

**Minutes**  
**Homeless Task Force**  
**MEETING DATE: November 28, 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 7:00 a.m. Minutes were approved.

**Review of Draft Plan**

Ms. Janet Miller introduced the draft plan to end chronic homelessness by highlighting core plan components. She indicated that the draft is in its initial stages and adjustments still need to be made. As plan components were described, Task Force members were asked to think about how they would like to proceed and to be prepared to have a full discussion at the next TECH meeting.

The draft plan is comprised of five sections plus a set of appendices containing reference information. The first section of the plan is an introduction that details the charge of the Task Force and processes used to create the plan. The following section describes the number of homeless in the community as determined in the Point-In-Time (PIT) count along with available resources in the community. The third section identifies the gaps in services in the community. The fourth section highlights best practices identified nationally. The fifth section proposes strategies that can be used locally to end homelessness.

Within the plan, there were changes to the strategy that recommends providing permanent supportive housing units. While 89 chronically homeless individuals have been identified, 64 are in need of permanent supportive housing according to the Continuum of Care application. Within the described strategy, the change in need for permanent supportive housing units for the chronically homeless has been documented and footnoted.

As discussion of the plan outline continued, questions were raised about the strategies for ending chronic homelessness. Specifically, the strategy that recommends developing a dedicated funding source was called into question. Some members of the Task Force were displeased that the dedicated funding source list in the appendix only included taxes and fees. Because the funding list does not include grants and other funding alternatives, some Task Force members did not believe the list was comprehensive.

As the funding discussion of funding alternatives continued, some Task Force members brought attention to the amount of resources currently been utilized in the community. Within the draft plan, Appendix G details the non-profit and faith-based resources spent on homeless. It was stated that this community is spending almost \$10 million annually to fight homelessness. Also, it was stated that the amount in appendix G did not include U.S.D 259 or Veteran's Administration resources. For this reason, some Task Force members

believe that plenty of resources are being utilized but resources should be monitored for efficient use.

Even though resources are utilized to combat homelessness, many Task Force members believe that current resources are insufficient to address the challenge. For this reason, some Task Force members viewed a dedicated funding source as critical to the success of the plan. While some members of the Task Force wanted a plan that makes a recommendation for a dedicated or continual funding source, it was stated that no funding option is ever continual. Making a recommendation for a tax or fee does not make a funding source permanent. It was stated that all taxes and fees are subject to review by governing bodies.

As the funding discussion funding dialogue continued, some Task Force members questioned the use of current resources. It was stated that current resources must be used efficiently. It was suggested that current allocations be re-evaluated to ensure that dollars are being used in the best way possible.

Though some Task Force members indicated that they will not support a plan that recommends or suggests a tax increase without examining alternative funding options, other Task Force members stressed the importance of creating funding strategy that includes the faith community. It was stated that the solution to the homeless funding challenge will involve a variety of stakeholders. It was stressed that that government cannot be relied upon as the sole source of funding and other groups must be included in the dialogue. As the funding dialogue concluded, it was suggested that the funding list be categorized to include all funding possibilities including those already being used. In addition, the title of the section should be amended from “Develop a Dedicated Funding Source” to “Identify Sustainable Funding Sources.”

### **Cost Estimates**

Next, discussion moved to cost estimates for the plan. For many of the recommended strategies, Task Force members requested that the final version of the plan attach cost estimates to each plan component. To determine the costs of these components, it was decided that lead agencies working in these areas should determine the cost of services for these areas. For the indentified strategies, it was decided that the following agencies would develop cost estimates for components of the plan:

- Resource and Referral Center – Sedgwick County/COMCARE
- Permanent Supportive Housing – City of Wichita
- Emergency Shelter Beds – United Way
- Dedicated Funding Source – TECH staff
- Governance Structure – City of Wichita/Sedgwick County

Because the assigned lead agencies are familiar with the costs associated with developing each plan component, it is believed that cost estimates should be more accurate. As discussion continued, questions were raised about whether providers had been contacted about funding for the Resource and Referral Center. It was stated that a conversation had not taken place but service providers will be included in the future.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:41a.m. The next TECH meeting will be scheduled as needed.