

MID-WILLAMETTE HOMELESS INITIATIVE TASK FORCE

February 7, 2017

Meeting Minutes

ATTENDANCE

Members: Tom Andersen, Kathleen Ashley, Bruce Bailey, Warren Bednarz, Chuck Bennett, Janet Carlson, Cathy Clark, David Leith, Jerry Moore, Jason Myers, Irma Oliveros, Jon Reeves, and Shaney Starr.

Guests – Karen Ray, Karen Ray Associates.

Staff – Hitesh Parekh (recorder) and Lisa Trauernicht, Marion County; Laura Walker, City of Salem.

Meeting was called to order by Chuck Bennett at 4:00 P.M.

1. WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

Task Force Member Introductions

Announcements/Chair Comments

- Chair Bennett announced that this was the last meeting of the task force.
- The City of Salem is working on phase 2 of its strategic plan, and it will include homelessness as a major challenge to be addressed by the city.

Approval of January 23, 2017 Minutes

- **MOTION:** Chuck Bennett moved approval of the January 23 meeting minutes. Seconded by Janet Carlson. A voice vote was unanimous. Warren Bednarz and Tom Andersen abstained.

Public Comment

Summary of Mr. Charles Fong's comments (Salem resident and twelve year homeowner).

- Not an employee or shareholder of Airbnb.
 - Knows a 60 year old single parent, laid off from her job two years ago and on verge of being homeless, who launched Airbnb hospitality. This enabled her to fill her income gap.
 - Mr. Fong wants to create long term co-housing for co-sharing as a sustainable rental model.
 - Working with homeless organizations to launch a social media campaign to "rethink your home."
 - Believes project has the merit to offer new housing stock without any public funding and will add a revenue stream to working families in Oregon.
 - City of Salem code allows up to five unrelated adults in a single family residential unit.
 - Also hoping Salem City Council will consider and approve the Airbnb concept as it will bring in revenue for householders.

Summary of Mr. T.J. Putman's comments:

- Director of Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network.
- Mr. Putman operates a faith-based shelter for families that helps them get into homes.
- Domestic violence is a number one cause of families experiencing homelessness.

- Wants to see homeless families highlighted by task force.
- Since January 1, 2017, there have been 75 unduplicated families (representing 235 kids each month) struggling with homelessness in the community.
 - Wants to encourage task force to make these homeless families a priority.
 - The YWCA has closed and very few shelters serve families.
- Excited at how Salem and Keizer are partnering to award funding for families.
 - Through grants, the Network has been able to help 60 families with transitional housing where Network pays the deposit and six months of rent.
 - Seen a 95% success rate with this type of arrangement where cities grant funds to non-profit agencies to aid the homeless.
 - Concerned grant donations are not in the MWHI draft strategic plan.
 - With Section 8 vouchers being frozen, this is one way to get people into a home.

E-Mail from Henrietta Griffiths:

- Recommends getting churches involved with solving the homeless problem. Can help mentor, tutor, and network with those experiencing homelessness.

Summary of Tina Hansen's comments:

- Pleased to hear discussion about churches getting involved with the homeless.
- Salem Alliance Church has an employment network to assist job hunters.
- Applauds all the work that went into opening warming shelters throughout various locations in the city.

2: COMMUNITY FORUMS REPORT

- Community Action Agency Director Jon Reeves presented this item.
- Summary of presentation:
 - Mr. Reeves chaired the Focus Groups/Coalition Coordination Subcommittee of the MWHI Task Force.
 - The subcommittee surveyed the following three groups about the homeless problem:
 - Homeless/recently homeless;
 - Community partners; and
 - Community members.
 - For all of the above, 123 surveys were returned.
 - (See [Issue Brief](#), and [Youth Survey](#))

Homeless/recently homeless Survey Results

- 57 of these were from individuals currently experiencing homeless.
- 39 women and sixteen men.
- 35 were sheltered at home with a family member.
- Shelter respondents were generally content with being in shelters.
- Homeless cited the following reasons as the cause of their homelessness:
 - Unemployment, addiction, criminal background, medical issues, bad relationships, poor rental history, mental health issues.
- Survey respondents said they needed the following services:
 - Free monthly bus passes, showers, laundry facility, and transportation.

