

Community Education & Policy Committee Meeting

Minutes: December 11, 2017

Attendance: Amanda Wilkerson, Damien Center; Megan Henderson, Anthem; Emmy Hildebrand, HVAF; Zach Alexander, CHIP; Erin Brown, Schools on Wheels; Antonio Alexander, Purpose of Life Ministries; Melissa Burgess, Horizon House; William Bumphus, Wheeler; Stephanie Fulk, VOA; Caleb Sutton, CHIP; Bryan Dysert, HVAF; Sandy Jeffers, Pathway to Recovery; Don Sawyer, Bigger Vision; Kelsa Johnson, VOA; Tamesa Gamble-Noel, VOA; Michael Schwing

Veterans Classification: Bryan Dysert from HVAF and also Co-Chair of the Veterans Task Force presented an in depth overview of veterans' program qualifications. He passed out brochures for HVAF's transitional housing and rapid rehousing programs that outline eligibility standards. Discussion focused on eligibility for VA healthcare, transitional and rapid rehousing. Veterans not eligible for services are referred to coordinated entry and multiple other service providers. Rev. Alexander asked if it was possible to create a matrix to outline eligibility to be shared with other service providers. Zach responded that CHIP has a similar brochure that he will email around to the committee. Amanda asked for clarification in regards to selecting veteran status on CES when the client may not be eligible for veterans' programs. Caleb responded that veteran providers select other CoC resources if a client isn't eligible for veterans' programs. It does cause an extra stop for potential clients, but CHIP wanted veteran providers who understand eligibility criteria to make that decision.

Communication Plan: Rev. Alexander shared copies of the recently approved communication plan. Zach will also be emailing it to the entire committee. He also shared an email to explain the origin of the communication plan. Essentially this action was taken as a response to the camp closures we've seen across the City recently. It is intended to promote healthier communication between the City, the CoC and the Homeless community. The Blue Print Council made a few amendments to change the notification to the Executive Committee rather than just the Chair. Additionally, they included time stipulations about how quickly plans needed to be enacted before approving it during the last Blue Print Council Meeting. Melissa asked for clarification on who is on the Executive Committee. Rev. Alexander responded it is Gabie Benson, Pastor Green and Scott Armstrong. A few days after this communication plan was adopted, we were notified of a camp closure at 21st and Shadeland (INDOT property). He was made aware of the closure and informed Gabie. Although there were a few hiccups along the way, the appropriate actions were taken and a meeting was held between CoC, CHIP, PBSO and INDOT to invite better cooperation in the future. He stressed that if you hear of a camp closing or other critical item, the key is to notify Gabie and the Executive Committee so they can begin to act. Don asked if the communication plan was shared with INDOT. Melissa indicated it was not, but that there was an understanding that INDOT would contact Melissa who will immediately contact Leslie Kelley who will then quickly inform Gabie. Don asked if INDOT provided a timeline of how quickly they close camps. Melissa responded that it depends on a number of factors: citizen complaints, police runs, request of the Governor, etc. She asked INDOT to notify her ASAP. The City ordinance does not apply to state property. Don also asked for clarification on if CHIP is contacted by PBSO and if they will work with the rest of the CoC as well. Melissa indicated she notifies Gabie only and Gabie will act according to the communication plan. Don asked if this would be how it would be handled going forward, Melissa said that it would be. Melissa asked for clarification of the term critical item in the plan. Rev. Alexander indicated it would be a fluid term in and PBSO and others can help define what a critical item is, examples being camp closures, bridge sweeps, emergency weather conditions, etc. Don added that ideally this plan would help coordinate a response to help individuals being displaced. Melissa added that she thinks PBSO has started this work on a smaller scale and the growing pains will occur as we try

to make it a community-wide effort. She would like to add the Faith Based Service Organizations to the plan as well. Rev. Alexander and Caleb will share this plan with FBSO. Rev. Alexander emphasized the purpose is that nobody is excluded and as many resources can be utilized to help when needed. The committee agreed this is a common sense approach that there be a plan that is followed to communicate broadly across the CoC, CHIP, neighbors experiencing homelessness, and all others presently involved in the community to be abreast of critical items. The plan does not ask for names of individuals to be shared therefore the committee agrees this following this plan shouldn't pose a breach of confidentiality. Rev. Alexander asked Zach to help share this with the entire CoC as well. Sandy would like to add the Executive Committee's contact info to the form, and then we can distribute the info as well. Rev. Alexander explained that we're trying to continue to work with PBSO and break down barriers that prevented full cooperation in the past. He would also like to work through an MOU to cover some of the confidentiality issues that have come up. William would like to compare the membership of PBSO and CoC because he believes there is significant overlap that should help break down communication barriers. Amanda agreed and said that the hope would be as people are brought together to work in collaboration to help those experiencing homelessness when critical items come up that there can be a rest to questioning of motives because the goal of all involved is to be informed and be able to help, rather than finding out too late and being excluded which can cause unnecessary tension.

Letter to the Editor/Mayor's 400 Challenge: The letter was sent by CHIP. Alan was going to send Rev. Alexander a distribution list and he asked Zach to follow up on that.

Homeless Memorial Service: Will be on December 21 at Roberts Park United Methodist Church.

Next meeting Amanda would like to review the pamphlet about veterans' eligibility and develop a plan to education the CoC. We will also discuss Blueprint 3.0. Next meeting will be Monday, January 8.