

CITY of Auburn Mayor’s Task Force on Homelessness
Meeting Summary for Meeting 4: Thursday, February 4, 2016
5:00 – 7:30pm
City Hall Council Chambers

MEETING ATTENDANCE					
Task Force Members & Alternates:					
Sylvia Fuerstenburg <i>For Sarah Christiansen</i>	✓	Alexis Schleiss	✓	Carla Hopkins	✓
Alexander Foster	✓	Leticia Figueroa	✓	Jeremy James	X
Virginia Gannon	✓	Dennis Grad	✓	Julia Jordan	✓
Debbie Christian	✓	Jeff Escobar	X	Ron Roberts	✓
Laura Kniss	✓	Cara Brinkley	✓	Diane Cimino-Kelly	✓
Ted Leonard	✓	Denise Daniels	✓	Kathie Blaschke	X
Staff Support Team:					
Erica Azcueta		Tami Kapule	✓	Bill Pierson	✓
Karen Reed, Facilitator	✓	Jamie Kelly	✓	Kristin Winkel	✓
	✓	Eric Robertson	X	Dana Hinman	✓
Guests:					
		Kyle Carrier	✓	Hon. Nancy Backus	✓

The meeting convened at 5:00 p.m.

Welcome, Introductions Review of Agenda. Karen Reed, Task Force facilitator, welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda. She noted for those in the audience that the task force will take public comment at the end of the meeting and written comment forms are also available. Karen noted that several online comments were received since the last meeting—they are included in the packets.

Approval of summary notes from Meeting #3: Co-chair Carla Hopkins noted a correction to last meeting’s minutes: Matt Wetter was not in attendance. As corrected, the minutes were approved.

Response to Task Force Questions. Karen noted that responses to the questions from Meeting 3 are in the packet.

Task Force Discussion: Impressions from site Tours at The Auburn Food Bank (TAFB), Auburn Youth Resources (AYR), Multi-Service Center Transitional Housing (MSC) and Valley Cities Landing and Phoenix Rising (VC).

- Alex Foster/TAFB: didn’t see the same faces at various locations, which seems people aren’t moving around to find resources.
- Ted Leonard/TAFB: individuals tend to migrate around 5pm; attendees aren’t always homeless – just looking for a meal; also noticed some groups engaging in “nefarious” acts outside the facility.
- Diane Cimino-Kelly/TAFB: noticed comradery, impressed with the attendees’ sense of community. These are stop gap measures from preventing homelessness
- Denise Daniels/AYR: 40-60 teens come for a meal. AYR allows night shelter and daytime hangout space. If it’s cold they’ll be referred to emergency shelters. AYR also offers job training & experience

- Carla Hopkins/MS: Transitional housing on Military Road. Stays can be from 6-12 months, or even 3-4 years. It is old military housing that can host a variety of individuals. Accomplishments must be made to move up further on housing voucher lists. People learn how to live on their own. Dennis Grad noted many students from the Auburn School District have lived there
- Alexis Schleiss/VC: Lovely facility. Sense of pride in the staff and residents. Phoenix Rising is still in the development phase, but will soon open to focus on teens & young adults learning life skills while getting mental health and substance abuse help

Presentation & Discussion: Auburn School District McKinney-Vento Act presentation *Presenter: Kyle Carrier, Auburn School District*

- Auburn School District (ASD) receives Title I funds; this Federal funding must comply with McKinney-Vento laws. The concept is to keep stability. M-V team at ASD helps identify, enroll & help kids in need. The law defines how a student is homeless: "Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence". Includes those awaiting foster care, etc.
- ASD had 147 students identified as homeless in 2014 and 163 in 2015. Families must fill out a housing questionnaire to qualify, but families are reluctant to do so – afraid they may lose custody of their children. Older youth are also concerned about being stigmatized as homeless.
- In addition to providing transportation to school from wherever the family lives, funds are set aside for other things: sports, lab, field trip fees, etc.

Local Service providers

- **Valley Cities** - *Alexander Foster, Program Therapist*
Valley Cities engages individuals in wrap-around services. Standard supportive housing. Typically a 2-year process. Helps those with severe mental health issues. Starting therapy early to get them stabilized & into housing is key. Client emphasis: therapy remains constant. Clients need to be willing to work toward success. Lack of affordable, sustainable housing at the end of the 2-year process is a huge barrier to long term success. Past criminal records often add to the problem of qualifying for sustainable housing.
- **The Auburn Food Bank** - *Debbie Christian, Executive Director*
Goal: to make it comfortable to come ("it's already bad enough"). Open Monday-Tuesday-Thursday-Friday. Allowed 2 visits a month; 1 regular and 1 emergency. Sponsors 2 hot meal programs, called Community Dinners. There are 5 in Auburn. No one is turned away. Also provide holiday baskets, weekend backpack programs and limited home deliveries. 4,000+/- registered in their system; 125+/- consistently come for meals. TAFB also offers job training/assistance; can write letters of recommendation. Has limited funding to provide financial assistance once a month. DV assistance for victims with emergent needs. Severe/cold weather shelter run by volunteers with 35 cots when temps drop below freezing. Partnership with APD & D.A.W.N. for interim DV housing. Gap: money and housing.
- **Sound Mental Health/PATH program** - *Cara Brinkley, Mental Health Case Manager*
A community mental health agency. Over 80 programs for adults, children, chemical dependency, housing & homelessness. Substance Abuse & Mental Health (SAMH) Federal money. Case workers help to make a plan to address needs of each individual. Provide long-term supportive services to those NOT already engaged with another federal program. Outreach worker strengths: can meet them where they are. Challenges: in Auburn – no access to hygiene or laundry facilities; lack of

enough public transportation to & from Auburn to connect people to other resources. Gas vouchers and a safe parking program would be valuable to have. Most emergent need: need more Housing First facilities.

