

Homeless Solutions Task Force (HOST) meeting
Oct 1, 2019
Clatsop Community College

MINUTES

1. Meeting began at 10:05 a.m. Members in attendance initialed the roster which is attached with these minutes.
2. Mayor Jones welcomed the group and appreciated the continued work that the group is doing.
3. Minutes of the July 25, 2019 meeting were approved. Mayor Jones moved, Tom Leiner seconded. Unanimous approval.
4. Chief Spalding shared that the Astoria Police Department responded to an accident involving a vehicle and a pedestrian on 9/13/2019. Todd Kirn was the pedestrian and later died from his injuries. Todd was remembered at a memorial service in Astoria as a good man that was experiencing homelessness. Officer Kenny Hansen attended Todd's memorial service at People's Park. Officer Hansen advised the service was well attended. Chief Spalding advised that there have been four pedestrian/vehicle accidents over the last year. Most of those involved homeless individuals wearing dark clothing and not in a crosswalk. Intoxication appeared to be a factor in many of the incidents.
5. Chief Spalding shared an update on calls for service related to homeless individuals. Year to date calls totaled 845, an increase of approximately 349% from last year. Chief Spalding shared the Department's efforts to work with individuals that are staying in campsites in the urban forest. Efforts continue to place these individuals in shelter with the assistance of CCA. Chief shared the pros and cons of the enforcement of illegal camping and advised that the Department is addressing these sites when there are complaints.
6. Chief Spalding shared a 10 minute video produced by the City of Gresham that highlighted a program utilizing a city employee in the role of homeless advocate to assist in the camp cleanups. The video can be viewed on YouTube here: [Gresham Program](#)
7. Ron Maxted gave an update from the presentation last month on Square One Villages. Ron referenced a book by Andrew Heben entitled "Tent City Urbanism". This was directly related to the discussion at our last meeting on Square One Villages. The thesis by Heben became his book and much of his research was based on Portland's Dignity Village and Eugene's Opportunity Village. Heben describes these informal settlements actually addressing many of the shortfalls of more formal responses to homelessness. The book is available on Amazon at: [Tent City Urbanism book](#).
8. Jonah Dart-McLean gave an update on the status of the Clean Slate Program. Jonah has been unable to substantiate the amount of individuals in need of having their court fines forgiven in lieu of community service, etc. Viviana from CCA said they may be able to look into finding out a way to see how many people are impacted. One idea was to form a community bank where

people could donate to a fund to assist. A good discussion surrounding the topic ensued and the consensus was that the concept could be expanded to include exploring other options for individuals to get out of debt from such things as medical expenses. Jarrod from CMH said that they have financial counselors that can help certain individuals to seek medical insurance. Jonah will reach out to CBH and the rest of his group to continue the discussion.

9. One member raised a concern about some homeless individuals not being able to have a surgery without a place to recuperate after the surgery. Perhaps Helping Hands might have capacity to assist these individuals on a temporary basis.
10. Chief Spalding states he is targeting the first quarter of 2020 to offer a council presentation with an update from the HOST Committee. The presentation would include a description of the work that has been done along with recommendations that may be in the Council's purview. The group agreed that it makes sense to focus on a small number of programs to present to council as opposed to a longer list that would be unrealistic to accomplish. The group will come up with a list of ideas and programs which will be sent out to the membership to prioritize for presentation.
11. Chief Spalding stated that there appears to be a growing need and level of interest in looking at a position dedicated to coordinating the efforts of all the different agencies and partners in the County to address the homelessness topic. The initial responsibilities and possible job description elements that were given to the members in the meeting are attached to these minutes. The position is partially based on the concept taken from the "Creating Systems that Work" program which states - *To address homelessness, communities should take a coordinated approach, moving from a collection of individual programs to a community-wide response that is strategic and data driven. Communities that have adopted this approach use data about the needs of those experiencing homelessness to inform how they allocate resources, services, and programs.* There was a strong level of interest in this topic as a top recommendation from the Committee to present to Council. Monica mentioned there is an upcoming combined City Council/County Commissioner meeting on October 10th and she would see if this can be added to the agenda. It was felt that a position(s) could be funded by many of the affected agencies and partners as a solutions to the growing problem. The following members agreed to form a subcommittee to work out some of the finer details – Jarrod Karnofski, Viviana Matthews and Tom Leiner.
12. Chief Spalding spoke about the continued problems with behavior from some individuals in the community. Chief was tasked with bringing recommendations to Council to address some of the concerns. Chief shared that he has reached out to other agencies in the state to get a feel for what is working and what isn't. Two ordinances have already gone to Council and were passed. These are the Unlawful Transfer ordinance which prohibits transactions between pedestrians and motor vehicles in the roadway and a prohibition of open containers of alcohol in public (consumption of alcohol in public is already prohibited with exceptions for events, etc.) Chief mentioned he will be presenting to Council an exclusion zone ordinance and was seeking

