

EMPLOYMENT/WORKFORCE/EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

1.13.21 10:00 AM- 11:30 AM @ Hagler Auditorium, City Hall & Zoom

IN ATTENDANCE: Jesse Wolfe, Connie Bookman, Steve Harrell, Marcus McBride, Blair Castro, Richard Russo (IT), Brain Wyer, Avalon “Mal” Mallory, Paul Miller

Jesse called the meeting to order. Jesse recapped his and Marcus’ meeting with Pastor Ashley Wilkinson-Meyer of United Ministries and how they plan to work together. They are starting a conversation on helping people involved with her organization to get assistance with workforce development and job training. They plan to continue this initiative this month and continue to get these pipelines established. Jesse encourages committee members to reach out to him and Marcus for meetings going forward, Connie offers to help set up these meetings. Jesse recommends connecting to the other faith-based organizations on this subcommittee, perhaps attending their next meeting on the agenda.

Connie and Blair talked about setting up specific QR codes and linking to the donate button on the website, as per last meeting’s suggestion by Paul Miller. We could also link to 211 and their Street Survival Guide. All we need is a specific resource list and to drill down to specific resources for this group. Paul suggested that people could donate or support different workforce programs (CareerSource, George Stone, or the Manufacturing councils that could then assist.)

Connie reviewed the trip that Allison, Travis and herself took to One Hopeful Place in Okaloosa County. This trip really highlighted the need for a low-barrier shelter in our community. At this location, there are sections for men, women, and families; and there is case management and other resources available. People are not allowed to bring alcohol or drugs on the premises, however they will not turn away those who are currently addicted or who have done these prior to entering the facility. They work with law enforcement to decrease arrests and refer to the facility as well. This was set up by the business community and Chamber there (Ted Corcoran) and recently she met with Allison, Ted, Todd Thomson who would be supportive of something like this in our community.

Brain mentioned that many businesses do not know how to help but they want to. It might be a good idea to get them in a roundtable and have a discussion on best ways to help. It would be good to consider how to engage churches/businesses, how to train them and guide them as business owners and church members, what the language is when talking about homelessness.

Soon there will be a report on the initial disbursement of the ARPA funds coming out, there should be an update soon!

Blair brought up selecting core and contributing indicators soon so that we can determine what needs to be tracked and begin tracking it.

Jesse asked if we can share WIOVA data on homeless students who are enrolled. Steve said you just can't share identifiable information but could share generalized data.

Bus vouchers and taxi vouchers are not necessarily a homeless indicator but a poverty indicator.

90 Works CEO mentioned having a survey that is being able to track who is on the verge of homeless or getting out of the situation, could possibly be able to engage them on resume, pre-employment skills, and preparing them to exit homelessness with a job. An assessment or survey of what people are doing already is a great tool, Connie will reach out to Cate Jordan for more information.

Marcus mentioned that workforce placement might not be the best data point to track at first because there are so many other pieces of low-hanging fruit that are necessary to remove their barriers in order to get homeless people ready to exit homelessness with employment.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 10:35 AM