

Minutes
Plan to End Chronic Homelessness: Oversight Committee
January 29, 2009
Sedgwick County CDDO, 615 N Main
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Jack Focht, Ben Grisamore, Janet Miller, Melissa Walker, Ray Frederick, Sue Castile

Committee Members Absent: TJ Akin

Guests: Ann Curl, Shelly Haupt, Mary K. Vaughn, Officer Nate Schwiethale

Staff Present: Deborah Donaldson, Rachelle Moody, Deanna Carrithers, Christine Tomkus

Welcome & Approval of minutes from October 29, 2008

Jack Focht, Committee Chairman, began the meeting by welcoming committee members and guests, and staff. Committee members reviewed and approved previous meeting minutes.

Introduction of new Homeless Plan Specialist

Christine Tomkus was introduced as the new Homeless Plan Specialist with Sedgwick County Division of Human Services.

Resource and Referral Center fundraising update

Jack Focht announced that he is a member of the fundraising committee and that United Methodist Open Door (UMOD) will host a fundraising kick-off event Wednesday, February 11th. All previous Taskforce to End Chronic Homelessness (TECH) members and current Oversight Committee members should receive their invitations in the mail any day. Honorary fundraising committee chairwoman Nancy Kassebaum Baker and Governor Kathleen Sebelius will be in attendance for the kick-off event.

Review and approve work plan for 2009

A work group of the Oversight Committee met over the past two months to create a work plan for 2009. The committee reviewed and approved the plan with one note:

- Regarding issue/action “Seek or identify transportation solution,” Jack volunteered to speak with Deann Smith (UMOD) about identifying funders.

Winter Emergency Shelter Update

Ben Grisamore provided the committee with an update on Winter Emergency Shelter use. He also indicated that Sandy Swank, the shelter operator, has kept a list of chronic homeless individuals that may be eligible for Housing First apartments. Shelly Haupt indicated that she planned to meet with Sandy.

He also reported:

- There has been great cooperation among partner agencies. Beginning February 23rd, the Metropolitan Community Church will be the Emergency Shelter site. This site is not within walking distance of the Lord’s Diner, so AECH is working with the downtown churches to identify a transportation solution.

- Advocates to End Chronic Homelessness (AECH) exceeded their fundraising goal of \$60,000. Excess money raised will be held in a reserve account for the next year's emergency shelter.
- A complete report of the full Winter Emergency Shelter would be provided at the close of the shelter, March 31, 2009.

Janet Miller requested to see a blank copy of the Winter Emergency Shelter intake form. She also indicated that it would be helpful to know the Union Rescue Mission nightly census during the full time of the Emergency Shelter (November 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009). She and Ray Frederick volunteered to contact the Union Rescue Mission executive director regarding census data and possible computer equipment for census data collection in the future.

Housing First Implementation Update

Mary K. Vaughn presented a Housing First update to the committee, accompanied by a handout that outlined logistics and the logic model. She reported:

- During 2009, the focus will be on gathering base line data for the program and ironing out the referral process.
- Nearly 100 landlords have been contacted to participate in the program since September, 2008. About half are willing to accept Housing First participants.
- Donations have been secured from hotels and businesses. Items include armories, bedding and other apartment necessities.
- The contract between the City and County will be on the February 10th City Council meeting agenda.
- One person has been determined eligible for a Housing First apartment. They are awaiting landlord contract approval from the City Law Department.
- In the future, both Channel 12 and the Wichita Eagle are interested in doing a story on a person placed into housing.

The committee also recommended that a system be put in place for Police officers to refer homeless individuals to Housing First apartments as well.

As may arise

Officer Nate Schwiethale provided clarification on ticketing of homeless in downtown parks during 2008. Jack urged staff and committee members to keep in contact with Officer Schwiethale when they hear of any problems that arise as well as for general updates on homeless issues.

The committee, staff and guests discussed their experiences with the 2009 Point in Time homeless count held Wednesday, January 28th.

Rachelle Moody provided a brief update on SOAR training. Jack urged staff to help clients in Housing First apartments apply for benefits using the SOAR model.

Melissa Walker offered to provide a program assessment for Housing First using her WSU Program Evaluation course students.

Next meeting:

February 19th, 2009, location TBD