



HOMELESS TASK FORCE Committee Meeting Notes

Wednesday, July 8, 2015
5:00 PM
2000 Main Street
Lower Level Meeting Room B-8

In Attendance

City Staff: Chief Robert Handy, Captain Dave Bunetta, Lt. Kelly Rodriguez, Teri Baker, Kellee Fritzal, Scott Hess, Stephanie Beverage, Simone Slifman

Task Force Members: Vicki Boatman, Chair Hector Valdez, Bill Blair, Vice-Chair Ralph Bauer

1. Public Comments (Limited to 3 minutes/person): None

2. Approval of Minutes from the Meetings of May 26, 2015 and June 26, 2015

A motion was made by Member Bill Blair, seconded by Vice Chair Bauer to accept the minutes as presented. Chair Valdez and Member Boatman voted in favor of approval.

3. Presentation by Rev. Karen Maurer of Beach Cities Interfaith Services regarding the homeless clientele served by BCIS in the City of Huntington Beach

Rev. Maurer presented a PowerPoint outlining the various services they provide in Huntington Beach to homeless individuals as part of an interfaith group of service providers. Services include carry-out daily lunches; personal hygiene kits; gently used clothing; counseling; secure mailboxes; Medicare/MediCal registration and referral programs; monetary assistance with obtaining California IDs, birth certificates, and prescription medication; referrals for veterans and other services to meet ongoing needs for people with shelter as well such as groceries, utility assistance, and housing referrals. Rev. Maurer also presented information on the upcoming carnival being organized by Coast to Coast and BCIS for August 14-16th, at the Huntington Beach Sports Complex. Proceeds from ticket sales for carnival rides and games will benefit Coast to Coast and BCIS and the services they provide.

Questions were asked about how to approach homeless people in public environments, such as outside a post office. Rev. Maurer stated that homeless individuals are often very lonely and many appreciate kind gestures like receiving a Ziploc bag containing personal hygiene items, snacks and socks, for example. A question was also asked about the possibility of providing lockers and the dollar estimate associated with obtaining them.

Muriel Ullman, consultant to the City of Costa Mesa indicated that a church in Costa Mesa has established a check in center where homeless individuals are permitted to leave their belongings during the day when needed.

4. Presentation by Jason Austin, MA, MFT, Program Manager with the OC Health Care Agency (HCA) regarding the Behavioral Health Care System available through HCA

Jason Austin presented a PowerPoint outlining the services provided through the OC Links program, which has been in existence for the past 18 months and is a service of the County of Orange Health Care Agency. It operates Monday-Friday from 8-6 with trained clinical staff available to provide information and referrals via telephone or online chat. They work with more than 200 behavioral health programs and link people to services based on need and eligibility. Community partners include educational organizations, public safety and government agencies, health care services, faith-based organizations, motels, private businesses, transportation providers and others. The majority of people are referred to OC Links by other service providers, the internet, probation, and through the County Behavioral Health Services staff. Since beginning, their program, they have serviced about 600 calls from Huntington Beach, with most calling on behalf of a parent or caregiver.

Lt. Kelly Rodriguez inquired about the time when it is appropriate to be in contact with OC Links, and their response time. Mr. Austin indicated that calls can come any time during or outside of business hours and response times depend upon the situation. Councilmember Barbara Delgleize inquired as to what happens when calls come in after 6 PM when the line closes. Mr. Austin indicated that calls are then triaged and attended to by the CAT Team and that there is also a suicide prevention hotline 24 hours per day with various available services that meet those specific needs.

Vice-Chair Bauer commented that the public needs to be made more aware of this program. Muriel Ullman commented that the service is impressive.

5. Presentation by Karen McGlinn of Share Our Selves (SOS) Regarding the Physical and Mental Health Profile of the Homeless in Huntington Beach

Karen McGlinn, the Executive Director of Share Our Selves (SOS) presented a PowerPoint outlining the profile of a homeless individual from a mental and physical health perspective, followed by an explanation of the services their organization provides. She stated that there are 12,000 homeless individuals in OC, with 19% chronically homeless and others fragiley housed. She identified various physical and mental health conditions that affect the homeless, which include, among others, schizophrenia, PTSD, substance abuse, sleep deprivation and various chronic diseases. SOS provides medical, dental and other service programs for the homeless at centers in Costa Mesa, Santa Ana, Lake Forest, and Newport Beach. They consider their organization as a "medical home" and work to provide continuity of services.

Lt. Rodriguez asked whether the organization will pick people up to assist them if the City were to call and what the eligibility is for service. Ms. McGlinn responded that they will not pick up,

as the person must be brought to their facility. Services are provided for free under a government mandate to service anyone free of charge.

Vice-Chair Bauer asked how we can make the service available to homeless individuals in our community and whether we could regularly transport people to one of their facilities. Ms. McGlenn indicated that it would have to be worked out, but, yes, it is possible. Ms. McGlenn mentioned that SOS is now also offering a cell phone program through Lifeline, and uses it to stay in contact with their clients, so that they can remind them to go to their appointments, obtain prescription refills, etc.

6. Task Force Meeting Wrap Up with Bill Nelson, Executive Director of Fresh Beginnings Ministries

Bill Nelson introduced himself to the Task Force as a facilitator to assist at the end of each meeting with a wrap up of what was discussed at that evening's meeting.

BCIS – three things learned through their presentation:

- They are located in HB
- There is a need for establishing continuity of relationships between the counselors and service recipients
- Access to job information and referrals

OC Links – three things learned through their presentation:

- High volume of available services – improvement is needed in the speed of responses to immediate needs
- Service allows for cooperation with PD and can often alleviate public safety intervention and time that could be dedicated to other activities
- Enthusiasm by the organization in their approach to solving problems

SOS – three things learned through their presentation:

- Detailed profile of the homeless individual
- Barriers to assisting the homeless
- Need for transportation to allow individuals to access SOS programs/services

Vice Chair Ralph Bauer distributed a list of questions to the members entitled "Some Questions About the Homeless Program in Huntington Beach" dated July 8, 2015.

7. Adjourn to August 12, 2015 at 5:00 P.M.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 P.M.