
TUCSON PLANNING COUNCIL FOR THE HOMELESS

Emergency Services Committee

September 22, 2009 Minutes – DRAFT

Co-chairs: Jim Kuzdal, David Buer

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 15, 2009, 10:00-11:30 am Jackson Employment Center, 400 E. 26 th Street
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Report to TPCH General Meeting October 8th
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■ n/a

TOPICS DISCUSSED

1. **Minutes.** Brother David noted that the second sentence of the Summer Sun report o the August minutes should read, “They have operated for 56 days, serving a total of 3,032 guests with an average daily attendance of 54 (45 men and 9 women).” Don Blascak moved to accept as amended. Joe Zelinka seconded. **Motion passed.**

2. **Winter Shelter Review.**

- **Triple AAA/Taxi Transport Services Update.** Don reported. The contract for services is completed and under review. AAA has agreed that they will transport Project Hospitality (PH) participants from the Salvation Army to the participating congregations at no cost. They are also willing to take calls to their dispatcher from the 911 dispatcher to provide taxi transport for homeless persons to Operation Deep Freeze (ODF). Some reimbursement from winter shelter funds will be required to compensate the taxi drivers, who would otherwise lose of income because they will be unavailable to accept paying fares. That is under negotiation.
- **Extended Shelter Proposal Update.** Brother David reported that he, Jim Kuzdal, Don and Blascak met with representative of the Flowing Wells Assembly of God (including staff that live on site) and the Central City Assembly of God pastor. The two churches with to work with the committee to use both sites for approximately two continuous months of winter shelter, independent of temperature or rain. A number of concerns were expressed. Many were answered. A follow-up meeting is set for this Thursday at the same location at 1:00 p.m.

Don noted that the period under consideration is December 15th-February 15th. He added that Lori Block is communicating with SunTran about free ODF transportation: Jodie Barnes and Ron Koenig are vetting the idea through the City of Tucson hierarchy. He noted some potential challenges, many of which were expressed in writing by Salvation Army Social Services Director Kim Ward. One challenge is potential conflict with an agency conducting a very different church sheltering situation recently ended by order of the City of Tucson, or with the City itself. Another is the Salvation Army’s concerns that their Hospitality House facility is overtaxed, under- staffed, under-equipped and generally insufficient to handle 100 intakes nightly for two months. (Salvation Army Major Peter Clack may attend the meeting Thursday to discuss these concerns, he said.) A third challenge is potential neighborhood opposition, which the Salvation Army has noted that they work hard to mitigate in their area but can’t eliminate. A fourth is the challenge of operating two sites generally. A fifth is the need to shelter women and children separately from men. Others include concern that: the proposal for one staff member plus volunteers at each site is not enough, two staff are needed; volunteer staffing may be issue; movement of people from feeding to sheltering churches may pose difficulties (although one feeding church will deliver, Brother David said.); how to handle the medical clinic usually held at the Hospitality House; and how to empower guests to move forward and off the street. Many factors remain unknown, and opposition from the Salvation Army would be a major obstacle.

Extended Shelter Proposal Update cont'd.

Don noted and detailed a tentative budget that Lori Block drafted for 60 continuous days of shelter for 100 individuals based on known factors. It totals approximately \$40,000, of which only \$11,000 might be obtainable from current resources. This would leave \$29,000 to be raised. Considerably more work is needed because not all factors are known, he said. Don added that he believes the committee should continue negotiating, but also realize that continuous shelter may not happen this season. He pointed out that granted funding is down 7% with FEMA and DES funding still unknown.

Jim noted that the Flowing Wells church seems so eager to do something that. "We should definitely find a way to get them involved this year."

Brother David stated that he believes there is an opportunity to do continuous shelter this year because Flowing Wells live-in staff are willing to help. He committed to be there six nights weekly for opening and be an all-night if needed. He said he believes that costs can be cut. He will be speaking to many local Catholic churches, one of which is willing to deliver three dinners weekly. He would like to see intake at all three sites and continue to use the existing meal programs such as Holy Family. He would like to approach Gospel Rescue Mission about allowing some of these people to eat there.

Don moved that the Emergency Services Committee affirm that they will keep the current structured programs as they are and fund them prior to considering continuous ODF for December and January. Joe Zelinka seconded. Participants discussed various aspects of the motion and the proposal.

Motion passed with one "no" vote.

Mark Jensen moved that planning for extended winter shelter without the constraints of weather continue in earnest. Wendy Heiden seconded. **Motion passed unanimously.**

- **Next steps** a.) Co-chairs will ask Lori Block for more details of winter shelter program costs.
- b.) Co-chairs will meet again with the two congregations' representatives on Thursday.

- **Projects Update.** Don reported bed nights subscribed as follows: PH - 2,212; OSB- 1, 005 (fully subscribed); and total 3,217. He noted that PH is short 332 bed nights in December, 194 bed nights in January, and 151 bed nights in February for a total shortfall of 667 bed nights. One-third of all nights fully subscribed. He noted that several churches have not yet reported, and that the programs are generally never fully subscribed and sometimes under-filled.

3. **Blankets.** Don reported that he has provided 85 blankets to Tucson Fire Department Station 2 and 76 to the Flowing Wells Assembly of God.

4. New Business/

- **Elementary School Projects.** Sylvia Cuestas noted that Gallegos Basic Elementary School in the Sunnyside district has four 5th grade classes that want to do community service collection projects to enable students to reach out and help people throughout Tucson. Two have selected their projects. A teacher found TPCB on the web, and emailed requesting additional projects. The committee discussed Steve Nelson's suggestion that they could do something for winter shelter, and decided that a presentation with question-and-answer sessions plus the suggestion of collecting towels and hygiene item kits, especially including hand sanitizer, plus clothing would be appropriate. The classes could compete against each other and set a deadline. Don volunteered to pick up collected items.
 - **Next step.** a.) Sylvia Cuestas will reply to the email reply and request time(s) to speak with the classes.
 - b.) Sylvia and Joe Zelinka will do the presentation(s),
- **OSB.** Mark Jensen introduced Clarissa Garcia, who will be this year's Southern Arizona Veterans Administration Health System liaison with One Step Beyond.

New Business cont'd.

- **Special Needs Task Force.** Renee Peyton reported that the task force looks at special needs populations, such as homeless, deaf, and blind people, and their needs during crisis situations. She noted that the Pima County Health Department does basics services, such as immunizations, only, and works through referral and coordination with community resources. She said that she will be attending the committee to better understand shelters, shelter coordination and how the two groups can work together.

5. Next Meeting: Thursday, October 15th, 10:00-11:30 a.m., Jackson Employment Center, 400 E. 26th Street.

Submitted by Settle Madden

Attendance

Name	Organization	Email
Don Blascak	Interfaith Coalition for the Homeless	dblascak@comcast.net
David Buer, OFM	Franciscans	buerofm@gmail.com
Sylvia Cuestas	Christian Faith Center / Jackson Employment	scuestas@csd.pima.gov
Clarissa Garcia	SAVAHCS	clarissa.garcia@ba.gov
Wendy Heiden	La Frontera	wheiden@lafrontera.org
Mark Jensen	SAVAHCS	mark.jensen2@va.gov
Jim Kuzdal	St. Vincent de Paul	jkuzdal@svdptucson.org
Reneé Peyton	Pima County Health Department	renee.peyton@pima.gov
Joe Zelinka	Comin' Home	jdzelinka@cominhome.org