- **Auburn Youth Resources** - *Sylvia Fuerstenberg, Executive Director*
Provides health, chemical dependency and homelessness prevention programs. Serves individuals 6 months (early childhood education) to 25 years of age. 8 sites: 5 in Auburn, 3 in Enumclaw and help in 28 schools across the region. Scattered transitional housing sites. Hope to expand intervention & prevention programs. Provide clinical staff & counseling. ACAP: head start program. Continuum of services – clients rarely need just one thing. Case managers provide life skills development and job training. King County Emergency grant allowed AYR to add 11 additional day center open hours on weekends. Challenges: pressures for low-income families, public transportation, lack of services and infrastructure relative to where kids are – they don't always have cell phones, cars, etc. Inadequate funding
- **HealthPoint:** - *Alexis Schleiss, Behavioral Health Care Coordinator*
Provides medical, dental, behavioral health, acupuncture services. Connect patients with insurance, transportation, medical vans. Challenges: non-compliance with their medications, frequent ER visits. Need to determine the best care for those that over-utilize the system. For homeless, they lose their phones and/or belongings (often stolen) so they can't easily access things like 2-1-1; limited shelter references. Patients don't always feel safe in shelters so they can be reluctant to go. They see a growing number of people living in cars; particularly difficult for those with special needs.
- **MultiCare** - *Diane Cimino-Kelly, Director*
Provides both inpatient & outpatient services; social workers, physical & occupational therapists. Auburn doesn't have all necessary services. Many of the same issues as expressed by HealthPoint. Medication is lost or stolen. Staff burnout when patients don't follow through. Limited inpatient chemical dependency spots. Typically see 125 patients a day in Auburn, 75 in Covington. Hospitals are "very expensive hotels." Multicare also provides clothing, transportation, medicines.
- **Christ Community Free Clinic** - *Virginia Gannon, Executive Director*
Provides quality urgent care. Open Tuesday evenings and 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month; first-come, first-served. Assist with sign-ups for Affordable Care Act. In 2015 they had 8 people identify as homeless and 69 as couch-surfing on intake CCFC forms. Challenges: 2-1-1 is not always up to date.

Review and Discussion: Draft Problem Statement, What does success look like, Recommendations Criteria & Recommendations Framework

Karen reviewed the draft document and asked for input from Task Force member and the staff support team.

- **Draft Problem Statement:**
 - Pull comments from TalkAuburn online blog.
 - definition of loitering
 - long waiting lists for subsidized housing
 - more supporting evidence, facts & numbers.
 - Rising costs of rental units.
 - Lack of mental health care \$ spending.
 - Should make clear what requires immediate attention.
 - Housing First: think outside the box. City-sponsored facility?

- Numbers to reflect changes in benefits at DSHS; many are losing cash assistance and food stamps: *How many are losing benefits because of changes in HEN?*
- Help for ABWOD: Able-bodied without dependents.
- Community concerns re: perception.
- Outreach services to help them get on the right path.
- Lack of resources, shelter for unaccompanied youth in SKC

In response to a questions about whether there could be tax breaks for keeping property rents low, Mayor Backus, who was observing the meeting, offered that there are several bills in Olympia allowing for tax incentives for new construction with set asides for affordable housing.

- **What does Success look like?**

- Everyone who wants a home gets a home.
- A system that works & understands the process from beginning to end.
- Increased partnerships within schools.
- An ongoing process that's always reviewed & refined during course of SAMH treatment.
- Increase in resources.
- Educational & awareness campaigns for the community as a whole.
- Realizing success requires a phased approach.
- Not one size fits all.
- A clear definition of homelessness.
- Engaging property owners to build more partnerships.
- One-stop shop to help people.
- Better connections/transportations to services.
- Measurable metrics & focus on goals that are actually attainable.
- A positive community impact, seeing homeless as part of us and not viewed as "those people".
- Advocacy: start small & locally, then move our further (a phased rollout).

- **Criteria for recommendations**

- Don't limit to just short or near term solutions. Also look at long term
- Focus on sustainable ideas.

- **Draft framework for Recommendations:** workable as presented.

Homework for Task Force and Support Team. Karen asks folks to be prepared at the next meeting to offer up potential task force recommendations, using the draft framework.

Public Comment

- Frank Bannister: identify the scope of the problem, see the impact: calls to PD, ER visits, trash clean up. Integrate services as there seems to be lots of overlap.
- Virginia Haugen: tried to start a health clinic near schools 25 years ago. Birth control is key. Make housing a priority, but no more apartments. Possibly buildings with shared facilities.
- Brocc Snyder: we have the solutions, not the actions. Look at their needs. You want to do things your way, not theirs. Try to step into their shoes. Tent cities, encampments so people can start to succeed with a sense of family/community. Focus groups.
- Petrina Yuenger: 2nd generation homeless. Grew up in foster care. ONC numbers are low; single adults make up the highest number but have the least amount of resources to utilize. A day center

with arts & crafts, a community thrift store with proceeds going back into the community. Waived fee for vendor permits to sell at Auburn events.

- Madrienne Salgado: Albuquerque, NM gives a wage to homeless that are out working. Could something like that work here?

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 P.M.