

Minutes

HOMELESS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

March 8, 2010 – 11:30am

Siouxland Health & Human Services Building

Members present: Hugh Grogan, Kerri DeGraff, Jim Meyer, Vernon Brown, Shirley Halleen, Mike Cooper, Wendy Giebink.

Members absent: Judy Buseman, Tam Baker, Jeff Barth.

Others present: Melanie Bliss, Sioux Empire Homeless Coalition; Angela Hyde, Community Outreach; Brett Johnson, Southeastern Behavioral Healthcare; Jamie Kessler, ICAP; Kari Benz, County Human Services; Julie Becker, St. Francis House; Major Mike Mills and Steve Cook, Salvation Army; Pat Stewart, VOA, Dakotas; Stephanie Nordgren, intern with Homeless Education office of SFSD, Gail Swenson, SF School District, and Stacey Tieszen, HAB Homeless Coordinator.

I. Approval of Minutes – 02/08/10 Minutes

- Upon motion by Mike Cooper, and seconded by Shirley Halleen, the HAB approved the minutes of the 02/08/10 meeting as provided. Carried unanimously.

II. Old Business

A. Safe Home Update

- Hugh Grogan provided an update on the progress of Safe Home. Tax Credit applications were due at the end of February so now it will just be a matter of waiting for an answer. To help reduce costs in an effort to obtain the Tax Credit funding, the design of the original building has been restructured. Minnehaha County should know by May if they have been awarded the funding.

B. Inter-Agency Collaboration Summit

- Stacey Tieszen provided an update on the progress that was made since the Summit. A final summary has been emailed out asking for Summit Attendees to read through the material and then, if interested, to volunteer to be on a short-term taskforce/workgroup. Workgroups will be set up for each of the priorities, and if a great enough response will form around a specific strategy area. Gail Swenson offered to have the Office of Homeless Education grant funds pay for additional facilitation from Patricia Julianelle if the Board thinks it beneficial.

III. New Business

A. Salvation Army Warming Center – Major Mike Mills and Steve Cook

- Major Mike Mills and Salvation Army Board Chair Steve Cook attended today's meeting at HAB request to discuss the services and clientele being served by the Warming Center. Major Mills said that the Center began on January 5, 2010 because of a concern that individuals who had no place to stay would be on the streets potentially freezing to death because of the harsh winter weather. The Center opens at 7pm every night if the weather is colder than 28 degrees (although wind chill is also taken into consideration) and remains open until 7am. Cots are not provided so they do not view it as a shelter. They have been averaging about 28 people a night. They have had no issues with violence or physical threats. The police have only been called when necessary to take someone to detox which has happened only 3-4 times. Salvation Army did not feel a need to get neighborhood approval before they opened the warming center as they were wanting to address the growing need they were seeing with people who were unable to get into or did not want to stay at the other shelters in town. Mike Cooper said that the City has received complaints

from neighbors and the lack of communication is a concern especially considering the City ordinance that addresses shelters. Steve Cook commented that it is not in violation of the ordinance as it is a warming center that does not provide beds for sleeping so does not qualify as shelter. Hugh Grogan then presented an overview of prior concerns and circumstances regarding the Salvation Army shelter that operated until a few years ago. Angela Hyde commented on the need in the community which she said is represented in the numbers coming to the warming center every evening. Mike Cooper then asked the Salvation Army to share what their general population at the center consists of each night. Single individuals, primarily male, typically on foot, 20% have been intoxicated, 15-25% have been Native American, and being homeless is not a requirement. People wishing to save on heating costs etc. are welcome too. Further discussion occurred with an offer from Mike Cooper (City Planning) to facilitate a small group of concerned Whittier neighborhood residents and Salvation Army staff which was agreed to by Steve Cook and Major Mills. Discussed the extensive background of Major Mike and his wife Major Judy Mills and the history that the Salvation Army has of working with those suffering from alcoholism and a way to create something new in the community that meets the needs – a type of Adult Rehabilitation Center that provides 40 hour a week work therapy, counseling, classes, chapel, and is a minimum of 6 months. Would look at a 15-20 bed capacity if there was community support and available funding.

B. Volunteers of America, Dakotas – Transitional Housing Grant - Pat Stewart

- Pat Stewart is seeking a letter of support for a grant that VOA, Dakotas is wanting to submit for Transitional Housing for Veterans. It is part of the national mandates of Volunteers of America. It is a grant per diem funding opportunity that provides housing for approximately 2 years. Case management would accompany the housing. Discussed two potential locations which are both properly zoned. Discussed the number of veterans in the catchment area. National VOA will submit the grant of behalf of the VOA, Dakotas. There would be 24 hour supervision. Vernon Brown made a motion to submit a letter of support on behalf of the grant application from the HAB. Shirley seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Pat Stewart will send Stacey Tieszen a sample letter and Stacey will complete the letter.

IV. Homeless Coordinator Updates

- Stacey Tieszen provided updates on activities since the last HAB meeting.

V. Committee Reports

- Program Committee

No additional report – focus of the Program Committee is on the Summit discussed above.

- Faith-Based Committee

No report at this time.

VI. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn made by Jim Meyer and seconded by Vernon Brown. Meeting adjourned unanimously at 12:50pm.