



S3 Housing Connect Meeting Notes

February 11, 2021 Zoom Call

Attendance (32 present): Kendra Martin, Ruth Price, John Kirkman, Hamer Carter, Kym Smith, Bob Hughes, Cindy Hall, Tami Carter, Marcia Johnson, Pat Hawes, Dr. Hall, Chris Kelley, Lisa Bryant, Lisa Cunningham, Crystal Mclver, Gabrielle Saunders, Paul Tate, Brittany Newman, Darla Shoults, Shadonna Headen, Laura Spivey, Joey Mosley, Gabby Murillo, John Campbell, Johnnye Waller, Holly Marosites, Karin Duggan, John Paschal, Tamara Brogan

Staff: Rachel Mann, Karen Kennedy, Stan Holt

1. **Welcome, Mission Statement**, Ruth Price, Vice Chair
2. **Point in Time Count Update**, Cindy Hall

Roughly three days before the national Point in Time Count (PIT) was supposed to take place, the state decided that due to COVID, it might not be safe to go out and do an unsheltered count. Region 7 was instructed to just do a shelter count. However, we decided that S3 has made too much progress to not do a normal count this year. Cindy asked shelter representatives to administer the shelter count, and entered the numbers herself via the app. She logged 78 sheltered people that night. There was a 2:1 man to woman ratio, and the average age was in the 30s. S3 didn't do any outreach for volunteers to do the unsheltered count, but some from the community wanted to join. There were eight volunteers plus a Sanford Herald reporter. The volunteers divided into four groups and went out to sites from the new homeless map that Gene Hathaway, GIS Department, created. Volunteers were allowed to go out anytime throughout the weekend to recheck spots if they didn't find anyone the first time.

A couple days later, a count was done at Bread Basket and the Prince Motel. Cindy also made an effort to count those in the hospital, jail, and out in the county. The only demographic that was missed were the CCC students experiencing homelessness. Ruth Price made an Excel spreadsheet with data from the count. The biggest age population was 21-35. There were nine people over 65, which was surprising. Gabrielle Saunders asked about homeless veterans, and Stan replied that data will come through as sheltered data from the state. Some veterans were found at the Prince and Palomino.

One team found a young man who had just gotten out of jail. Thank you to Crystal Mclver and her team for connecting him with resources! Also, thank you to Lisa Bryant with Central Carolina Hospital for going out and handing out goody bags! We are also extremely appreciative for donations. We received over 200 blankets, tons of hats, food, and more. We made over 150 goody bags with volunteers from First Baptist Church, and Crossroads Church donated 50 hygiene bags! These bags were handed out or left at sites. We are still distributing some of the donations.

3. **How do you know you are doing well locally?** Stan Holt

Stan showed a graphic of a boat sinking and asked S3 members what they thought. Some shared that they should get water out of the boat, but that is not a sustainable solution. Others said the picture represented that multiple groups should work together for a solution. Some things we've tried might not be the solution that "plugs the hole" in the sinking boat. We always need to look at new ideas. Stan then shared some clues that something good is happening locally. These include: 1) Everyone adapted

when the state said not to do the PIT Count like normal. We met and exceeded expectations, and got data that is more useful for our community. 2) We are beginning to think about how to leverage funding in the community. The collaborative grant from COVID funding between OMI, BOLM, H3, and Salvation Army is exciting and we are thinking ahead about how to leverage resources and bring them to our community! 3) Karen had presentations in front of City Council and County Commissioners. During one of these, she was told that people come to Lee County to be homeless- which may not be reality- but that means we're doing a good job! We're getting pushback because we're growing and changing the local system.

As agencies begin to collaborate and get to know the other local organizations, you then begin having necessary conversations about philosophical differences on how to work with clients. You may or may not agree with how an organization is operating, but each agency is needed in the mix. Stan encouraged the group to keep trying creative solutions.

IV. Mobile Shower Project Discussion- Veternation, Gabrielle Saunders

Veternation has been in the Sanford area since 2018. Gabrielle showed building plans for her proposed mobile showers and led a discussion on potential partnerships needed to bring them to Sanford. The mobile showers will be for anyone who needs them, not just veterans. Gabrielle shared that she has gone through steps with Environmental Health, the Planning Department, and Building Inspections to get the needed permits for this operation. She really needs ideas and collaboration around where she could park the shower truck. Ideally, this location would have a water hookup. John from BOLM, Joey from HAVEN, and other organizations said that Gabrielle could park her truck outside of their organizations occasionally.

V. Committee Reports:

1. **Housing**, Bob Hughes- This committee is concentrating on the Triangle J report. They are going through goals they determined previously to see where we should redirect our attention. They are also communication with other task forces and groups in the area to ensure that we are not duplicating efforts. Lastly, they are working to encourage county commissioners to prioritize affordable housing; advocacy is important.

2. **Services**, Tami Carter- Cindy gave a PIT Count update, and agency reports were shared. They viewed a video on a tiny home community in Wilmington. Vaccines are now open to those in category 3, which includes homeless shelter staff!

3. **Community Outreach and Engagement**, Cindy Hall- This committee discussed goals. They want to find someone to educate the group on evictions and the moratorium. The outreach event at CCCC was pushed back to Fall 2021. Stan reminded the group that we need to be thinking about stories to share. Also, the committee's next meeting will focus on messaging around the assumptions that those experiencing homelessness are coming to Lee County because of our system.

VI. Closing Remarks and Adjourn

The group thanked Cindy Hall for her leadership during the PIT Count.

Kendra announced that United Way has a lot of face masks if any agency needs them.

BOLM is reducing the number of hotel and motel stays that they were offering. It has become very expensive. John reported that JLHCA hasn't been involved with the stays in a while, and BOLM can't afford them alone. However, the need is still out there- BOLM had a COVID case and couldn't find assistance to place the person in a hotel. Also, John mentioned that the local Health Department did not have a plan on how to assist the person, which was concerning for all. John reiterated that BOLM can't be the only organization offering hotel stays, especially because they need to focus on their normal operations.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. Thanks to Ruth Price for starting the meeting!