

# JUNEAU HOMELESS COALITION

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## Juneau Homeless Coalition Meeting Minutes - DRAFT November 15, 2012 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority

### I. Roll Call/Introductions

Mandy O'Neal Cole called the meeting to order at 11:35AM.

### II. Approval of Minutes

September 20, October 25, 2012

Jen La Roe requested that the question she asked Amy Hiley and answer from the September meeting be recorded in the minutes. Her question for Amy was: *Is there potential for other designated groups (i.e.: chronically homeless, mentally ill, etc.) to receive specifically awarded vouchers, such as the domestic violence voucher program? If so, is that something the homeless coalition could advocate for?*

*Amy: The Empowering Choice Housing Program (vouchers for persons displaced due to domestic violence) is a demonstration of what can be done. Clearly it aligns with the Governor's stance against domestic violence. Amy does not know of any specific plans to create similar types of programs for other populations at this time. Many years ago AHFC received from HUD, and continues to utilize vouchers set-aside for persons with disabilities. AHFC is also working with the Department of Corrections and the Department of Health and Social Services, Office of Children's Services to utilize HOME funds available through our Planning Department to offer Voucher-like assistance to parolees and youth graduating out of foster care. AHFC leaders want to hear from all representatives serving common clients and potential clients regarding community-housing needs.*

It was also noticed that the October minutes read "agenda." Jessy will make changes and repost the minutes online. Holly Handler made a motion to approve the September and October meeting minutes with the suggested corrections; Mariya Lovischuk seconded and the minutes were approved.

### III. Discussion Items:

#### A. Treasury Report

Jessy Post gave a report on JHC's finances. There have been no changes since the last report. Twenty-one members have paid their FY2013 dues. From dues (to date), JHC has \$1,880. The latest expenditure to date is a \$215 deposit for the Public Market booth. The total funds are \$7,062.26.

#### B. Cornerstone

Gus Marx of Juneau Youth Services shared some information about the Cornerstone Youth Emergency Shelter. Cornerstone is a runaway shelter for youth, ages up to 19 years old. Gus said that the low facility utilization is a concern. Currently they are at about half capacity, which is very low compared to last year when Cornerstone was about 85% full. Gus handed out a brochure on Cornerstone for members to share with colleagues and if the opportunity arose, to point youth to the facility. One correlation to the low utilization is the loss of the federal grant for their Mobile Crisis Unit that closed earlier this fall. Although Cornerstone numbers are low, the Transitional Living Program numbers are increasing. Mandy mentioned that there has been a lot of turnover from the Department of Children's Services, which could be a factor.

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AWARE's emergency shelter has seen numbers rise. Mariya Lovischuk added that the Northern Lights Youth Shelter utilization was tremendously under utilized. They have seen only 12 students since it opened at the beginning of the school year. They have held a Yakoose social at the youth shelter, but it didn't help increase numbers. Someone suggested that maybe that the youth shelter is called a shelter verse a transitional living program gives off a stigma. Sandi Kohtz added that the population at Rainforest Recovery is young. Jorden Nigro stressed the importance of building and maintaining relationships at school with the students who need help and a stable environment. A longer discussion and possible presentation from new Program Coordinator, Pat Hefely will take place at the December meeting.

## **C. Carol Bodda of Veteran Affairs**

### **a. HUD-VASH Program**

Carol Bodda, from the office of Veteran Affairs in Fairbanks, visited Juneau and the JHC to talk about the HUD-VASH program and how it affects Juneau. There are 10 vouchers designated for Juneau that can be administered now. The Juneau Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (in the Federal Building) will have a social worker, Ed Williams from SEARHC, starting in December. Carol will manage vouchers from Fairbanks, and requested that agencies send referrals to her. A priority will be made for the most chronically homeless veterans that are willing to participate in case management. Once referrals start coming in, she can communicate with Alaska Housing Finance Corporation.

Carol shared HUD's definition of chronically homeless: Homeless for a year, or four episodes of homelessness in three years. Other than Ed, there is no local role and if need be, case management could be done telephonically. She is managing Juneau's 10 vouchers because it is too small of a caseload to have a full time staff from the VA. She has a total caseload of about 40 clients up in Fairbanks.

Holly asked if case management would get clients through the VA Disability system to receive benefits. Holly currently sends veterans to a service officer to help fill out claims for VA Disability compensation. Carol said that there is not a VA Disability office in Juneau, but clients still need to go see the compensation and pension physician for exams and to receive those benefits.

The HUD-VASH program requires a criminal background check. The program can work with sex-offenders, as long as the client is not a lifetime offender. In the state of Alaska there are 15-year offenders that have to register for 15 years, and lifetime offenders who register for the rest of their lives. Offenders are required to provide a record from public safety office that proves they are not a lifetime offender.

## **D. Public Market**

The JHC has been assigned to the Juneau Arts & Culture Center, booth #13, which is different from last year's space. Jessy spoke with Ruth Kostik of Perseverance Theater to see if she wouldn't mind switching booths. They would like to keep their booth space because they will be printing off tickets on the JACC printer in the lobby, so they wanted to be as close as possible to that printer.

