

**Minutes**  
**Homeless Taskforce**  
**November 15, 2006**  
**United Way 245 N. Water**  
**7:00 – 8:30 am**

**Taskforce Members:**

Rev. Cheryl Jefferson Bell  Sue Castile  Gypsy Claar  Connie Dietz  Jack Focht  
 Patrick Hanrahan  Lou Heldman  Bernie Hudspeth  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  George Kolb  Ron Holt

Staff:  Jenni Gluszek  Beth Oaks  Jeff Porter  Gloria Summers

**Welcome**

Jack Focht called the meeting to order at 7 a.m.

**Minutes**

The minutes from the November 1 meeting were approved with Ron Holt's name added as attending.

**New Business**

**Hunter Health Clinic Presentation**

Susette Schwartz, CEO of Hunter Health, presented on her clinic's role within the homeless community. Since 1987 Hunter Health has received federal grant money to be the homeless medical care provider in Wichita. Last year the amount of this grant was \$400,000. Hunter Health provides a wide variety of services ranging from family practice to OB/Gyn to dental. All services available are listed in a brochure Schwartz provided to the taskforce.

Hunter Health provides a great deal of outreach. They contract with Inter-Faith Ministries to transport the homeless to get to the various clinics for appointments. Additionally, Hunter Health has a shelter nurse who does TB screenings and does triage back to clinics.

Schwartz provided several handouts. The first listed the top ten reasons all patients are seen at Hunter Health and the top ten reasons homeless patients are seen. The most striking difference is the number of pain-related reasons the homeless come to the clinic (5 of the top 10 reasons). The second handout showed the number of unique homeless users/patients seen in 2005: 1,448. This number includes those who live in shelters, transitional housing, on the street or are doubling up. The third provided handout showed the breakdown by type of living condition for homeless patients in 2005. Finally, Schwartz provided a handout on the age, sex, race and insurance and poverty levels of their homeless clients.

When asked what niche is not currently being filled for the homeless, Schwartz stated the need for dental care. While Medicaid will cover children's dental, most adults without insurance just go without this care. KDHE and the Vision Group are looking at a local dental school. Schwartz was then asked why she thought a program that was started last year in the ERs to refer individuals to dentists did not work. She mentioned a few key reasons. First, uninsured individuals (the vast majority of homeless) feared they would be billed for this visit. Secondly, the ER is typically a relatively convenient location

via a bus route or walking. Some of the dentist's offices were not. Schwartz feels that the best thing that can be done to improve dental health in this population is to support the safety net providers so they can expand services.

Schwartz also responded to questions about substance abuse patients. Hunter Health has three counselors. Individuals found on the street who need in-patient treatment are sent to Options Adult Services on Millwood Street. Hunter Health pays Options Adult Services \$30,000 a year based on a grant for services provided to the homeless. This amount has not increased over the years despite an increasing number of clients served. Hunter Health provides follow up meetings and counseling for these individuals.

In response to whether or not being open extended hours would be beneficial, Schwartz shared that Hunter Health has applied for grants for years for this purpose. If Hunter Health were open in the evenings, this would alleviate some strain on the ERs.

### **Update on Meeting with George Hansen**

Lou Heldman and Jack Focht gave a recap of their breakfast with George Hansen, CEO of Corporate Lodging. Hansen's business matches people with hotel rooms, after companies contract with them. Last year after Hurricane Katrina, Corporate Lodging was hired by the Red Cross and FEMA to do a similar match for displaced victims. As the hotel stays became extended, Corporate Lodging was asked to find apartments for these individuals. Every few months, Congress extends this contract further. Many of the individuals placed were like the current homeless and were doubling up with friends and family at the time of the storm.

Corporate Lodging uses an E-Bay type system of matching individuals with appropriate housing (both apartments and rental houses) and landlords. In this electronic database the housing options are listed with details besides cost including restrictions (i.e. for shelters: bed availability and configuration). To create this system, Corporate Lodging sent out staff to do interviews with landlords and gather accurate information.

Mary K. Vaughn offered that Wichita did a similar process when trying to place Katrina victims. She noted that it worked and might be a good suggestion for the 10-year plan. It was then discussed whether or not the restriction on growing the Section 8 program was due to not enough vouchers or not enough affordable housing. Vaughn stated that while there is a decent amount of what most would consider "affordable" housing, many individuals in our community still don't make enough income for that housing.

### **Future Meetings**

In keeping with bi-weekly Wednesday morning meetings, the next meeting will be Wednesday November 29, 2006 from 7-8:30 a.m. The meeting will be in the United Way of the Plains Board Room, 245 N. Water. Meetings are open to the public. County staff will share community engagement options. A meeting with Jack DeBoer will either be recapped by the taskforce chair or DeBoer will be present to dialogue with the group.

### **Adjournment**

Having no other business the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 a.m.