feedback from the group. The exclusion zone concept would identify an area of town where a higher number of illegal incidents are occurring. Individuals receiving three or more violations in a certain period of time could be excluded from that area for a limited period of time. One concern raised is if someone has to pass through the excluded area or needs to work in the zone. Spalding said he understood that concern and would ensure certain exceptions are incorporated into the ordinance.

13. One member brought up the Chip-In service that used to be offered by the Parks Department. Jonah mentioned the program was dropped due to insufficient resources to manage the program.
14. One member mentioned there is a significant need for additional psychological services in the community. The committee agreed.
15. The following items were raised by members of the committee during the Roundtable portion:
 - a. Rick Bowers said the Warming Shelter fundraising efforts are underway. Also, listening sessions are being hosted by CC Hope.
 - b. Viviana said January 28th is the date for Project Homeless Connect
 - c. Arline said she really enjoyed the book – “Ending Homelessness.” The book is available for any member to borrow – See Chief Spalding. Arline also mentioned she really appreciated having the one-page handout for Astoria Food Resources and felt we should have more distribution of this form.
 - d. Councilor West returned from the League of Cities conference where they learned others are dealing with the same issues we are.
16. Several guests in the audience commented:
 - a. Richard Elfering commented that mental illness is a significant problem in the community and there should be more resources to address it.
 - b. Dot Olsen raised the following issues – City should have permits to allow camping, Fines for open containers are too high, Everyone should check out the Facebook page for Filling Empty Bellies, Need to expand the amnesty program, need a team of people to assist the homeless, Use the blue building for a drop in center and Filling Empty Bellies and something about an ambulance.
 - c. Bill Black spoke about the creative peer approach.
17. Doodle Poll will be sent out to determine date for next meeting
18. Adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

Submitted by Geoff Spalding, October 2, 2019

Creating Systems That Work

To end homelessness, a community-wide coordinated approach to delivering services, housing, and programs is needed.

What is a coordinated systems approach?

To address homelessness, communities should take a coordinated approach, moving from a collection of individual programs to a community-wide response that is strategic and data driven. Communities that have adopted this approach use data about the needs of those experiencing homelessness to inform how they allocate resources, services, and programs.

The following are key elements of a coordinated systems approach:

Coordinated Entry

[Coordinated entry](#), also known as coordinated assessment or coordinated intake, is a process designed to quickly identify, assess, refer and connect people in crisis to housing and assistance, no matter where they show up to ask for help. It can pave the way for more efficient homeless assistance systems by:

- Helping people move through the system faster to housing;
- Reducing new entries into homelessness by consistently offering prevention and diversion resources upfront; and
- Improving data collection and quality and providing accurate information on what kind of assistance consumers need.

Planning

Establishing a plan helps communities set goals and conceptualize what they should prioritize. A plan can include goals, a process and timeline for meeting those goals, and mechanisms for evaluating progress. Planning also brings providers, government officials, Continuum of Care leads and funders together to address topics such as how to identify needs of the population, decide on the structure of coordinated assessment, integrate prevention and shelter diversion resources, map out existing assessment and intake processes and sketch out preliminary needs assessment and screening tools.

Collecting and Examining Local Data

[Data collection](#) efforts have advanced considerably in the past few decades and have opened up new opportunities and insight into homelessness in America. Collecting data and using it to inform decisions, locally and nationally, is critical to addressing homelessness.