Kiel is compiling documents for the booth, and requested that members send any information they would like to include before Wednesday. Laura Lucas and Phoebe Rorhacher baked 400 cookies the past weekend. Laura passed around examples of the house-shaped gingerbread cookies for members to sample and to show the packaging. Laura also mentioned that the cookies would be handed out for free and can be a good

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conversation starter. The cookie packaging has information about the Coalition that shoppers can take with them.

**E. Name Change**

At the last meeting we dedicated the meeting in February to discuss the name change, however the conversation is on going until then. It was requested that the mission statement be added to next agenda.

**F. Awareness Event**

Kiel Renick presented an idea for a homeless awareness event to take place sometime after Project Homeless Connect. Kiel is envisioning a potluck event outside near the courthouse to say thank you for the work being done on housing and homelessness issues. With this event, he'd like to also make it known that there is much more work to take on and accomplish—listing current projects and state what the community needs. Using the event as a platform to release the data from Project Homeless Connect, he hopes to engage community leaders—including the Assembly and legislative delegates, the public, and those experiencing homelessness. It was suggested that Kiel write letters to legislators. Pam Watts also suggested contacting those in charge of coordinating the Veteran Stand Down that took place this past September because of the legislative participation at their event.

**G. 2012-2013 Priorities**

The Coalition is making progress on our priorities that were set back in May. However, it is good to revisit them to see what work is being done and what needs more focus. Mandy mentioned that all of these priorities are pieces that will be incorporated into a 10-Year Plan. JHC has started on the work of a 10-Year Plan before framing everything in the plan. Another task is to build the framework of our 10-Year Plan.

**1. Coordinated social services approach / coordinated intake**

Sandi Kohtz has agreed to lead this committee because of the work she has started for the Housing First working group to coordinate service providers and the intake process. We will talk more about this priority at the next meeting due to time.

**2. Housing First project**

Scott Ciambor has been our (unofficial) lead on the Housing First Project, and has been providing updates. The JHC's best role is to advocate for a Housing First project and educate the public.

**3. Point In Time / Project Homeless Connect/Vulnerability Index**

Jessy Post has been the lead on coordinating the Point-in-Time Count/Project Homeless Connect. A planning committee has been meeting monthly and a progress update will be given at the next JHC meeting.

**4. Affordable housing commission policy changes**

Dan Austin has led JHC in providing comments and reviewing the housing section of the Comprehensive Plan.

There was discussion on the need to finalize either a rotation of members, or establish a designated member to attend the Affordable Housing Commission meetings. Members feel it is important to have JHC representation at all AHC meetings. Ruth Danner liked the idea of the multiple people going to meetings—the more the better so more members stay informed. It was suggested that Shari could bring AHC minutes to our meetings and brief the Coalition, however by Shari being a Commissioner, it would be best to have different representation from the JHC.

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Ruth expressed concern about the Peterson Hill project, which has been proposed and a main topic of discussion at AHC meetings. \$6.3 million is semi-earmarked for affordability on developing roads. This land is going to be subsidized and she believes this is not the best need for that \$6.3 million, which could be used for another affordable housing project. She suggested approaching the Assembly members. She emphasized that members should do their own research on the issue but to be aware of the situation.

Mandy will attend the next meeting and report back to the Coalition. If anyone else would like to attend, the next meeting is Tuesday, December 11 at 5:15PM at the Downtown Library.

## **5. Participate in Alaska Coalition on Housing and Homelessness**

There are five Juneau Board Representatives: Scott Ciambor is the Chair, Mariya Lovishuck is the Vice-Chair, and Jordan Nigro, Brenda Knapp, and Jessy Post serve on the Board.

## **6. Support for Smith Hall – low income seniors**

This priority is not applicable this year and does not require a Lead member.

## **7. Contact absent property owners (reuse of resources)/Inventory properties/ Rehabilitate dilapidated property for housing use/Downtown revitalization**

Time ran out to discuss all the priorities. A follow up discussion on the priorities will take place at the next meeting.

Jen LaRoe made an announcement about open seats on the Planning Commission. The next meeting is December 5. It was also requested that we debrief on the VASH program at the next meeting.

Mandy adjourned the meeting at 1:00PM.

## **V. Informational Items & reminders**

- A. 2013 Membership Dues
- B. Public Market – Nov. 23-25

Next Meeting:

Thursday, December 20, 2012 11:30am-1:00pm, THRHA.

## **Proposed Names:**

- Southeast Coalition to End Homelessness
- Juneau Coalition on Housing and Homelessness
- Juneau Coalition to End Homelessness
- Juneau Committee to End Homelessness
- Juneau Alliance to End Homelessness
- Southeast Alliance to End Homelessness
- Housing For All
- Capital Coalition on Housing and Homelessness
- Juneau Coalition to Make Homelessness History
- Advocacy to Support Ending Homelessness

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