

S3 Housing Connect Meeting Notes
February 8, 2018
Gordon Wicker Room

Attendees: Brad Simon, Kendra Martin, Teresa Kelly, Dick Poletti, Bill Carter, Tami Carter, Heather Garrity, Bob Hughes, John Kirkman, Carla Carpenter, Patricia Hawes, Marcia Johnson, Holly Marosites, Gabby Murillo, Cindy Hall, Betsy Jungkind, Sherry Shudra, Jeffrey Rawlings, Rachel Picard, Karen Kennedy, Janet Ayers, Terry Allebaugh, Marilyn Gilliam

Welcome and Introductions, Agenda Review

Karen Kennedy called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Introductions were made. Sherry Shudra was recognized for winning Sanford's Citizen of the Year and Cindy Hall for winning Duke Energy's Citizenship Award.

Membership Items

The position within the voting members designated for a formerly homeless person will be filled at future meeting. In addition, there is to be a change with the Housing Committee Chair position. Both items will be held as soon as representatives attend for making this change.

Review of PIT Count by Wayne Chew

Prior to the count, *S3 Housing Connect* members promoted the event in the local newspaper, Facebook and on local radio stations. Gabby Murillo started posting on Facebook about the count and soon people started sharing the posts and asking questions about our initiative. Wayne C. thanked everyone for their assistance preparing and completing the event. There were 34 volunteers to help with the PIT Count visiting sites designated on the map between the 8pm-midnight hours, Jan 31 and February 1; 4-5 am hours, as well as the Breadbasket during lunch on Feb. 1. The count totals appear to be higher than last year's at this point, but the Data and Metrics committee is currently working to compile all of the data. We may conduct another count in May. Once our data is compiled, we will be comparing it to data from similar towns and states. Most people were thankful to be counted because to them, it meant a chance at no longer being homeless.

Brad Simon stated his group of volunteers found approximately 50 people, and 12-14 of them were behind Family Dollar in Tramway. Brad's group of volunteers included men that reside at the Men's Shelter and they were able to help locate other homeless people that they knew of more easily.

Jeffrey Rawlings said that the guys from the shelter that were assisting with the PIT were beyond helpful because they knew where to look, and we should build on this knowledge base. Also, the second session of the PIT (4 AM- 8 AM) is where most of the data was collected because that time frame is when most of the homeless go back to where they normally sleep at night. Brad Simon asked if we could just do one extensive count from 4 AM- 8 AM since this is where we

had the best results, but it was decided that it is necessary to do the full length count in order to get the most correct data.

Jeffrey continued by saying they are currently tabulating all of the numbers. However, they are having some issues because some of the information was incomplete on the survey documents. The count is officially over now, so we can't keep collecting data but instead have to begin checking the information to include the numbers in the PIT count. Terry Allebaugh replied that the unsheltered information for PIT Counts is often incomplete and you still have to count it. Terry then asked how the information will be released to the wider public, and stated this information will have to provide interpretation for all of our data. If we don't, then the community will infer things from it. Cindy Hall recalled she found a man who had been homeless for the majority of his life and preferred to stay homeless in his tent than to find housing. Terry stated that chronically homeless people are often very content, and we have to think about what kind of help these people have experienced. They might not have had good opportunities presented to them for assistance. Furthermore, it is really important to continue to engage the chronically homeless and build relationship. Jeffrey concluded that often the biggest issues is mistrust between the homeless and service providers. Following through to communicate and provide assistance is crucial.

Six for Six Committee Reports

- **Service Provision-** Tami Carter stated their last meeting was on January 29th. They reviewed food provision boxes and funding for the project. For the PIT Count, the committee assisted in gathering 50 bags prepared by CUOC for the homeless. The bags included toboggans donated from Wenger's, socks, blankets, toothbrushes and hand knitted scarves from *Scarf it Up*. The Salvation Army provided a service directory, which was laminated and put in the bags. 32 out of the 51 bags were distributed at the PIT Count, and Karen Kennedy gave the others to the Salvation Army, First Baptist Church and some individuals at Depot Park.

- **Low Barrier Shelter-** Sherry Shudra said that they were not able to meet this past month. John Paschal gave an update on the Emergency Shelter: January has been busy, and they have had great community support. The max has been 15 people at the shelter in one night. The ratio is usually 70% male, 30% female. More people have shown up just needing food than a place to sleep. Bread of Life is currently doing well with food for openings. Donations and food bank supplies are coming in frequently. People come in throughout the night very hungry and tired. The most communication happens at midnight when they wake up. There are two husband and wife volunteer teams that stay at night. There is not shower options currently available and the plumbing is not complete for the donated washer and dryer. Karen asked if the reason they hadn't fixed the plumbing was money, and John replied that they have the money, but can't find plumbers. Bread of Life is focused on getting those things installed and other tasks, but as

of now they are currently meeting people's needs. So far, no one has been kicked out or removed for violence or other reasons. Bread of Life is starting to think about summer and extreme heat. Bread of Life representatives want to make sure everyone understands they currently aren't set up to be a shelter during extreme heat since their facility lacks air conditioning. There needs to be another alternative for people during the summer. Sherry then said that Low Barrier Shelter committee is aware of these issues and is working on them.

