
TUCSON PLANNING COUNCIL FOR THE HOMELESS

Tucson Homeless Connect Committee

February 26, 2009 Minutes

Convener: Don Blascak

<p>Next Meeting: Thursday, April 2, 2009, 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. Santa Cruz Room, Sentinel Building 320 N. Commerce Park Loop</p>

<p>Report to TPCCH General Meeting</p>

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| <p>■ Event report</p> |
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TOPICS DISCUSSED

1. **Minutes.** Charlie Bowker noted that he was present at the meeting, but not listed on the attendance. Jodie Barnes moved to accept the minutes as amended. Patti Scott-Lopez seconded. **Motion passed.**

2. **Review of Event.**

- **Venue.** Consensus was that the venue, with expanded space and separate registration, worked well.
- **Setup.** Consensus was that setup went well and facilitated flow.
- **Flow.** Don noted that there did not appear to be room for improvement within the church layout. Rick suggested that the resource table be moved toward the exit – or made part of the exit interview – to encourage guests to use services rather than obtain items and leave, which he observed some guests do. Don suggested that next time, the committee appoint a member to be in charge of obtaining resource table items. Jodie noted that Glen of the Gospel Rescue Mission’s White Shepherd program has been talking with Target about resource donations.

Charlie suggested that flow would be facilitated if each volunteer has a cross-referenced list of providers and services. He also noted that the guides were sometimes be hard to locate once assigned; and that some guides left guests who had to wait at the first service stop. Service providers noted that these guests were sometimes confused as to where to go next. Leslie suggested that there could be some “floating” guides, clearly identified by badges, who could assist guests when their original guide had to move one while they waited. Rick noted that he observed a guide acting as a “place holder” in one line while her assigned guest was receiving another service.

Patti suggested providing volunteers with lanyards with name badges that are color-coded by the volunteer’s function.

Don also suggested that one person be in charge of the evaluation forms.

- **Next steps. a.)** Jodie will speak with Glen about possibly being in charge of the next event’s resource table.
 - b.)** A special section of the registration/exit area will be used for evaluation forms collection at the next event.
 - c.)** Guides will be provided a cross-referenced list of providers and services at the next event.
- **Providers.** Consensus was that if committee member and volunteers understand more about provider’s services, they will be better able to help the guests. There were 30 providers total. Leslie reviewed the providers’ sign-in sheets and gave preliminary counts of people served by each. Homeless Court Judge Michael Pollard was unable to come because he had a trial that ran long. He agreed to try to assist the list of persons who requested help at the event. Leslie suggested asking other city magistrates, and/or the county, to attend the event. Requesting help from law students and paralegals was also suggested.

Review of Event cont'd.

- **Transportation.** There were three vans total, one each from Salvation Army, Gospel Rescue Mission, and Primavera. Comin' Home's van was not used. Transportation went well except that the driver whose first stop was Southside Presbyterian Church didn't realize that the potential guests were in the courtyard, and proceeded with his rounds. The driver returned later. Leslie suggested increasing the number of vans available, and placing one person in charge of transportation only. Don noted that there is still some awkwardness in arranging trips to and from the DMV. Lori suggested asking Sun Tran to provide transportation to DMV and back, in the same spirit in which they provide transportation to Operation Deep Freeze and back.
 - **Next step. a.)** The driver for the route including Southside Presbyterian Church will be instructed to stop and go inside for the next event.
 - b.)** An event dispatcher will be recruited.
 - c.)** Committee will explore having Sun Tran provide round-trip DMV transport.
- **Media.** Media coverage of the event was good. Both of daily newspapers, the Tucson Weekly, and Channels 4 and 9 provided coverage. Leslie noted that Channel 9 lead that evening's 5:00 p.m. news with the Tucson Homeless Connect story. Leslie reported that Phyllis Lim asked her to request having a dedicated person or two stationed at the door to greet and direct elected officials and media representatives. Media representative interviewed several homeless persons. There was some scurry to locate a homeless person, at a media representative's request, who recently lost a job. Participants noted that it would be helpful but difficult to pre-select homeless persons willing to speak with media representatives. Patti suggested speaking with homeless persons in shelter who may wish to volunteer. Jeff suggested working with outreach workers to identify potential interviewees.
- **DMV.** A total of 45 persons received identification from the Arizona Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) during the event. Jodie noted that Jack Lewis of the Motor Vehicle Division thanked her for including them in the event.
- **Registration.** Settle Madden noted that separating registration from service providers, and using a volunteer to direct flow to registration, worked very well.
- **Food.** There was sufficient food this time. Lori sent someone out to purchase more baked goods, which were going quickly. Some of those ended up being donated to the Salvation Army Hospitality House. Jodie noted that sack lunches were given out too soon. Their distribution should be delayed.
- **Services provided.** Leslie Carlson reported that 215 registration forms, and 208 exit forms, were gathered. She also reviewed preliminary numbers from service providers' sign-in sheets. It was noted that Homeless Court Judge Pollard had a trial run long, preventing him from attending as planned.
- **Volunteers.** Consensus was that there was a need for lead volunteers for each area before the morning of the event. Jodie noted that there were a number of volunteers from Target, including a store Human Resources manager, and a Tucson regional representative. She suggested asking Target for potential title event sponsorship. Don suggested that we recruit specialized volunteers who will repeat their service at each event.