A Shared Data System

A [Homeless Management Information System](#) (HMIS) is a local information technology system used to collect client, program, and system-level data on the provision of housing and services to homeless individuals and families and persons at risk of homelessness. Each Continuum of Care is responsible for operating an HMIS system according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Data Standards.

There are many benefits to a common and shared data system. From a client-level perspective, it contributes to a more seamless process of matching individuals, youth and families with the right resources. It can also make the comprehensive analysis of a community's homeless system possible, which is critical to assessing incomes and ultimately improving practice and performance.

Performance Measurement and Evaluation

Performance measures can be used by communities to examine progress and to assess what steps they should be taking to further reduce homelessness. HUD has developed [system-level performance measures](#) to help communities gauge their progress in preventing and ending homelessness.

How A Coordinated Systems Approach Can End Homelessness

To end homelessness, a coordinated systems approach is needed. This approach requires using local data to inform decisions about how to most effectively allocate resources, services, and programs to best address the needs of those experiencing homelessness in the community.

Countywide Homeless Liaison

- Coordinate all the efforts from all the different agencies in the county
- Research and write grants
- Triage individuals into the correct resources
- Help identify individuals currently “residing” in county and assess their needs.

Job Description

1. Systematic and coordinated collection and use of data to meet outcomes targets. Coordinated assessment and data entry.
 - a. (Experience in collecting relevant outcomes data from multiple agencies. Experience in using data information systems to enter and extract data to report progress in achieving outcomes.)
2. Outcome focused crisis systems.
 - a. (Experience in designing and implementing client support systems to achieve successful client outcomes.)
3. Local systems to end homelessness including 1) rapid rehousing (shelters), 2) transitional housing, 3) workforce housing, 4) alternative, low-cost housing, 5) disability housing.
 - a. (Ability to advocate for and educate the community in the need for multiple levels of housing to end homelessness, including 1) rapid rehousing (shelters), 2) transitional housing, 3) workforce housing, 4) alternative, low-cost housing, 5) disability housing.)
4. Improves policy.
 - a. (Ability to identify policies that present barriers for people who are homeless to succeed.)
 - b. (Qualifications: 1) familiarity and experience with best practices in ending homelessness, 2) successful experience in system integration and improvement, 3) successful experience in client outcome-based management.)
5. Close the gaps by 1) tracking the client to a successful outcome (i.e. Housing), 2) develop reliable hand-offs and 3) tracking across agencies.
 - a. (Demonstrates success in closing the gaps by 1) tracking the client to a successful outcome (i.e. any level of housing), 2) developing reliable hand-offs, and 3) tracking across agencies.
 - b. Demonstrates a focus on the client, rather than the program by describing experience with designing and/or implementing 1) a common and shared point-of-entry process across agencies, 2) peer support personnel to help the client navigate the entire system, and 3) an integrated inter-agency system designed to help the client achieve the outcomes that they need.

- c. Demonstrated skill in creating and facilitating inter-agency collaboration and coordination in order to create a seamless, client-centered, outcomes-oriented system to end homelessness.
 - d. (Demonstrates an understanding of client-centered services and has successfully collaborated with other agencies and funding sources to eliminate duplication, competition, and piece meal services.)
6. And I would add: Demonstrates familiarity with various funding sources and has a successful track record in obtaining funding that supports ending homelessness.

