward in Ventura for low income housing with estimated completion in 2011 and 12.

IV. Subcommittee reports (meeting times / locations at end)

A. Faith Communities by Bill Finley

1. Homeless Awareness Month will be in November. Letter going out soon to churches, etc under letterheads of various orgs. inviting participation and with a response form. A draft of the letter will be ready May 1.

B. Homeless Prevention by Cindy Cattle

1. Beginning Balance in March \$8,746.00. Donations in March were \$2,546.80, leaving a working balance of \$11,292.80. \$ 5,667.00 total was allocated. Balance is \$ 5,625.80 (as of 4/7/10). Donations received in March include: Ventura Church of Christ \$200; Ventura Missionary \$291 and Community Presbyterian \$1,000 and American Veterans Flagpoles & Flag \$45. (also received the \$1,000 from Kiwanis reported last mo.) Update from Catholic Charities & Project Understanding regarding January services: Frans as of April 6 had assisted 10 households for total of \$4,467; Project Understanding 1 household for \$1,200.- Since inception 129 households helped. April is Project Understanding's month to handle fund.
2. Paul Bramson brought in a bottle with over \$100 collected.
3. New meeting date: second Wednesday at noon at Catholic Charities.

C. Housing Options by Carolyn Briggs

1. Home Share Program up and running 477-7324 or homeshare@gmail.com. Several presentations have been made to spread the word and flyers are available. Muriel Steiger is working as a volunteer assisted by Patricia Hamilton, and Ken Finning is coming to One Stop to help get people into Home Share. Five Home Providers have submitted apps. Two home seekers were matched together and assisted to budget and find a place. An article appeared in the Elks newsletter. Housing Authority helping to refer people to HomeShare

program. The office is open 2 day a week at VCC and also some days at the office on 646 County Square Drive, suite 100.

2. Committee met on March 10 with Jeff Lambert, Community Development Director, Ventura to talk about pending housing projects.

D. Gateway Report by Clyde Reynolds

Looking at specifics like size, and cost estimates. "The concept is growing wings"

E. Community Education by John Jones

1. Decision reached to not meet regularly. Will work on improving the website.

F. Steering Committee by John Jones

1. Making plans for a 3 hour retreat on April 22. Maximum of 15-18 persons to be involved.

2. John and Bill met with Police Chief Ken Corney. A. Discussion on shopping carts. Lots of concerns re ugliness of misused or abandoned carts. Also competing awareness that homeless people use carts for their belongings. Burden would be on store owners to have a system that makes it difficult/impossible to take carts off lot. This is done in many cities. Usually code enforcement supervises plan and Ventura is very low on code enforcement staff now.

Discussion.

B. Chronic offenders, people who are seen daily or several times a day committing minor offenses: open bottle, urinating in public, drunk in public, etc. Plan to convene service providers and share names and specifics on offenders and do some problem solving. Discussion

2. Steering Committee will meet at Starbucks every 3rd

Wednesday of the month at 3:30.

V. Old Business

none

VI. Announcements

1. Lift UpYour Voice is doing a series of workshops: one May 1, for persons with direct experience of homelessness, one on morning of May 8, for others, and a third on the afternoon of May 8, to mix participants. Contact Beth at LUV.Beth@gmail.com or 861-8341 or 644-3898 x101. Reservations are required.
2. NAMI walk May1. Please go on line to register and/or to sponsor \$\$\$\$\$ to support John, Debora and Jill Forman. The VSSTF team is The Vulnerable Persons Unit. Join us for a fun morning for a great cause. Sign up online or talk to John or Debora.
3. Turning Point Breakfast May 5, free breakfast, interesting speaker, speak to John or Debora to attend
4. Salvation Army Prayer Breakfast May 6 at Crowne Plaza

5. Art Walk May 17-18. Lift Up Your Voice photo project will be at My Florist. LUV has a new website. <http://www.uuventura.org/about-us/about-lift-up-your-voice.html>
6. Turning Point submitted a grant request for 12 housing units for mentally ill veterans. It is a national competitive process. A tentative site is being looked at.
7. Donald Sommerfield, a formerly homeless man and writer who is now living in the Shore, won first place in the city of Ventura Art Tales Contest in the adult story category. Don has also had several pieces printed in the Star profiling homeless persons.
8. Salvation Army is hiring an entry level case management person. High School degree required, computer literacy, to oversee safe sleep and the food pantry. Contact Shelli Locklear shelli.locklear@usw.salvationarmy.org

Meeting adjourned at 4:20
Respectfully submitted,
Debora Schreiber
secretary

Next VSSTF Meeting May 5, 3-5 PM

Upcoming events:

- Retirement Party for Rick Pearson April 22, 4:30-7:30.
Contact Project Understanding for details
- NAMI Walk May 1
- Turning Point Breakfast May 5
- Salvation Army Breakfast May 6

Regular Meeting Schedules

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

The **Ventura Social Services Task Force** meets every 1st Wednesday, 3:00-5:00 PM, at Family to Family, 303 N Ventura Ave # E, Ventura 93001. May 5, 3-5 PM,

NEW DATE: The **Homeless Prevention** Subcommittee meets every 2nd Wednesday, 12 noon, Catholic Charities, 303 N Ventura Ave May 12

The **Housing Options** Subcommittee meets every 2nd Wednesday, 4:30 PM, Housing Authority, Snapdragon Lane, Saticoy. May 12

Gateway meets third Friday at Salvation Army on Oak Street, at 2 PM, April 16.

Contact John Jones for Education committee information

<http://www.onecityventura.org>