

Minutes
Homeless Task Force
MEETING DATE: February 19, 2008
United Way
7:00 – 8:30 a.m.

Taskforce Members

Rev. Cheryl Jefferson Bell Sue Castile Gypsy Claar Connie Dietz Sharon Fearey
Jack Focht Patrick Hanrahan Lou Heldman Bishop Michael Jackels Bishop Scott Jones
Steve Martens Janet L. Miller Tim Norton Marsha Stanyer Mary K. Vaughn

Ex officio members: Winston Brooks Bill Buchanan H. Edward Flentje Ron Holt

Welcome

Jack Focht called the meeting to order at 7:06 a.m. Mr. Focht welcomed and thanked Task Force members for their diligence over the past 18 months. Mr. Focht also thanked Sedgwick County staff for their hard work and highlighted Janet Miller's contribution to the Task Force. After Mr. Focht expressed appreciation, Mr. William Buchanan, Sedgwick County Manager, expressed thanks to Task Force members, United Way, and Sedgwick County staff for their hard work on the Task Force and willingness to serve. After the words of appreciation, the minutes from January 23 meeting were approved.

Presentations and Community Group Contacts

As the Task Force sought public feed back on the draft plan, Mr. Focht and Ms. Miller highlighted the different ways that TECH sought public input. A letter was sent to the Chamber of Commerce, Visioneering, and Builders, Inc. Also, presentations were made to the following community groups:

- Wichita Area Association of Realtors (WAAR)
- Advocates to End Chronic Homelessness (AECH)
- Wichita Community Foundation
- Board of Apartment Managers
- Downtown Ministers
- Sedgwick County Mental Health Advisory Board
- Sedgwick County Human Services Managers

These presentations were a part of TECH's community outreach effort in addition to the public engagement event held on February 7 at Century II.

Review of Public Input Data

As TECH gathered public input from different stakeholders, data was collected. Surveys about the TECH plan were distributed at multiple public engagement events. Ms. Jenni Gluszek, Sedgwick County staff, highlighted the overall results. The overall results showed the following:

- Citizens were supportive of a One-Stop Resource and Referral Center to be located downtown, or along a City bus route, that is open on evenings and on weekends. Overall, 84 percent were supportive of a Resource and Referral Center.
- Citizens were supportive of Permanent Supportive Housing (4.5 out of 6). Responses were more neutral on whether support services should be required (3.4 out of 6).

- Citizens were supportive of additional emergency housing (4.3 out of 6) with a bed selected as the most appropriate form.
- The majority of citizens believe that funding is insufficient (73 percent) to the challenge of ending chronic homelessness and government should reallocate current spending (60 percent).
- Citizens believed that an Oversight Committee was necessary (81 percent) with their most important task being of evaluation of plan implementation and results (5.2 out of 6).
- In terms of implementation, Permanent Supportive Housing was ranked most important in order to end Chronic Homelessness.

As the presentation concluded, Ms. Miller stated that the community had a better understanding of the “Housing First” concept. Because the concept is complex, there was concern that understanding the concept might be more difficult. To implement the plan, Mr. Focht indicated that the community needs a spirit of cooperation. Other TECH members expressed the same sentiment. Commissioner Norton indicated that the plan had been through the filter of the public and that it was time to move forward and adopt the plan.

As TECH prepares to go before the governing bodies, Ms. Janet Miller suggested that TECH request one action step: that both governing bodies appoint an oversight group before elected officials adopt the plan. As discussion concluded, Commission Norton made a motion to adopt the plan without any amendments. Mary K. Vaughn seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Next Steps

TECH members agreed that the next step for the Task Force should be to present the Plan to End Chronic Homelessness to both governing bodies. The Task Force will present to the Sedgwick County Board of County Commissioners on Wednesday, March 12 at 9 a.m. and to the City of Wichita City Council on Tuesday, March 18 during their afternoon workshop.

Adjournment

After TECH members decided on future action steps, the meeting concluded with TECH members expressing thanks to Jack Focht, the Task Force Chair, for his leadership.