



S3 Housing Connect Meeting Notes

June 10, 2021 Zoom Call

Attendance (30 present): Lesa Price, Tamara Brogan, Cindy Hall, Yazmin Risano, Hamer Carter, John Kirkman, Bob Hughes, Max Dolan, Joey Mosley, Tracy Staley, Quiotti Ratliffe, Kimberly Rau, Kelli Laudate, Karin Duggan, John Campbell, Shadonna Headen, Heather Garrity, Brittany Newman, Dr. Bill Hall, Gabby Murillo, Sandra Torres, Darla Shoults, Kendra Martin, Commissioner Bill Carver, Paul Tate, Kerry Bashaw, Laura Spivey, Crystal McIver

Staff: Karen Kennedy, Rachel Mann, Stan Holt

1. **Welcome, Mission Statement**, Tamara Brogan, Chair
2. **Location Discussion**, Karen Kennedy

There has been some interest in returning to in-person meetings or a hybrid model. Karen asked what everyone's opinions are on that. Kendra said she is not ready to be back in person yet and likes the hybrid option. S3 members started suggesting locations, including the Gordon Wicker room, City Hall, the Navigation Center, the McSwain Center, or local parks. Everyone agreed the McSwain Center might be best, as it is bigger and has technological capabilities the other rooms don't have. Hamer shared that OMI has been meeting in a hybrid format, but they are going back fully in-person next month. Bill Carver stated that the Young Commissioners have been meeting in the McSwain Center with 30+ people and there was plenty of room to space out. Someone suggested that committees meet in person, and the larger S3 meetings remain virtual. The group agreed that this was a good idea.

3. **Storage Discussion**, Kelli Laudate

Kelli recently had an experience with a man experiencing homelessness in Downtown Sanford, and when she asked what he needed, he replied "I just need somewhere to store my stuff." Kelli said she had never experienced someone asking for storage space, but it is an important request. Darla is interested in placing lockers outside the BOLM building. Darla said that safe storage is a huge issue for people experiencing homelessness. Having the storage outside also prevents liability issues. People could be responsible for providing their own locks, or we could partner with a local business to get a donation of locks. If we got a donation, clients could potentially pay up to a dollar for the lock so they have some accountability. Kelli said that City staff sometimes struggle with all of the belongings that get left in public places. Staff are not allowed to remove any belongings. Kimberly Rau suggested looking into schools that are remodeling to see if we could get lockers for cheap. Darla previously obtained some lockers from a partnership with Lee County Schools and also grant money. Someone brought up the point that we could run into issues if clients have too many belongings and the lockers are too small. John P asked if we should have lockers at more than one location; Kelli suggested we start with BOLM and Bread Basket, then open it up to other organizations, if they're interested. Stan recommended that we ask those experiencing homelessness what they think about this

idea, because they'd be able to poke holes into ideas that we might not think of. Stan also said we should start small, because we won't get it right at first. Cindy shared a personal story regarding this conversation. She previously helped a person who had so much stuff it overflowed the trunk of a car. Hamer added that from a nonprofit perspective, people need a place where they can safely keep their important documents. When a client first enters the shelter, a large portion of time is spent trying to track down their important documents. John P ended the conversation by reminding everyone that storage is a huge problem with no simple answer.

4. **Data Collection**, Stan Holt

Stan started compiling 2020 data from local shelters so we can see the big picture of the amount of people assisted during the pandemic. The shelters have started collecting data around gender and race too. OMI and HAVEN have even categorized how many people were from out of the county, out of state, etc. Stan thanked OMI, HAVEN and Family Promise for their contribution to this data. Max asked if there is any data on veterans. Stan said not yet, but Kendra said that according to 211, there have been 26 veterans since we first started doing 211 coordinated entry. This is a very small number and it shows they are mostly being helped through other avenues. Hamer said OMI also collects data on veterans, but there aren't many of them; Maybe only 2-3 veterans per month. Veterans have specific resources and shelters they can use, so they tend to stick with those options. Joey said that HAVEN has a surprising number of military spouses as clients, but not many veterans. Tamara said Family Promise has a veteran once in a while, but it's rare. Lastly, Cindy said that she sees more veterans at the Prince and Palomino; They are usually self-sufficient and tend to stay long term. Bob asked if we could have access to this data, and Stan said he'd share once it's complete.

