

Homelessness Task Force Minutes

May 6th, 2021 10am

Zoom

Chief Spalding called meeting to order at 10:02am

Rosters-Virtual Roll Call

Introductions and new members

Mayor's Welcome-Council Goals: Mayor Bruce Jones

Mayor Jones gave an overview of the goals of the Homelessness Task Force (HOST). The purpose of HOST is to coordinate and communicate with other community agencies and individuals that are dealing with homelessness. It is beneficial to meet to share information and ideas to create solutions.

Chief Spalding added a survey was sent out to members of the HOST and the group will review the survey results later on.

Approval of Minutes:

Chief Spalding asked for a motion to approve the minutes from March 2021, Roger Rocka made a motion to approve, David Reid seconded the motion. All in favor. Motion carried.

Homeless Vaccinations-Julia Hesse:

Public Health Employee, Lisa McClean vaccinated 20 unsheltered individuals at Clatsop Community Action's Health and Wellness event on April 29, 2021. The Health Department plans to go to the Astoria Warming Shelter on shower days for future vaccinations. The Health Department plans to identify locations where the unsheltered eat lunch and set up a small station of vaccinations. They are using the one dose vaccine.

Helping Hands-Program updates-Mike Davis

The Astoria Men's location is at full capacity for emergency beds and the Women's Shelter is at 75% capacity. Mike Davis asked if any agencies or organizations have art supplies available it would contribute a useful donation for the agency.

Davis shared one of Helping Hand's success stories that a woman who has been staying in the shelter for a year has regained custody of her children and is transitioning into permanent housing.

Countywide Liaison Position Update-Viviana Matthews

Clatsop Community Action (CCA) hired two Homeless Liaisons on April 1st, 2021. One of the hires decided to resign voluntarily after one week. CCA is currently interviewing to fulfill the second position. Cheryl Paul, one of the homeless liaisons is working closely with CCA's Community Resource Desk until the other position is filled. Every day, Cheryl has been going to Seaside to provide information and services to the unsheltered population in South County.

As of now, there has been fewer applicants for the position than the first time. Matthews stated the Homeless Liaison position is full time, full benefits and ranges between \$17.00 and \$21.00/hr.

Chief Spalding asked if the roles and responsibilities of the Homeless Liaison position have been clarified?

Matthews provided an example of how the position operates:

Last week, the City Council of Seaside called on behalf of a woman who is experiencing chronic homelessness in a RV on 12th Street. The city council asked CCA to step in to help her transition into permanent housing and the woman was ready for permanent housing. Cheryl and Community Resource Desk, Jennifer Wills helped her identify housing and connected her with resources in the process.

Chief Spalding asked how do people access resources from her?

The homeless liaison will have a work cell phone on hand and community agencies can contact her when she is out of the main office in Astoria, Matthews stated.

CCA was contacted by Clatsop County Health Department to coordinate a Health and Wellness event to vaccinate the unsheltered population. Oregon Health Authority was able to fund the event. At the event there were several agencies present, Clatsop Behavioral Health, Head Start, Amanda Ogle from the Veteran's administration, and provided clothing, haircuts and showers. Everyone who attended the event was given a backpack with a cell phone charger, water, a sleeping bag, and personal care products. Over sixty individuals attended the event and twenty were vaccinated. Matthews is hopeful to coordinate a second event and have it located in Seaside to provide the opportunities and resources to the South County unsheltered population.

Clatsop County 2020 Strategic Plan and Navigation/Drop-in Center Update-Monica Steele

Clatsop County Board adopted goals for 2021-2022. Currently, the board is going through the budgeting process for a Navigation/Drop-in Center. Next steps are looking into community partners to participate and collaborate with. The Navigation Center would provide showers, laundry services, meals, and set up appointments for mental health services. Monica Steele will write a report and send it out.

Monica Steele added she is excited to work with CCA and the Homeless Liaison to establish housing needs.

