

Minutes
Homeless Taskforce
August 30, 2006
United Way 245 N. Water
7:00 – 8:30 am

Taskforce Members:

Rev. Cheryl Bell Sue Castille Gypsy Claar Connie Dietz Jack Focht
 Patrick Hanrahan Lou Heldman Bernie Hudspeth Bishop Michael Jackels
 Bishop Scott Jones Steve Martens Janet Miller Tim Norton Marsha
Stanyer Mary K. Vaughn

Ex officio members: Winston Brooks Bill Buchanan George Kolb

Staff: Jenni Gluszek Beth Oaks Jeff Porter Gloria Summers

Welcome

Bill Buchanan welcomed attendees to the meeting and led the group in self-introductions.

Review of Goals

Jack Focht thanked the members for serving on the taskforce. It was noted many members represent organizations doing excellent work in addressing homeless issues in the community, but a systematic approach needs to be developed. Focht stated there are two primary objectives for members 1) develop a 10 year plan to end homelessness in Sedgwick County 2) act as advocates for the implementation of the group's recommendations. The resolution establishing the group is clear; deliver recommendations to end chronic homelessness in the community by February 28, 2007.

Presentation of United Way Report

Beth Oaks and Gloria Summers provided a brief presentation on the *Overview of Homelessness* report commissioned by the City of Wichita and Sedgwick County. Oaks noted the report is mainly a compilation of data; there is little interpretation, which will allow the members to develop their own conclusions. The report includes a discussion of causes and definitions of homelessness. Also of note in the report is the section addressing barriers to affordable housing. Other sections of the report highlight programming in the area, best practices from other communities, and funding opportunities. Summers gave an overview of the contents of the appendices, and encouraged members to examine them at length. Staff of the United Way offered the gather additional information the taskforce deems necessary.

In 2005 Wichita/Sedgwick County had a homeless population of 533, of which 184 were classified as chronically homeless. Each year the Department of Housing and Urban Development requires a headcount of homeless populations, last conducted in January of 2006. Members discussed differences in homeless population count between USD 259 and the point in time figures. USD 259 includes families "doubled up," multiple families in a single family residence, in their counts. It was suggested the numbers collected for HUD and the school district are trending tools. Members agreed

determining ways to the underlying causes of homelessness and near-homelessness was more important than attempting to reconcile different methodologies of determining the homeless population.

Federal Funding

Mary K Vaughn, Wichita Housing Authority, discussed federal funding for initiatives addressing homelessness. The City of Wichita is considered an entitlement city, making it eligible for direct receipt of federal funds to address community housing needs. The City maintains contracts with a number of partner agencies to provide direct services for the homeless. Vaughn distributed a handout detailing the allocations to the City and the partners for specific service delivery areas.

One of the direct services provided by the city is the administration of the Section 8 housing programs. Section 8 programs subsidize housing for those meeting certain criteria. In June when the City began accepting new applications for Section 8 vouchers they received over 2,000 applications.

NAEH 10 Year Plan

Focht gave a quick overview of the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) 10-year plan. In researching the NAEH plan Focht was able to contact Kari Bedell, one of the organization's capacity builders, who will be in Wichita in late October. Bedell indicated in interest in either meeting with members or addressing the taskforce during the visit to Wichita.

Future Meetings

The members agreed to meet every other Wednesday from 7-8:30 am beginning September 6, 2006. All meetings will be held at the United Way of the Plains Board Room 245 N. Water. Meetings will be open to the public, but public comment will not be accepted until the taskforce deems it appropriate.

Adjournment

Having no other business the meeting was adjourned.