

MID-WILLAMETTE HOMELESS INITIATIVE TASK FORCE

June 6, 2016

Meeting Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Members – Kathleen Ashley, Warren Bednarz, Gladys Blum, Steve Bobb, Janet Carlson, Kim Freeman, Mark Garton, David Leith, Heidi Mackay, Jerry Moore, Jason Myers, Anna Peterson, Jon Reeves, Verena Wessel, and Jennifer Wheeler.

Guests – District Attorney Walt Beglau, Deputy District Attorney Paige Clarkson, Lt. Tad Larson, Anne-Marie Bandfield, and Jeanine Knight.

Staff – Hitesh Parekh and Lisa Trauernicht, Marion County and Laura Walker, City of Salem

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM by Janet Carlson.

• **WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**

Chair Comments

- May 2 meeting recap
 - Focused on veterans. Thank you to Jennifer Wheeler and Steve Bobb for their work organizing the meeting.
 - Strategic plan process adopted and subcommittees appointed.
- An updated list of the subcommittee meeting dates will be sent out every Monday.
- Meeting times and documents are posted on the MWHI website:
www.homelesstaskforce.net.
- Subcommittee meetings are posted on the website as they are scheduled.
- Lisa Trauernicht will be assuming staff duties for the MWHI Task Force. Commissioner Carlson thanked Hitesh Parekh for his work on behalf of the task force.

Task Force Member Comments

No comments

Approval of May 2 Meeting Minutes (ACTION)

MOTION: Steve Bobb moved approval of the May 2 meeting minutes. Seconded by Warren Bednarz. A voice vote was unanimous.

• **TARGET POPULATION (DISCUSSION)**

- See [Target Population Chart](#)
- Discussed which population(s) the group wants to focus on.
- Subcommittees may want to focus on various target populations.
- 2016 U.S. poverty level: Family (of four) \$24,300, individual \$11,880.
- Numbers on the target population document are underrepresented. Difficult to get an accurate count of the homeless population.

- Runaway and homeless youth under-reported. Counting of this population has changed over the past few years and is continuing to change in an effort to get a more representative number.
- Financial Subcommittee is looking at the number of families that are close to homelessness, and the need for affordable housing.
- Simonka Place has served 500 women (unduplicated) since September.
- School district provided an annual number over the school year rather than the Point in Time Count.
- Point-in-time counts are intended to give a representative number taking the count on one day.
- City of Salem has an extensive waiting list for housing vouchers and public housing.
 - Approximately three-year wait for vouchers
 - Difficult to get an unduplicated list of people in need of housing as those on one housing list may also be on the lists for surrounding housing programs.
- Some Task Force members desired not to select a target population, in an effort to not leave a group out.
- **INNOVATIVE PUBLIC SAFETY STRATEGIES (INFORMATION)**
 District Attorney Walt Beglau, Deputy District Attorney Paige Clarkson, Lt. Tad Larson, Marion County Sheriff's Office and Anne-Marie Bandfield, Marion County Health Department, presented this topic. **See PowerPoint presentation Substance Abuse and Criminal Charges**

- Public safety often intersects with homelessness.
- Marion County is taking a holistic approach to dealing with quality of life and livability concerns and getting people connected with services, using the best practices from around the United States in an effort to get the best outcomes.
- Background given on criminal charges related to possession of a controlled substance (PCS).
 - Often seen in tandem with other crimes, sometimes related to a mental health crisis or with homelessness.
 - PCS crimes are currently felonies.
- Individuals with addictive behaviors that lead to criminal charges face barriers to employment, securing housing, getting a driver's license, and need additional assistance.
- Marion County District Attorney's office filed 862 felony PCS charges in 2015. An additional 555 PCS charges were not filed.
 - First time offenders with no criminal history or individuals with just trace amounts of narcotics not filed.
- Accountability, public safety, livability for the community, proper stewardship over public prosecutorial resources, and rehabilitation are concerns of the District Attorney's office.
- Criminalizing addiction and mental health problems does not work. Deterrence cannot be the goal; it has to be about helping people get better.
- Need to use criminal justice system as a bridge to treatment not a barrier.
- Offering diversionary probations for motivated individuals is a consideration.

