

**HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION TASK FORCE
ADVISORY/AT-LARGE SUBCOMMITTEE
12.1.21 10:00 AM @ City Hall and via ZOOM**

IN ATTENDANCE: Allison Patton; Jules Kariher, Lou Ray, John Johnson, Connie Bookman, Michael Kimberl, Travis Thompkins, Donna Jacobi-Pruett, Ashley Wilkinson-Meyer, Laura Gilliam, Ronnie Rivera, Jim Reeves, Jennifer Thompkins, Sheena Payne (representing Tim Smith), Blair Castro, Mel Pino, Lawrence Powell, Ann Hill

Jim Reeves invites all members and the public to Tiny House Ribbon-Cutting at 143 E. La Rua, 923(c) at 2::00 today; Pensacola's first tiny house.

A representative from each group will give an update on their subcommittee.

Healthcare Subcommittee

Jules Kariher gives recap on Healthcare efforts of Task Force. Jules recognized Michael Kimberl as another subcommittee member in attendance. Jules, Chandra, Walter and Michael did a walk through of the community and encampments to meet with the unhoused community. One of the things they found was that these people were bombarded by people who were trying to "sell" them insurance, however they were really getting their SS benefits taken away. They also found that there were people getting discharged from the hospital, though not really ready to come home, there was a huge need for respite beds in our community so the subcommittee wanted to prioritize this. They have met with REAP and other shelter partners to make sure those new shelters have respite beds. Their group defined homelessness more specifically (in cars, on street, no power, in shelters), and decided to use this definition in a hospital setting. In actual the camps, there was no case management and many of these people had health needs, so Community Health hired Walter Arrington to become their case worker for the people in the shelters and encampments. They are also working together with the Mental Health subcommittee to ensure there is no duplication of efforts and sharing data. The Healthcare subcommittee is even developing a code (IDC code) to flag those who may be homeless and fall into the different definitions.

Travis says the new EMS tracking system will now track people who are homeless and their interactions, Dave from Gilmore's public safety department will be joining the subcommittee.

Donna wanted to highlight that there is a need for elder care and discharge planning; it was not in the case manager's profile to ask if they live alone or need support during discharges.

Mental Health/Addiction/Case Management Subcommittee

Laura Gilliam gives a recap of this subcommittee. Their group has been taking inventory of existing community resources and identifying gaps, aided in discussion of the ARPA funds, and

looked at improving case management and coordination of care. They are working to better understand the process on the Healthcare side so that these providers can streamline their work. Mental Health has selected and finalized their indicators, they made sure to look at factors they could actually get data from, there can be ways in the future to improve the type of data they are getting by asking providers to begin collecting what they need, and need to be able to localize the data. Group wants to develop better ways to communicate between different providers.

Jules would like the hospitals to get a list of available resources (who has immediate availability for homeless), Dr. Williams says they will look into sharing with the hospitals more frequent updates on bed capacity for Lakeview.

Connie had met previously with SenaCorp, Shawn Salimida with FFN, and Dr. Josephs to discuss how they can work together to help with beds or capacity in the mental health alt community. They also had discussion on the lack of service providers within the mental health field (how do we get better pay for these employees, hire more social workers, etc.)

Legal Services/Criminal Justice/Specialty Courts

Allison & Ronnie give updates on their subcommittee. Ronnie says they are interested in the number of homeless getting services from the ECSO, and how and what quality as to those services are being provided. Allison says one of their primary objectives is to track data on those involved in the criminal justice system, such as courts, jails, state attorneys, law enforcement. This data applies to victims of crime, not just those accused. Privacy is always taken into consideration when collecting this data. Objective is to decrease homeless interaction with the criminal justice system overall, and improve the outcomes of those who do act with the criminal justice system. Have been having discussions with those in other communities for best practices and programs that also aim to achieve these objectives, as well as those who are knowledgeable about jail diversion programs, etc. The group found that for many of these programs, homeless individuals are not able to participate because they do not have an address and there is no way for participants to be tracked. The subcommittee is also looking at grants or funding for some of these programs, engaging with the court system and court administration, jail system, law enforcement, Lakeview center, public defender and state attorney's office.

Jules- Much of what we do requires resources, we don't have a crisis intervention unit, for example, aside from Lakeview. Without these resources programs are difficult to administer and implement. Wanted to know if there have been any discussions on law enforcement having a social worker assigned to work with homeless to connect them to services. Should always have an ROI provided for these programs.

Ronnie- Homeless Court would take grant money and a judge to lead this.

Jules would like to know a quantifiable amount/cost to arrest homeless individuals and place them in jail. John says there are monthly meetings on jail diversion with different law

enforcement, Lakeview Center, etc. Getting the current bed capacities to law enforcement would be helpful as well.

John says that our next task is to figure out what are the priorities of the inventory we have. There has been a decline in the number of group homes available here, as well as an increase in the Opioid Crisis. There is an increase in substance abuse and addiction services but a decrease in bed.

Jules points out that the Advisory Committee can become advocates for the funding that this Task Force needs, and expanding the capacity of our resources.

Connie points out that Tallahassee has the Kearney Center, where our Mayor and others have visited. A center like this is a part of our long-term plan.

Melissa Pino would like to see law enforcement less involved with these homeless interactions unless it is absolutely necessary or if they have been a victim. Would like to see strike teams set up to respond to emergency calls including law enforcement, mental health professionals, EMS workers if necessary.

Travis points out "One Hopeful Place" in Okaloosa County, which is expanding their 52-bed facilities for men to more space to include women. Allison said Legal Services is going to visit this facility on Monday.

Faith-Based Organizations/Food/Mentoring/Transportation

Ashley gives recap on FBO efforts; there is an open invite for people to come to any of their meetings. They have been involved in immersion experiences, have started a food resources inventory and partnered with 211 and other databases to highlight where there are gaps and where there is a lot of duplication. There are many food programs in schools, but there is not a centralized space for managing these, they are trying to look at ways to be more strategic at how it is distributed. Tammy Nelson has stepped up to coordinate the Food Subcommittee. They want to create an interactive map of where the food availability is. Walter Arrington is leading the mentorship subcommittee to help implement mentoring programs and curriculum. They are also collecting a transportation inventory and highlighting gaps (there is not any duplication, this is a huge need). The group is also looking at leading a prayer initiative and will be looking at selecting their core & contributing indicators today.

Connie wants to propose the idea that Faith-Based Orgs "adopt" an unhoused individual (whether that be 5-10 people) to make sure he has everything he needs including benefits, food, transportation, etc.)

Housing Subcommittee

Connie gives a recap; in summary Housing is critical. One developer learned in the first meeting that it was the highest and best use, so he is now set to build units based on this.

Employment/Workforce Subcommittee

George Stone and CareerSource plan to get outside of their building and bring their information and services to the people.

Comments

Lou Ray- had an opportunity to do a deep dive into homelessness previously, and he discovered that the shelter system was top of mind for most; many in homelessness discussed difficulties to access resources. He recently heard that Baptist was demolishing their old structure, and wanted to make sure that was on people's radar, really supportive of the Tiny Home project.

MEETING ADJOURNED 11:27 AM