

Juneau Coalition on Housing & Homelessness Meeting

Minutes - Draft

May 16, 2013

12:00 - 1:30 PM

Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority

I. Roll Call/Introductions

Mandy O'Neal Cole called the meeting order at 12:05 PM. Mandy made a motion to add SOAR training to the list of discussion items.

II. Approval of Minutes

A. April 25, 2013

Jorden Nigro made a motion to approve the April minutes; Jen La Roe seconded. With no objections the minutes were approved.

III. Discussion Items:

A. Affordable Housing Commission Update

Mandy and Shari Partin shared that the AHC has been reviewing the Juneau Affordable Housing Fund, which has \$477,000 reserved for building affordable housing projects. The AHC is discussing alternative uses or how to encourage the usage of the fund. Mandy also mentioned that Community Development Department Director, Hal Hart had shared with AHC that there are 264 permit applications for potential housing projects.

The Steering Committee met with City Manager, Kim Kiefer, and Deputy City Manager Rob Steedle to discuss the coordinator position and potential funding options to support the JCHH. A housing coordinator at CBJ is questionable for the future, but funding for a deliverable project verses a staff position to support JCHH is more realistic.

B. SOAR

SOAR stands for SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery. This national project is designed to increase access to the disability income benefit programs administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) for eligible adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and have a mental illness and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder.

Social Security will provide applications but does not sit and council those who need help filling them out. This is why SOAR training in the community is important and more community members and organizations who work with this population are needed to guide clients through the process to receive the benefits they are eligible for. Janna Brewster from Front Street Clinic shared that they have funding for a Social Security/HR manager position. The Coalition agreed that there is a great need for a central point of contact for specialized Social Security assistance.

C. Coalition Identity

I. Website Update

Kiel Renick reported he has received some good feedback on content and overall organization of the website from members. James the web developer is currently making changes to the site. Once the website is complete, James will train one or two members on how to manage and update the site.

II. Logo

Laura Lucas gave a progress update and passed around two logo ideas for feedback from the group. Laura and Jessy Post had previously met with the graphic designer to discuss the Coalition's mission and talk about imagery that might best represent the Coalition. The first design incorporates a house and a hand, a symbol of caring. The second design incorporates a house with mountains. Some feedback implied that the first design had a caring grassroots feel. The second design with the mountains has a more institutional feel. This design had fewer comments about tweaking the design and won overall. After the vote, members noted that if the hand in the second design was reworked and made "softer", they would like to see another round. Laura and Jessy will follow up with the designer and send out the two logos via email.

D. Collaboration Session

At the last meeting in April, members voiced that they would like more interagency sharing and collaboration to take place during the meetings. This month, the steering committee wanted to allow time for members to have an open dialogue—a time for agency updates and an opportunity to discuss problems, barriers, and short-term or quick solutions that are needed within our agencies.

Ed Williams, Veteran Affairs: Ed shared that Juneau has 10 HUD VASH Vouchers. Nine of those vouchers have been issued, but there is no housing. Some of these voucher recipients have an income, others do not. Ed noted current issues that arise: a). Keeping voucher recipients housed b). Bringing them into services and c). More eyes are needed on clients. Ed suggested inviting Julie Eriksen from Coordinated Resource Projects to a future meeting.

Shari Partin, Alaska Housing Development Corporation: AHDC has 312 subsidized, market-rate, and tax credit housing units. AHDC housing is 100% full and generally works off a wait list of 70-80 people. She noted that they have had 3 vacancies the entire year. Shari also helps with housing prevention and security deposits. This month she has helped 7 people from getting evicted and has worked with 20 voucher recipients that are looking for housing, which is not technically part of her job description to help locate housing for those with vouchers. Susan McDonald from the Juneau School District mentioned that she knew of two families that had recently been evicted, but only knew of the situation after it occurred. Shari said she is only able to help those facing eviction. She also shared information about their new medium range support program from the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG). There are tight eligibility restrictions for those needing housing—clients have to be receiving other supportive services and Shari has to be in contact with their employer. If AHDC needs to make regulation changes, JCHH could be an active supporter.

Jen LaRoe, St. Vincent de Paul: Jen reported that they have successfully applied for Greater Opportunities for Affordable Living grant (GOALS) on time.

Jorden Nigro & Laura Lucas, SE Alaska Independent Living (SAIL): SAIL serves a broad population of seniors and people with disabilities to live independently. They get many requests from elders and others needing housing but can only direct them to housing providers. On the topic of SOAR, Jorden said she has been providing benefits counseling. She also sees a big need for services for people with fetal alcohol syndrome.

Janna Brewster, Front Street Clinic: Front Street can provide more time with a patient than other clinics to assess all their needs because they don't know when or if they will see some of their patients again. The clinic works on all aspects of health from behavioral health to dentistry. The dentist has been seeing 60 patients a month, even with the loss of HAP funding for dentures. Janna herself sees 120 patients a month. They do not serve prenatal clients because of liability issues and once a woman is pregnant, the care falls under Medicare. Janna shared that if a client does become housed, the clinic can help for up to one year.

Catharine Boice, Juneau Public Health Center: The Public Health Center provides a variety of services on a fee for service based on income. The Health Center does referrals, STD testing, some immunizations and child immunizations, and prescribes birth control and Emergency Plan B. They also provide TB care, which is where they typically see most of their homeless clients.

Kiel Renick, The Glory Hole: Kiel reported that the shelter has some empty beds – they are at about 75% capacity, which is the first time in 6 months. He said one of the main challenges they face is connecting clients with the services they need. The Glory Hole collaborates with AWARE when there is a family in need of immediate housing. AWARE will house the mother and child and the Glory Hole will house the father.

Susan McDonald, Juneau School District: The Students/Families in Transition Program only operates during the school months, which is concerning for the students who receive meals during school hours and are now on summer break. Susan talked about a program called Kid's Café that Captain Don from the Salvation Army is organizing and another program called Backpacks for Kids, which provides backpacks with supplies and food for students. The JSD district has identified 151 homeless children but she questioned how many more students in our district need food. She suggested discussions with Food Services would be a good start for collaboration.

Gus Marx, Juneau Youth Services: Cornerstone is the youth emergency shelter with 17 beds spread out between 10 apartments. They have been at about 75% utilization. John Estes, the new manager and his team are looking at ways to make the shelter a more long-term solution. The shelter primarily serves two groups of clientele: runaway youth and state custody youth. Gus said that JYS is seeing more state custody kids and a less percentage of homeless kids.

Take aways:

- Networking with landlords needed
- Feature Coalition members at monthly meetings and/or in media – newsletters or Capital City Weekly feature
- Debrief about collaboration session
- Develop member portal for website

IV. Informational Items & reminders

Prisoner Reentry Coalition: Friday, May 31, 10-11:30AM, Gruening Park

SOAR Training: June 3 & 4, Tlingit & Haida Regional Housing Authority

Next Meeting:

Thursday, June 20, 2013 • 12:00 - 1:30 PM • THRHA