In addition, Jeffrey said there have been concerns expressed with the lack of a working answering system when the shelter is called for needs. John P. replied that the voicemail is currently not set up and hopes that this item will be addressed soon.

Jeffrey mentioned Oak Ranch, and said they have spaces open currently and it is an amazing place. Sherry added that it is not low barrier at all, and it is transitional housing and not a shelter. They are trying to add a human trafficking program.

- **Housing-** Bob Hughes said they are currently working on the Linden Avenue project and trying to gather information on renovation costs. Resource Development is sure they can obtain funds for the initial environmental assessment needed. The committee has received a list of city/county owned vacant properties as potential for future housing sites. The committee would like to collaborate with the city in seeking potential private affordable housing developers. Gayle Johnson asked what will happen if Linden has to be remediated, and Bob replied that we don't know yet, but Sanford Housing Authority and the committee would assist with researching funding. Dick Poletti mentioned incentives from the city or county to encourage builders to develop affordable housing. Jeffrey mentioned that in his hometown high school students build houses and donate them. Would it be an option for us to partner with high schools? The Housing Committee will discuss with school representatives in the future.
- **Community Engagement-** Wayne Chew reported his committee conducted the PIT Count and PIT training sessions as discussed earlier in the meeting. The committee is planning to organize another PIT count in May. Wayne complimented all S3 members and volunteers for their work during the Jan 31 PIT count.
- **Resource Development-** John Kirkman informed the group that Irene Smith joined the committee and outlined a process needed to write grants. Irene meets with Bill Hicks/BOLM on a consistent basis in hopes of making the organization "grant ready" for future grant opportunities. Resource Development has been working with the city on employing homeless people and this project is moving forward slowly with more questions than answers from city processes at this time. However, City Staff will move forward if the Council directs them to in a more formal manner once liability and personnel items are more concrete. There are many cities that have programs like this that

work very successfully. Irene is also working on a script for fundraising. Gayle Johnson gave an update on a generator needed for Bread of Life- they need to know what type and size generator is needed. Attempts to gather this specific information from Bread of Life has been unsuccessful to date. St. Thomas Episcopal Church donated \$500 for bags for the next PIT Count. Karen suggested placing the S3 logo on the bags.

- **Data and Metrics-** Teresa Kelly stated they last met on January 2nd. At this meeting, they got an update on agencies working with homeless populations and what some factors are that would reduce costs for services from agencies in our community. They discussed the PIT Count and partnering with Community Engagement committee to present data. Terry Allebaugh added that Emily Schwartz contacted the Coalition to End Homelessness for how best to access the Homelessness Management Information System data. Emily has completed the preliminary work for how things could look within the system. The limitation for this data is that there are only three local entities currently providing info into the HMIS system: Johnston Lee Harnett Community Action, Family Endeavors, and Volunteers of America. The question becomes, how do we get other providers into the HMIS system to measure data of how we're doing and how to tweak our work? Terry recommended a survey that would go to agencies outside of HMIS to get a snapshot of how 2017 looked for a fuller picture. Terry then gave local data: 159 homeless have been served, and six returned to homelessness. If any numbers like this remain high we need to take strategies to address them. Jeffrey stated that there is no money involved with HMIS, it is just time spent for training. Terry said it is important that we get agencies and staff into the HMIS system as soon as possible but for now the surveys are important. Jeffrey said the push is to get all shelters into this program. Tami Carter asked if we could have a certain day and time to all do this training to ensure everyone would get it done. Betsy Jungkind asked why it takes eight hours for this training. Jeffrey said it's about confidentiality and compliance, and different modules are about different parts of HMIS. Karen will send out a copy of Terry's presentation to be used only as discussion and not hard data for reporting.

Discussion about Cross Committee Work Session by Jeffrey Rawlings

Committees are coming together outside of *S3 Housing Connect* to have monthly meetings, but we want to have a joint work session for all of the committees so that collaborations on projects occurs. Some committees' work will overlap but we want to make sure we're all on the same page. We will figure out what groups we want to bring together first, and have two or three meet at a time.

Discussion of Final Work Plan and Next Steps by Terry Allebaugh

Presentations to local government officials on the progress of *S3 Housing Connect* over the last year will occur at 6 pm on February 19 (Lee County Commissioners) and February 20 (City

Council). Presenters will be Jeffrey, Terry, Wayne and Rachel. Terry asked for everyone to come out and show their support at the meeting. There is not a plan to ask for any money at these meetings; only to provide an update on the progress of the task force to date. Marshall Downey said that these presentations are also a passing of the torch, because S3 Housing Connect should be transitioning from consultant led toward sustainability.

Other Business

John Paschal suggested that we need to reach out to Helping Hand Clinic about joining S3 Housing Connect. John P. also stated the need for adult daycare options. In addition, Tami said if anyone knows of any local services that aren't currently involved with this initiative to let her know.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.