5. **Officer Election**, Karen Kennedy

S3 did not have a nominations committee this year. Karen asked if there are any nominations for chair. Someone suggested Tamara and Ruth retain their current positions as chair and vice-chair again this year. Dr. Hall motioned for nominations to cease, and Max Dolan seconded.

Max motioned for a vote, and Commissioner Carver seconded. Stan added a motion to approve Tamara as chair and Ruth as vice-chair in the Zoom chat. Voting members all said "yes" in the chat, meaning there was a unanimous approval by all who were present.

Afterwards, Tamara said it makes sense for the new people in the Executive Director positions at Salvation Army and HAVEN to take the voting member positions that the former executive directors previously held. Everyone agreed that Tracy Staley and Joey Mosley should automatically become voting members as the new Executive Directors of their organizations.

Karen also shared that Tami Carter stepped down as Chair of Services Committee. Kendra is going to be new chair of Services committee, with Darla Shoults as vice-chair. Karen shared that Tami is doing well and will still be involved with S3 after she recuperates.

There are proposals for two new committees- Advocacy and one focused on Landlords. It is time for S3 to restructure committees, so we will meet to rethink each of the committees and how they can achieve goals. Tamara said that some of the committees should work together on goals, so we could consider that when restructuring. Stan reminded everyone that if we add new committees, that could be five or more meetings that some of us would attend each month, which would be time consuming. S3 as a whole needs to think about 3-5 things to accomplish, and structure committees to meet those goals. This will be discussed at the July S3 meeting.

6. Committee Reports

Services, Kendra Martin- This committee recently discussed their 2020 achievements, which include case conferencing, a new resources brochure, and learning about child welfare and protective services. They discussed new goals for 2021 and 2022. Some of these include a Project Homeless Connect event, racial equity, advanced rapid rehousing services, and quarterly service provider meetings. New leaders were selected for this committee; They are Kendra Martin, chair, and Darla Molina as vice-chair.

Housing, Bob Hughes- Housing committee meets the first Wednesday of every month at 10:30 AM. The eviction committee met recently, and Kerry gave updates on its progress. This committee then discussed SAGA's entrepreneurial fund and how it could potentially be redirected towards affordable housing. SAGA is considering that, and will be taking a vote on it. Kerry and Bob are still looking into Cape Fear Collective, but that organization seems to be busy currently. Bob is wondering if S3 could do something on its own using CFC's framework. Sanford Housing Authority didn't receive emergency housing vouchers this time because they did not meet eligibility requirements. Hamer shared that OMI has some emergency housing vouchers. Marshall Downey with the City of Sanford updated everyone of the Unified Development Ordinance revisions regarding extended stay hotels. The NC homelessness conference was this week; It was very informative! Bob asked if anyone has heard about a transient occupancy legislature bill; No one had heard of it yet.

Community Engagement, Cindy Hall- This committee moved their meetings to 9 AM on the first Tuesday of each month. At the last meeting, Bob Hughes shared an update on housing projects. The Project Homeless Connect event at CCCC is scheduled for September 8th. There will be lots of tables for each of the different resources set up in the courtyard. There will also be food provided.

El Refugio's karaoke fundraiser raised \$12K. Darla gave an update on the Navigation Center. Lastly, the committee shared success stories. Tracy Staley shared a story from working with Salvation Army.

Evictions, Kerry Bashaw- The eviction moratorium is set to expire on June 30. It's doubtful that it would get extended again. This committee is trying to strategize what can be done at the local level to prevent evictions. There hasn't been much federal or state guidance around

preventing evictions. Everyone should continue to use 211 as a resource, and utilize the Navigation Center as our local resource hub. This committee is strategizing around pulling resources together through the Navigation Center. Kerry wants to put together a press release about local resources to send to the Sanford Herald and the Rant. We need to make sure we're reaching the right people, who are our most vulnerable populations. John Kirkman asked how many renters could potentially be impacted, and Kerry said it's hard to say because we have no clue how many landlords have been waiting for the moratorium to expire. We are expecting the worst but hoping for the best.

Advocacy, Kerry Bashaw- This committee will be having their first meeting on Wednesday, July 7th at 2 PM. If you are interested in public policy, advocacy and/or want to join the committee, contact Kerry or Rachel!

7. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

Kendra reminded everyone that United Way is sponsoring a drive through vaccination clinic. Please register through the UW website.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.