- The court could order a dismissal of charges for successful completion of the treatment plan.
 - Maximizing the use of successful treatment courts to assist probationers.
 - Targeting high risk offenders that do greater damage in the community through Public Health using the Criminal Justice System.
 - Early intervention by allowing the DA the discretion of shifting from felony charges to misdemeanor-level charges for new offenders
- Harm Reduction Model: Collaborative effort for chronic, service resistant addicts and offenders.
 - Meeting people where they are.
 - Success is reducing the harm to the individual and the community around them.
 - Requires community involvement, program management, and funding.
- Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) pioneered in Seattle.
 - Coordination between patrol officer on the street, sheriff's deputies, and case managers.
 - Officers know the chronic offenders and what their needs are.
 - Uses the potential of criminal charges to encourage treatment, housing, and employment, to make people better.
 - Diverting people from the criminal justice process by getting them into treatment.
- Paradigm shift in the District Attorney's office, trying to make a change in how law enforcement responds to addiction problems in the community.
- Connecting municipal courts that deal with many of the livability crimes of addiction and homelessness will increase the collaboration in getting people to the services they need.
- Background given on the Crisis Response Outreach Team (CORT). [See Diagram](#)
- - Reduction in jail bookings since 2006.
 - Large numbers of individuals experiencing homelessness also suffer with mental health issues.
 - Unique to Marion County is the longest continuously open 24/7 crisis care center in the state.
 - Wraparound services immediately accessible by law enforcement, correctional institutions, and the Salem Hospital.
- A quality sobering station is of great need in the community.
 - Subcommittees can evaluate this and bring recommendations to the Task Force.
- **SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES (DISCUSSION)**
 - Subcommittees will bring proposals to the Task Force for consideration each month, and can also seek letters of support when they begin working on grant funding for specific issues.

Affordable Housing Subcommittee

 - One meeting so far, interested in finding funding mechanisms.
 - Interested in partnerships and private funding streams.
 - Identifying obstacles to affordable housing in the community.
 - Identifying key players. Looking at best practices.

- Catholic Community Services is working on a LIFT proposal for a Woodburn property.

Support Services/Education Subcommittee

- Identifying existing services, service providers, and gaps, and creating a central community resource portal for information and resource sharing amongst providers.

Public Safety Subcommittee

- Will meet later in June.

Veterans Subcommittee

- Will meet Thursday, June 9, 10:00 AM, at the Polk County Courthouse.
- Making connections with other groups working with veterans to determine what is being done in the community.

Financial Subcommittee

- Met May 31.
- Current lending practices discussed.
- Working on foreclosure prevention and ability to fund a greater number of multi-family and affordable housing projects.
- Discussed the barriers to building affordable housing and land use zoning changes that could make it easier for developers to move forward.

Health and Housing Subcommittee

- Kenny La Point, OR Housing and Community Services, is the lead.
- Meets on the second Monday of each month at noon at Willamette Valley Community Health conference room, Ryan Drive, Salem.
- Not exclusively an MWHI group, but a portion of their work will be to propose recommendations particularly related to the Medicaid-eligible population.

Focus Groups/Coalition Coordination Subcommittee

- Put together strategies to interact with and gain insight from people that are currently homeless and those that have recently been homeless and successfully made it out.
 - Get to the places where individuals are receiving services and use our partnerships to conduct focus groups.
 - Putting together survey questions to go to people who do not come to meetings
 - Getting an understanding of the informal assets in the community.
- Subcommittee meetings are recorded; however, no written minutes are being created. Working on a plan for making subcommittee meeting recordings available to the public.
 - Support Services/Education Subcommittee
 - Bruce Bailey would like to be added to the group.
 - Steven Goins asked to be removed.
 - Veterans Subcommittee
 - Bruce Bailey, Wayne Crowder, Elan Lambert and Mitch Sparks would like to be added.
 - Mental Health Housing Subcommittee title has changed to Health and Housing. It is part of the Mid Valley Housing group.

Revised the language of the charge to: Work with those developing a proposal for Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Housing and Community Services funds to deliver support services, connecting with Willamette Valley Community Health (Coordinated Care Organization) and other community service providers.

MOTION: Anna Peterson moved to add the participants on both the Support Services/Education and Veterans subcommittees and delete the member from Support Services/Education, and revise the language on the Health and Housing Subcommittee. Warren Bednarz seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

- **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Herm Boes:

- Has worked with homeless people for ten years.
- Homeless people are our neighbors.
- Thanked the task force for the time being put into this.
- Faith community is doing a tremendous amount of work in the community to help homeless. Excited to see the work MWHI is doing and looking forward to seeing how the efforts will combine to help individuals.

Victor Reppeto:

- Thanked law enforcement, especially Walt Beglau and Mark Garton, for the difference they are making in our system.
- Thanked the task force for bringing services to the point of contact.
- Training for police officers is important, especially in communication skills.

- **WRAP-UP**

Additional Comments

- Next meeting is Wednesday, July 20, 4:00-6:00 PM, at the Keizer Civic Center.
 - Social service coordination is the topic.
 - Network of Care and rental managers panel will be presenting.
- Location for the Veterans Subcommittee meetings may change. Updates will be posted on the website or call Commissioner Wheeler's office, (503)623-8173.
- Financial Subcommittee meeting, Wednesday, June 22, 2:00-3:00 PM, at Courthouse Square.
- Thanks given to public safety officials for their presentation.
- Check the MWHI website for updated meeting times. www.homelesstaskforce.net

ADJOURNED Meeting adjourned at 5:56 PM.