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# TUCSON PLANNING COUNCIL FOR THE HOMELESS

## Emergency Services Committee

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### January 6, 2009 Minutes

Chairs: Jill Rich and Don Blascak

<b>Next Meeting:</b> February 3, 2009, 10:30-11:30 am 1745 E. River Road, Suite 245
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<b>Report to TPCCH General Meeting January 15<sup>th</sup></b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Budget permitting, ODF will be called in connection with Tucson Homeless Connect, February 13-14<sup>th</sup></li></ul> |
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### TOPICS DISCUSSED

1. **Minutes.** Minutes of the December meeting were accepted by consensus.
2. **Blankets.** Don Blascak reported that consolidation of blanket storage is scheduled for Friday, January 9<sup>th</sup> beginning at 8:30 a.m. at Tucson Iron and Metal (TIM). Loose blankets will be moved from Tucson Electric Power to the Salvation Army Hospitality House for immediate distribution. Boxed blankets will be moved to the St. Vincent de Paul warehouse. TIM is donating the use of a fork lift and driver. If there are blankets remaining at TIM when the St. Vincent de Paul warehouse is full, they may be stored at Caridad-de Porres. The operation may take two days. Additional helpers are needed at the SVDP warehouse, Jim Kuzdal noted. Debbie Purdom reviewed the numbers stored at each location and concluded that approximately 18,000 blankets remain.

Don noted that the committee's goal is to eventually achieve single-site storage of all the FEMA blankets. He continues to negotiate with a south side storage facility owner for a rate that might allow blanket storage there.

Participants discussed the current rate of blanket distribution and next year's probable need for blankets. Jim noted that outlying communities, such as Safford, Douglas, and Benson, are beginning to understand that this emergency resource is available and to draw on it.

  - **Next steps:** a.) Don will call Gospel Rescue Mission regarding additional helpers.
  - b.) Debbie will provide copies of the letters that FEMA needs (including a letter from the city) to allot blankets for TPCCH to Kim Ward of the Salvation Army.
  - c.) Kim will order 15,000 blankets for next year.
  - d.) Debbie will follow up on order fulfillment.
3. **Winter Shelter Programs.**
  - **Project Hospitality (PH).** Jill and Don noted that two congregations had issues with PH operation over the past weekend. Those issues were: no transportation for guests to or from the congregations (resulting in the creation of potential liability issues when congregation volunteers transported guests); the inclusion in groups of guests of individuals who were not case managed; and complaints from guests about their treatment at the Hospitality House. The transportation issue was particularly troublesome, Jill noted, because money for contingency transportation is included in the winter shelter budget.

Participants discussed the issues. Kathleen Joy, Hospitality House manager, noted that the Salvation Army has worked to resolve the transportation issue, and now has six vans available, with two on the premises at all times. Additionally, their major is requesting the purchase of a new van in the next budget. Laurie Robinson, the winter shelter programs coordinator, noted that there are random factors (such as "no shows" and "walk-offs", as well as challenges in notifying case managers/clients when a place in the program opens) involved in the assignment of PH participants to congregations. This has prompted her to add Hospitality House guests to groups in order to fill a congregation's expected number of guests.

**Project Hospitality cont'd.**

She also noted that intake workers have not always correctly followed her instructions for assignment of guests to PH after she has left for the day. Salvation Army (SA) personnel assured other participants that they make every effort to treat each guest respectfully. They noted that sometimes what a guest hears is not what SA personnel have actually said and provided examples. Personnel who are new this year noted that they were unaware that taxi funds were in the budget. Participants reached consensus regarding the solutions detailed in next steps.

A sign-up sheet for congregational visits for the remaining term of PH was passed and returned to Don for scheduling.

- **Next steps:**
  - a.) The Salvation Army will allow Laurie to change her hours to overlap with those of the intake workers in order to improve communication regarding and execution of programs.
  - b.) Hospitality House guests will no longer fill out PH numbers. PH participation will be limited to guests in case management.
  - c.) Hospitality House personnel will phone for taxis for PH participants if needed.
  - d.) Kim will ensure that the Salvation Army's Major Clack is aware of all concerns and changes.
- **Operation Deep Freeze (ODF).** Kathleen reported that ODF has operated seven nights to date. She noted that the average ranges of persons sheltered nightly are: ODF, 75 to 100; Project Hospitality 31 to 36; and One Step Beyond 13 to 14.
 

Don expressed concern regarding the breath analysis of all potential ODF participants on one night that he observed. Kathleen noted that the smell of alcohol within the waiting group was so overpowering that it was impossible to identify from where it might originate. She noted that this was the first time they had asked all participants to submit to the breathalyzer, and that they hope it will also be the last. She noted that the policy is to request breath analysis only for those who appear intoxicated, and to offer detox shelter to those who exceed the limit used to determine intoxication under traffic laws.

Don suggested that, due to increasing demand on local shelters, ODF be called – providing the allotted nights/budget is not exceeded – for the nights of and following the next Tucson Homeless Connect, February 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, to provide shelter for Homeless Connect guests. Consensus was to do this.

  - **Next step:** Budget permitting, ODF fill be called for the nights of February 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.
- **One Step Beyond (OSB).** Mark Jensen reported that OSB had been going well. A total of 14 guests are at St. Pius Church through January 31<sup>st</sup>. On February 1<sup>st</sup>, a total of 17 guests will be housed at St. Anthony's and St. Cyril's churches.

4. **New Business.** Don distributed a list of challenges that the Winter Shelter Programs face need to address for participants to review and discuss at the next meeting.
5. **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10:30 a.m.-12:00p.m., Realty Executives, 1745 E. River Road, Suite 245.

Submitted by Settle Madden

**Attendance**

Name	Organization	Email
Lori Block	ICH	lori.block@ichtucson.org
Don Blascak	ICH	dblascak@comcast.net
Regina Cheatom	Salvation Army	Regina.cheatom@usw.salvationarmy.org
Sylvia Cuestas	Christian Faith Center	scuestas@pima.gov
Mark Jensen	SAVAHCS	mark.jensen2@va.gov
Kathleen Joy	Salvation Army	kathleen.joy@usw.salvationarmy.org
Jim Kuzdal	St. Vincent de Paul	jkuzdal@svdptucson.org
Debbie Purdom	Caridad/de Porres	debbie@caridad-deporres.org
Jill Rich	American Red Cross	jbr@dakotacom.net
Laurie Robinson	Salvation Army	laurie.robinson@usw.salvationarmy.org
Kim Marie Ward	Salvation Army	kim.ward@usw.salvationarmy.org