Lori reported that they were expecting 85 volunteers, excluding committee members, the morning of the event. Between those absent and additional volunteers, she believes that at least 85-90 volunteers worked that day. Approximately half were new, half were repeat volunteers. Some of them took on lead roles. The volunteers generally reported that they thought the event was well organized, and that they would like to volunteer again. She noted that about 10% of volunteers are winter visitors, who will not be available in spring/summer. She also noted that she made connections with new congregations, and that she is now getting more calls from congregations asking "what can we do?" She is willing to continue as volunteer coordinator.
- **Volunteer/Guest Interaction.** Consensus was that the volunteer/guests interactions were very good, and displayed advocacy as in the example of one volunteer guide holding her guest's place in line.
- **Post event summary letter.** Don requested that provider coordinator sent participating service providers a letter summarizing the even and asking for their continued participation.
 - **Next step.** Rick will prepare a summary letter to providers.
- **Clean up.** Consensus was that clean-up went very well.

Review of Event cont'd

- **Budget Versus Costs.** TPCH approved \$2,000 for the event. Lori reported that a total of approximately \$1,750 was spent to serve 215 people, making the cost \$8.14 each. Approximately \$250 of in-kind donations excluding backed goods, were also provided.
- **Communication/radios.** Don noted that the radios were a tremendous help with communication. More radios are needed.
 - **Next step.** Don will communicate the need for additional radios to Stan Hamnett.
- **Other.** Participants discussed how to provide additional and/or more frequent services, especially to new, first-time homeless persons. Discussion included: doing the event quarterly or three times a year; seeking additional collaborations, such as with the Backpack to School effort to reach homeless families; reaching out to school homeless liaisons; consulting with providers to determine what type of schedule they could accommodate. Consensus was reached that: the July 17th event will proceed; collaboration with HopeFest and Veterans Stand Down will continue; quarterly events may be too taxing on both the committee and service providers, but a three-time-yearly schedule might be possible; additional collaborations should be sought and existing ones expanded when possible; specialized events should be explored; a joint Homeless Connect/Street count event should be planned for January 2010; and an event in parallel with the TPCH Annual Conference should be considered.
 - **Next steps:**
 - a.) The providers subcommittee will meet before the next committee meeting.
 - b.) Lori will research upcoming events to see if there are helpful events every two months or so.
 - c.) Don and Lori will draft and de-conflict with other similar events a potential schedule for the coming year.
 - d.) Don will draft and distribute a timeline for the July 17th event.
 - e.) Settle will inform the TPCH Education Committee of the THC Committee's interest in a possible parallel event.

3. Next meeting. Thursday, April 2nd, 9:00-10:30 a.m., location to be decided.

- **Next step.** Jodie will reserve a room and notify the committee. (Jodie reserved the Santa Cruz Room of the Sentinel Building.)

Submitted by Settle Madden

Attendance

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