Community Partner Survey Responses

- Three community partners submitted surveys along with 48 members of the CAN-DO neighborhood association.
 - Suggested a continuum of care from crisis to intervention looking at restoration and development of housing for the homeless;
 - Important to Identify the main causes of an individual's homelessness.

Community Member Survey Responses

- Community responses to the survey indicated the following need to be addressed to help the homeless:
 - Lack of housing and shelter, lack of permanent supportive housing, mental health issues, and employment and job assistance
- Homeless people need the following basics:
 - Food, shelter, bathroom, laundry, clothing, addiction and mental health treatment and services.
- Recommended:
 - There should be better coordination amongst service providers and information sharing.
 - Providers hold regular meetings for planning purposes, especially when services change.

3. STRATEGIC PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Commissioner Janet Carlson presented this item.

- Summary of presentation:
 - Task force approved 21 strategic plan recommendations at the last meeting.
 - Three recommendations were not approved and are being returned for consideration today, [see attachment](#).

A. Prior Recommendation:

Work with landlords and rental management companies to develop a flexible plan for rental fees and deposits, to allow seniors the opportunity to rent.

Revised Version:

Develop tactics to help reduce risk to private landlords and help incentivize them to rent to seniors and people with special needs. (Based on Lane County's Plan.)

Discussion:

The PACE team looked at Lane County's strategic plan for homelessness and found it was a good recommendation to add to our plan.

MOTION: Commissioner Carlson moved the revised version of this recommendation into the strategic plan. Warren Bednarz seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

B. Prior Recommendation:

Work with community partners, such as the local hospital and Coordinated Care Organizations, to support a housing community for seniors (and other adults) with behavioral issues. A housing

community of homes, such as Adult Foster Homes with special staffing, would provide a safer setting for all.

Revised Version:

Work with community partners, such as the local hospital and Coordinated Care Organizations, to advocate for appropriate housing to address the safety and care needs of seniors with behavioral challenges due to brain injuries and other diagnoses. (Northwest Senior & Disability Services and Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network)

Discussion:

Clarified the revised recommendation will focus on seniors with brain injuries.

MOTION. Commissioner Carlson moved the revised version of this recommendation into the strategic plan. Mayor Cathy Clark seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

C. Prior Recommendation:

Provide economic resources for veterans, including free bus passes, gift cards, and rent support. (Willamette PACE Team)

Revised Recommendation:

Do not approve - most organizations already provide these resources.

In addition to the follow up recommendations, there are also the following new recommendations to be considered by the task force.

D. Add Strategy:

Offer training opportunities to landlords and local agencies on ADA requirements and HUD guidance relating to service animals and assistance animals for people with disabilities in housing and HUD-funded programs. (Commissioner Carlson)

Discussion:

- Service animal representatives have introduced legislation that will specify the requirements for claiming a service animal.
- There are emotional support animals and service animals.
- A number of individuals can offer training such as the Fair Housing Council of Oregon, Salem Rental Association. Salem Police Department also does its landlord tenant training three times a year.

MOTION. Commissioner Carlson made a motion to move this strategy into the strategic plan. Warren Bednarz seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

E. Delete Strategy:

3.13 ASSESSMENT: Develop a Landlord Assessment Tool for assisting high barrier clients in obtaining housing.

Revised Recommendation:

Remove recommendation (Cindy Becker, Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network)

MOTION. Commissioner Carlson made a motion to delete this strategy. Warren Bednarz seconded the motion. A voice vote was unanimous.

4. STRATEGIC PLAN ADOPTION (DISCUSSION/ACTION)

Commissioner Carlson presented this item.

