

**Minutes**  
**Homeless Taskforce**  
**MEETING DATE: May 2, 2007**  
**United Way**

**Taskforce Members**

Rev. Cheryl Jefferson Bell  Sue Castile  Gypsy Claar  Connie Dietz  
 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  George Kolb  Ron Holt

**Welcome**

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

**New Business**

Minutes were approved.

*Mary K. Vaughn's Trip to Phoenix*

Mary K. went to Phoenix for a work conference last week and while there learned about the Human Services Campus (HSC), a 24/7 homeless center ran by Maricopa County and the City of Phoenix. This site has been in existence for 18 months and offers a variety of services including 800 shelter beds on site. Mary K. toured the HSC and learned about its approach on behalf of the TECH. A short film was shown that displayed the Human Services Campus approach to homelessness.

The campus is comprised of a dozen agencies that offer services to the homeless in the following areas:

- Jobs
- Housing
- Substance abuse counseling
- Government benefits
- Identification
- Medical needs including dental
- Post office

After the video Mary K. provided some other insights she had while visiting. Her primary concern was the number of individuals just "hanging out" on the campus, laying around, playing dominos, just "being." Mary K. explained the HSC's rationale is that one day these individuals will decide they're tired of just hanging out, and will get up and go to the appropriate agency to receive the services they need to be self-sustaining. Mary K's concern was not in whether or not this was the right philosophy but whether this was a philosophy that would be accepted in the Wichita community. Additionally Mary K. struggled to think of a site in Wichita a campus of this size could be located. Finally Mary K. was not convinced the project eliminated the obstacles of homelessness. Nonetheless the services offered were impressive.

*Atlanta Trip*

Jack Focht, Janet Miller and two County staff will go to Atlanta on May 9 to tour the Gateway Intake Center and meet with the United Way of Atlanta. The group spent time after Mary K's

presentation brainstorming the questions they would like answered in Atlanta. These questions follow.

1. What is the goal of the Gateway Center? To get people out of sight or to provide services?
2. How was the location selected? Is the site accessible? Does it “disturb” other citizens?
3. What services do people get at the center? What do people need to succeed?
4. Who is accountable? Who owns this project/center? Is it the City, County or an independent agency? Who are the key players?
5. Regarding funding, how were the resources pulled together?
6. How did Atlanta get people to voluntarily move to one centralized location?
7. What housing options exist for homeless individuals who are or become self-sustaining? Are there SROs in town? How many? How are those funded?
8. Does the Gateway Center address general and chronic populations, or just chronic?
9. Is there a mix of faith and community-based agencies involved in the project?
10. Does Atlanta have a City Housing Trust Fund? If yes, what is the revenue source?
11. How long has the Gateway Center been running?
12. What lessons have you learned? If you had it to do over, what would you do differently?
13. What is going on in areas outside of Atlanta that are more close in nature to Wichita?
14. How do you deal with “If you build it, they will come?” Are there populations surges based on the seasons?
15. Does the Gateway assist people in getting their identification? If yes, how so?
16. Does Gateway do any street outreach to the homeless who have not come voluntarily to the center?

A report of this trip’s findings will be shared at the May 16 meeting.

*Focus of report: chronic or general homeless?*

The taskforce took up the discussion again regarding whether the focus of the TECH’s plan should be the chronically homeless or the homeless in general. One suggestion was made to focus on the HUD chronic definition but also include families with children. Most communities’ plans moved from an initial chronic focus to a more general one. This suggests as taskforces plan they realize the problem is too big to focus only on the chronic group. One member brought up the fact that while ideally the TECH would solve all problems, often if one tries to solve too many problems, he/she ends up accomplishing nothing.

The topic of bringing all current providers to the table was again mentioned. The need for a more coordinated approach to service delivery would be the purpose of this meeting/summit. Focht took the opportunity to transition to the next topic of discussion, the restructuring of the Community Council on Homeless Advocacy (CCHA).

*Reconfiguration of CCHA*

Focht met with members of the CCHA last week and discussed the restructuring of this group, which has been struggling for some time. The role of CCHA is to do just what the TECH is looking for, coordinate services for the homeless in this area. Focht mentioned that members of the taskforce may get calls in the coming days asking them to be a member of the reconfigured CCHA.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:06 a.m. At the next meeting, the group going to Atlanta will present their findings.