Mayor's Task Force on Homelessness
7/8/2019

Name	Title	Agency	Representing	Phone Number	Email Address	Conf
Kate Allen	Kate Allen Community Development Services			503 351-8618	kmadev76@gmail.com	
Amy Baker	Executive Director	Clatsop Behavioral Health		503 325-0241 x 225	amyb@clatsopbh.org	
Jonah Dart-McLean	Interim Director, Parks and Recreation	City of Astoria	Parks	503 298-2467	Jdart@astoria.or.us	<i>JK</i>
Alan Evans	Executive Director	Helping Hands		503 440-9357	a.evans@helpinghandsreentry.org	
Sean Fitzpatrick	Housing Provider	Wecoma Partners, LTD		503 325-2280	csrefitz@aol.com	<i>SP</i>
Mary Docherty Geil	Director	Riverfolk		503 298-1288 (c) 503 440-7079 (W)	surroundingyouinlight@hotmail.com	
Kenny Hansen	Detective	Astoria PD	Homeless Liason	503 298-2533	khansen@astoria.or.us	<i>JK</i>
Melissa Linder	Director of Curriculum and Instruction - Fed Programs Dir.	Astoria School District	Astoria School District	503 325-6441	mlinder@astoria.k12.or.us	
Joan Herman	City Councilor	City of Astoria	City of Astoria	503 298-2408	jherman@astoria.or.us	<i>JH</i>
Sarah Lu Heath	Director	ADHDA	Downtown Business Owners & Residents	503 791-7940 (c) 254 541-3640	sarah@astoriadowntown.com	
Jennifer Holen	Director	United Way of Clatsop County		503 325-1961	jennifer@bakedak.com; uwccdirector@pacifier.com	
Jarrold Karnofski	VP - Support Services	Columbia Memorial Hospital		503 338-7505 (W)	jkarnofski@columbiamemorial.org	<i>JK</i>
Arline LaMear	Citizen At-large	City of Astoria		503 338-6883	cliffandarine@msn.com	<i>JK</i>
Tom Leiner	ADHDA	Pat's Pantry		503 720-4999	twleiner@gmail.com	<i>(B)</i>
Annie Martin	Interim Executive Director	Warming Center		720 937-3591 (C)	annie.annie.m@gmail.com	<i>VH</i>
Vivianna Matthews	Director	Clatsop Community Action		971 308-1031	vmatthews@ccaservices.org	
Lisa McClean	Public Health RN II	Clatsop County Public Health		503 325 8672	lmclean@co.clatsop.or.us	<i>LM</i>
Cindy Price	Citizen At-large	City of Astoria		503 791-1710	cindyleeprice@gmail.com	
David Reid	Development Director	Chamber of Commerce		503 338-8596	reid4924@gmail.com	
Raven Russell	Development Director	Helping Hands		503 265-9046	r.brown@helpinghandsreentry.org	
Geoff Spalding	Chief of Police	Astoria Police Dept	Public Safety	503 298-2540 503 741 0000 (c)	gspalding@astoria.or.us	<i>P</i>
Monica Steele	Asst. Interim County Mgr	Clatsop County	Clatsop County	503 338-3609	MSteele@co.clatsop.or.us	<i>MS</i>
Kathleen Sullivan	Commissioner	Clatsop County	Clatsop County	503 325-4996 X172 (W) 503 440-4643 (c)	ksullivan@co.clatsop.or.us	<i>KS</i>

Bruce Jones Mayor Astoria
Jessamyn West - City Council, Astoria

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VH

MEETING SIGN-IN SHEET - GUESTS

Homelessness Solutions Task Force

Oct 1, 2019

Facilitator: City of Astoria

Place/Room: Columbia Hall - 117

Name	Position	Phone	E-Mail
Joan Herman	City Council		
Jessamyn West	City Council		
Joan Herman			
Trista Borden	CBH	971-466-0041	tristab@ciatsopbh.org
Richard Jeffrey	Activist	503 325-9430	r.elfer@engr.com
Yusuf M. Uwan	CCDPH	503 325 8800	Imcclean@ciatsop.org
Monica Steele	Clatsopland	503-325 8565	on file
Bill Black		415 401-5126	Bill@wblack.com
mindy finch	AUC	509-701-0338	mindy.finch@gmail!
Rose Anderson	CBH	503 440-2393	Rosea@ciatsopbh.org
Ron Moffett	Wenatchee	503 338-9153	moffett@
Nelle Moffett	Advocate	916-307-9790	speak-peace.com
Brenda Medina	Advocate		
Dorothy Olsen	CCHOPE	503 470 0123	LDOLSEN@Aolmail.com
Helen Gouvert		480-272-4894	seagullz@hotmail.com
Bruce Williams	Business Owner	503 320 6656	b42wzz@gmail.com