

FBO Subcommittee Meeting Minutes – July 7th 2021

Meeting held at the I-110 Bridge

Called to order at 12:00pm

Connie Bookman

- Introduction about her work, the task force, and the FBO subcommittee
- Introduces co-chairs: Jennifer Tompkins and Ashley Wilkinson Meyer

Jennifer Tompkins

- Announcement that in the case of an emergency, ECAT will evacuate the encampment and bring them to a shelter

Melissa Johnson

- Summary of her experience working with the homeless at this encampment
- They need friendly faces and people to be here for them
- Churches need to be involved, not just under I-110 but all over Pensacola
 - o Churches can bring food and supplies
 - o Bring them to showers, some haven't showered in three to four months

Tammy Nelson

- Question: What is happening for the pregnant women that are living here

Melissa Johnson

- Stays connected with them, talking to them on the phone
- They need mentorship to connect and express the help that they need
- They don't want to come out and be in the system without support, they are scared that their children will be taken away from them

Connie Bookman

- The Majella house (a maternity home) is close to opening and will soon be an option for these women

Jennifer Tompkins

- Brought up the idea that if everyone were to reach out to someone who serves a meal and bring that data together to help to organize how these services can be used more efficiently
- Need a long term system for the community to know who is doing what on what day

Michael Kimberl

- Washburn Center has a calendar that people can call and add themselves to in order to serve a meal

Ashley Meyer

- This subcommittee's role is to chart all this
- Organize food, transport, mentorship, and faith based organizations
- First meetings are focused on what's out there right now and where are the duplications/gaps

Melissa Johnson

- The homeless want the churches to come to them and hold services

Serene Keiek

- \$3.5M to Opening Doors, do not have the shelters and space needed
- Affordable housing is needed
- Idea: what if every church found a house, OD could pay for that
- “we can put people in houses but we need a house”
- In a waiting pattern for housing/shelters
- They need housing but they also need mentors to connect with the community, help with financials, help with everyday issues

Kevin Eason

- “we are not doing enough”
- REAP grand opening on the 15th
- Trying for an IMPACT100 grant
- Currently have 8 shelters for men, 3 shelters for women

Serene Keiek

- The I-110 encampment grew again over the weekend, up to about 85 people
- Summary of the data gathered by Opening Doors
- OD offers services every Wednesday from 9-11am
 - o IDs, birth certificates, phones, insurance, and more
 - o Trying to get rid of all the barriers

Tammy Nelson

- Question: what can we do to help the other subcommittees

Serene Keiek

- The other subcommittees are focused on other important topics, focus here should be on mentorship

Jennifer Hardy

- Churches can focus on their immediate area of town rather than everyone running around

Ashley Meyer

- Idea: a map could be used to visualize where the churches are compared to services and those in need – create a sort of interactive map where we could look at the area on a grid, making places where congregations/FBOs are located, along with Food availability to get better sense of what food resources exist and where

Pastor Sylvia Tisdale

- Figure out if there are homeless encampments near our churches and make those connections

Kevin Eason

- Idea: we need to come together as a team and have a big meeting with reps from all the churches - this may not happen right away, but something to be thinking about for the future

Tammy Nelson

- Liberty Church has been successful in documenting needs while visiting these sites and communicating these needs back to the church

Comment about this Subcommittee focusing on Mentorship and Friendship – if we are going to invite congregations and people of faith to be friends/mentors/neighbors to those who are vulnerable, we need to make sure they are well equipped and trained.

- For example if congregations want to go out in the community to offer food or offer to transport someone to an appointment/interview/etc, must abide by 2X2 policy, ie, never go out alone, but always go at least 2 people at a time

Question: What about a committee for advocacy?

Response: We need to make sure we are connected with JUST Pensacola, or make sure they are represented on the Housing Subcommittee?

Idea mentioned about congregations coming together to purchase a hotel as a one-stop location for service providers to connect with homeless; temporary housing, traditional housing and even permanent housing could all be located there as well

- Dr. Calvin Avant was involved with a place called Covenant House in Orlando, FL and they did something similar to this

Connie Bookman

- The task force is just launching, hoping to see major impact in a year but it is a three-year process

Jim Vchulek

- This subcommittee cannot focus on every issue, that is what the other subcommittees are for
- This subcommittee needs to think about what the focus should be: Faith-Based Organizations (including congregations). Food, Mentorship, Transportation
- As meeting concluded, idea about finding some kind of interactive map for tracking services was discussed a bit more – suggestion to connect with UWF to see if a student could develop something like this if it does not already exist.

End at 12:52pm