Astoria Opportunity Village project update-Ron Maxted

Ron Maxted, presented it has been one year since creating the committee for Astoria Opportunity Village. The next steps are to coordinate a guidance subcommittee to best meet the goals of transitional housing in Clatsop County. This project will provide housing and incorporate social services agencies and county organizations. Key players include Viviana Matthews, Teri Steenbergen, Amy Baker, Monica Steele, Lauren Wilson, and Bill Black. One example of Opportunity Village is in Eugene, Oregon. Dan Brian who is part of Opportunity Village in Eugene has been helpful to the committee as he has provided feedback and personal experiences with Opportunity Village. What the committee needs is an agency's nonprofit status for funding. Maxted would like to establish a mobile trailer foundation for the transitional housing. This trailer can move to several locations in the county and provide open houses on Saturdays. Maxted asked for feedback, suggestions and participation from the group for the success of the project.

Homeless Activity-Calls for Service-Chief Spalding

Numbers have been decreasing, so far there as has been 169 calls related to homelessness in calendar year 2021.

HOST member survey

Chief Spalding sent out a HOST member's survey to gain feedback on the value and work of the committee and identify priorities of HOST. Thirteen out of twenty-four members responded to the survey. After the results of the survey were submitted, Mayor Jones and Chief Spalding will get together with the membership and plan out what the focus of the group will take based on members responses.

Chief Spalding shared his screen to show the results of the survey.

Majority of the members responded, "moderate amount" and "A lot" to "The HOST group provides value to the community". All but one of the respondents said a great deal of this group has strengthened relationships in the community.

Examples of Priority 1, responses: Promoting Accountability, secure housing, marginalized populations, identifying location for Navigation Center, guiding new Homeless Liaison positions.

Examples of Priority 2, responses: Low Barrier Housing, Supportive housing, wrap around services, set guidelines for new advocates.

Examples of Priority 3, responses: Educating Community on Mental Health, Landlord outreach, Shelter, identify unhoused and maintain connected services.

Arline LaMear asked if there was still continued discussion on using the old police station as a drop-in center? Steele answered they were looking to evaluate the location as there would need to be extreme internal changes for it to be a successful drop-in center.

Member Roundtable

Councilor Roger Rocka suggested the HOST Committee set its top three priorities and it might be fruitful to have a subcommittee comprised of participating agencies to work on each priority. Chief Spalding also shared some of the different subcommittees the HOST committee has had and currently has.

Teresa Barnes from the Astoria Warming Center said they are working on having the center open more nights throughout the year for those in need.

Viviana Matthews added CCA is having their summer mobile food pantry located in Astoria, Warrenton and Seaside on Thursdays.

Cindy Price decided to step off as a member but will continue attending as a guest to support the group.

David Reid mentioned there are frustrations with small businesses as workers do not want to return to work and encourages those to return for the support of small businesses. The rent moratorium will continue to extend along with unemployment benefits. This will affect businesses in Clatsop County.

Brooke Stanley is interested in supporting the Navigation Center and to apply for funding for housing projects.

Terri Steenbergen from The Harbor informed the group there is an increased need of housing for victims of Domestic Violence. Their agency is focusing on safety planning. It is difficult to work with hotels because of the stigma of victims of domestic violence.

Mayor Jones will be adding Filling Empty Bellies to next meeting's agenda and have them do a presentation.

Mayor Jones stated to the group that Chief Spalding is transitioning out of the leadership position for HOST and would like to see another individual take on the opportunity to fulfill his position.

Guest Comments

Chief Ham recognized CCA Homeless Liaison, Cheryl for helping the woman in the RV. The City Council in Seaside had a meeting and a member of Seaside raised concern of the RVs on 12th Street. The contact and services provided by Cheryl were great.

Tonight, the City of Seaside is having a meeting at 6pm to address homelessness. This meeting will be live streamed as well.

Next Meeting July 8th, 2021

Meeting Adjourned: 11:23am