

Minutes
Homeless Task Force
MEETING DATE: November 14, 2007
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 George Kolb Ron Holt

Welcome

Jack Focht called the meeting to order at 7:06 a.m. Minutes were approved.

Approval of Resource and Referral Center Documents

Ms. Janet Miller began the meeting with an overview of changes to the Resource and Referral Center documents. Changes include those that were requested at the October 31 TECH meeting. (Detailed changes highlighted in October 31 minutes) In addition, a note was added to the end of the document indicating that additional information was needed to determine whether the center will be open 24 hours.

Next, questions were raised about the specific location of the Resource and Referral Center. It was stated that the location of the center should be determined by the governance board who oversees the plan. After questions and concerns were addressed, Mary K. Vaughn made a motion to approve both Resource and Referral documents. Bishop Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion of “Housing First” Component

After approval of the Resource and Referral Center documents, discussion moved toward the “Housing First” with supportive services available. Highlights from the “Housing First” component include:

- Identify chronic homeless as target population of “Housing First”
- Describe “Housing First” model
- Provide access to wrap-around services
- Provide intensive 24-hour case management
- Utilize scattered site apartments
- Require recipients to pay up to 30 percent of their income for rent and utilities
- Hire a “Housing First” specialist dedicated to overseeing the program

As discussion continued, questions were raised about 119 units described in the action steps and timeline component of the document. TECH members had questions about how the Task Force subcommittee arrived at 119 housing units as a community need. It was stated this conclusion was derived from the Continuum of Care SuperNOFA application that is submitted by the community annually.

Next, discussion continued as questions were raised about community resources needed to provide services. It was stated that all components of the plan will require a community partnership. It should not be assumed that government or any one sector of the community

will be required to address all problems and challenges associated with the homeless community. As the “Housing First” conversation concluded, members were asked to approve the document. Bishop Jones made a motion to approve the “Housing First” with supportive services available document. Patrick Hanrahan seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion of Plan Outline

In moving toward drafting a plan, Janet Miller presented an outline of the five sections of the plan which includes proposed solutions. It was proposed that the plan should be succinct but should include back-up information. In addition to previously discussed solutions, the outline highlights the development of a governance structure which had not been previously discussed. It was stated that development of a governance structure is critical to the future implementation of the plan.

As the plan is developed, it was decided that each solution should feature action steps to assist with future implementation of the plan. It was also suggested that a sixth solution would be to improve coordination of HMIS data management. Currently, the community is not using HMIS to its full capacity. By utilizing more of the HMIS system, coordination among service providers should improve.

Next, discussion shifted towards funding solutions. TECH members were asked to decide how they would like to decide upon possible funding alternatives. Some members expressed concerns over the increasing competition for federal dollars. It was stated that larger communities are facing increased competition for federal dollars from smaller communities. Some TECH members suggested creating a “Housing Trust Fund.” Currently, the State of Kansas has a “Housing Trust Fund” that is to be used to support homeless programs however the trust fund does not have sufficient resources.

As the funding dialogue continued, it was suggested that uses of current resources be reassessed to determine whether resources could be redirected to other programs. It was stated that current resources are being maximized and redirection of funds would be difficult. As TECH members continued to debate possible funding options, it was decided that a list of funding alternatives should be compiled and TECH members would debate and decide the best options at the next TECH meeting.

Consideration of Public Review

TECH members were asked to comment on the best way to solicit citizen input on the plan. TECH members were asked to email Deanna Carrithers, Sedgwick County Management Intern, by Monday, November 19 with options for gathering feed back from citizens.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 28 at United Way located at 245 N. Water.