- Summary of presentation:
- Approximately one year ago, the Mid-Willamette Homeless Initiative Task Force was formed and held its first meeting.
 - Talked about creating a strategic plan.
 - Format of plan was presented at task force meetings in March and April 2016.
 - Then broke into eight subcommittees to work on individual topics.
- In September, the task force began adopting the subcommittee recommendations. The final recommendations were adopted today.
- Task force also entertained “at-large” recommendations from anyone who wanted to bring them forward.
- Willamette MBA students (PACE team) were asked to review other jurisdictions’ strategic plans for ideas.
- Have now placed recommendations and ideas into a [draft strategic plan](#).
 - Plan includes annual and five year performance measures.
 - No targets/actual numbers at this time.
 - Willamette PACE team will add these during their second semester.

MOTION: Commissioner Carlson moved to adopt the strategic plan and include all the approved recommendations. Seconded by Warren Bednarz; motion carried. A voice vote was unanimous.

Discussion

- Needs of homeless families (as mentioned by Mr. T.J. Putman) are covered in the strategic plan.
- Gaps in the plan can be filled as we move forward.
- Plan will be a great platform for each of our communities to build upon.
- The City of Salem has already begun working on the plan.

5. PIVOT TO IMPLEMENTATION-GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Karen Ray, consultant, Karen Ray Associates, made a presentation on [pivoting the strategic plan to implementation](#).

- Explained that by coming together to implement the plan:
 - Individual entities would be becoming interdependent and not independent.
 - Organizations must move from being stand-alone entities to develop inter-organizational planning.
 - There were three different levels of engaging and investment: Cooperate, coordinate, and collaborate.
 - To change how the community deals with homelessness, there must be a systems change, a result of what happens when individual organizations change the way they use their resources.
 - Involves policy changes, knowledge improvement and service integration.
 - Each organization in the community that cares about and uses resources on this issue will need to think through their role in the plan.

- Strategies must focus on results, relationships and resiliency, making sure the work continues.

Summary of Discussion

- Other cities in Oregon have organized successful responses to the homeless issue through their councils of governments.
 - Lane County Council of Governments consists of local governments and special districts.
- Our Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments (COG) includes Marion, Polk and Yamhill County.
 - Already works collaboratively on transportation, planning, and training.
 - A board of directors oversees the work of the agency.
 - Yamhill County is also very interested in the homelessness issue.
 - The council is neutral and can call on technical advisors for help as needed.
- Consider asking the COG to hire a project manager to continue the MWHI work.
- For the first year, Marion County and City of Salem will contribute to hire the project manager. Keizer is also looking at contributing resources towards this position.
 - Strategic plan implementation becomes COG responsibility.
 - Identify an advisory council made up of community leaders to advise the COG board.
 - Can benefit by COG’s technical and governance expertise.
- Makes sense to have a project manager move the strategic plan forward.
- Proposed project manager position must:
 - Be fairly “high level,” someone who has contacts in the community.
 - Be a full time employee managed by COG.
- **MOTION.** Mayor Clark moved that the following proposal be added as an “action” item to the agenda: A proposition to the COG Executive Committee to hire a project manager to implement the MWHI Strategic Plan. Executive Committee will then take this proposal to the COG leadership meeting on March 21. Seconded by Janet Carlson; motion carried. A voice vote was unanimous.

ACTION ITEM

MOTION. Mayor Clark moved that the MWHI task force propose to the MWCOG that a program manager be housed as an employee of the Council of Governments to carry out the strategic plan as adopted by the task force. Seconded by Jon Reeves; motion carried. A voice vote was unanimous.

Discussion:

Mr. Reeves suggested amending the motion to have a transition team recruited by task force members assist with this transition. Co-chairs will help recruit task force members to be on the transition team.

- One of the first tasks of the project manager will be to develop a memorandum of understanding.
- Eventually some type of community progress reports should also be considered.

6. WRAPPING UP OUR WORK

- In recognition of the task force's work , the COG awarded the Regional Project Cooperative Award for 2016 to the cities of Keizer and Salem and Marion and Polk Counties.
- Commissioner Carlson thanked the council members for serving on the council and staff and presented them with certificates of gratitude.

ADJOURNED 6:14 PM