

CITY OF SHERIDAN

City Hall • 120 SW Mill Street • Sheridan, OR 97378
Phone 503-843-2347 • Fax 503-843-3661
www.cityofsheridanor.com

Presentation & Information Gathering Session Minutes April 7, 2023, at 2:00 PM

Sheridan City Hall Council Chambers
120 SW Mill Street, Sheridan Oregon
Public Attendance in person & via Zoom

A. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL:

Mayor Thomson called the Council Meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Present: Mayor Thomson; and Councilors Acuff, Buckles, Hebert, George, Hodgins, and McElroy.

Absent: None

Staff Present: Heidi Bell, City Manager; Tyler Yeoman-Millette, City Attorney; Kenny Peterson, Maintenance Lead Worker III; Deycia Gibby, Code Enforcement/Safety Management; Marcie Lumley, Recording Clerk.

B. INTRODUCTIONS/PRESENTATIONS:

Attendees introduced themselves and indicated their position or workplace.

D.J. Vincent, Chief Operator/Pastor of Church @ the Park summarized the work and mission of Church @ the Park.

- 300 folks at their back door during pandemic, placed there by the City or State at the State fairgrounds.
- They have staff on site 24 hr./day.
- Open micro shelter communities – 2 in Salem, 2 more next month.
- They have plans and procedures in place to keep the area safe for guests and neighborhood.
- Part of their job is to help residents manage their “stuff.”
- People become homeless when they run out of relationships, not money. They do case management, with a goal to help restore relationships.
- 90 days is the average family stay at their facility; 6-9 months is the average stay for singles. They re-evaluate residents’ status and progress, then work with them to find their forever home.
- They are a “low barrier” shelter – Church @ the Park bases qualifications for intake on current day behavior. No drugs or alcohol is allowed at their site, but the person doesn’t have to come to them clean and sober.

- Best way to place people at their facility is referral, i.e., from State agency; they base priority status on vulnerability of the applicant.

Question was asked about meeting medical needs of residents.

- Church @ the Park partners with other agencies, i.e., DHS, Bridge to Recovery, etc.
- Referrals to primary care providers.

Housing Authority representatives Nicole and Sarah introduced themselves, summarized organizations goals and functions.

- They are connected to West Valley Housing Authority.
- There is an alliance between agencies and entities to accomplish their goals.
- Yamhill County Housing Authority is at their maximum capacity.
- Low income folks need food banks, DHS resources, food stamps, OHP, outreach navigators to build trust and get homeless the help they need.
- Some food banks deliver to homes/apartments if the person or family can't get to food.

D.J. Vincent listed needs of homeless that most don't realize are priority needs:

- A mailing address needs to be established before they can get many services.
- Church @ the Park works with the post office to route mail to residents.
- They help residents prioritize mail, and next steps.
- They have people who go with residents to appointments, obtain behavioral and physical healthcare, drug and alcohol rehab, etc.

Nicole with Housing Authority added to the list of ways they help residents:

- They help homeless navigate the DMV.
- They secure a place for the residents' belongings, help them obtain a birth certificate and social security card.
- They provide case managers to help facilitate obtaining services.
- They find landlord to take residents, sometimes "transitional housing."
- They were given ok to repurpose part of the State Mental Hospital into rehab and affordable housing. They have a May 1 move-in date, and already have 500 on the waiting list. The goal is to process 10 individuals or families into the new facility per week so as to not overload the new system or overwhelm the residents with the constant change/chaos of new neighbors.
- They help with furniture and use "barrier removal funds" to help get needs met.

Melanie with Salem Housing Authority

- The use of barrier removal funds: pay old PGE and other bills in collections, birth certificates, and other costs that which make it difficult to qualify for a home. Barrier removal funds can be obtained through grants.

Josh with Church @ the Park:

- Josh asked Sheridan what we think our homeless number is. Number of unsheltered or people at-risk for homelessness is growing.

D.J. with Church at the Park suggested starting Sheridan's housing project at 10 units. Discussion regarding the number of people who are in Sheridan who need housing/assistance.

- In answer to a question about Sheridan's homeless population, Mayor Marianne indicated that the Food Bank estimates there are at least 12 homeless folks in Sheridan: 10 men and 2 women. American Legion serves meals and gave her an estimate, but these counts don't get everyone.
- An accurate "point in time" count is needed to assess the need more accurately.
- The School District told the Mayor that no school-age children are listed as unsheltered; instead they live with other families.
- Homeless individuals and families are mostly hidden. "Unsheltered" also includes those who are "couch surfing."
- Food Bank reported serving 130 people this week in Willamina.
- There are often 3-4 families in one house. There's a report of 15 people in one 20-ft travel trailer. There is often no heating source in those trailers. Not sustainable housing.
- Families stay together, sometimes multiple generations, even if it's not desirable.

Jon Legarza with Healthy Sustainable Communities stated the importance of educating the community through communication:

- Vital to have a communication plan.
- Use a Technical Advisory Committee to develop a communication plan. They look at different sites to ascertain viability, and help improve possible solutions.
- Sheridan Council was encouraged to add Salem Housing, a SIT (Service Integration Team) and others as resources.

Multiple terms have been used in discussion regarding the homeless. Questions were raised regarding correct terminology.

- Talk with the homeless with respect. Listen to them, honor them, and use their language.
- The terms "houseless" and "unsheltered" were discussed.
- Caution: must be careful when talking with the homeless not to trigger trauma.
- Important to use "T.I.C." – Trauma Informed Care.

D.J. with Church @ the Park:

- What do we see as challenges in our communication?
- Who are we going to partner with?
- D.J. encouraged Council to use Church @ the Park as a resource. They are housing-focused, with the goal of increasing the quality of life.

Josh with Church at the Park asked questions with the goal of helping Sheridan develop an outreach to the homeless.

- Where do we send people in need at this point? The response: city of McMinnville or Yamhill County agencies. If they are out of funds or are unable to address the need, who next? Then what's next?

- Heidi indicated that some homeless individuals have been arrested, then went into rehab afterwards.
- Josh stated that emergency care, as well as a plan and resources, are needed but we also need to look at what's next – the next step, and steps after that, to restoring relationships.
- Several of the presenters assured City Council, Mayor, and City Manager that Sheridan is further along the path than expected.

City Manager Heidi was asked about resources currently available in Sheridan. She informed visitors of the transitional apartment complex that was built in Sheridan to support people in recovery.

And in hopes to encourage them to collaborate with the City to address our local needs, Mayor Marianne encouraged people to attend the meeting on Friday, April 14, at 10:00 a.m. at Good Shepherd Church Hall where the City will be communicating with faith-based leaders, asking for their help and input about their social service programs. Questions to ask/get answers for at this meeting:

- What do we provide?
- Who will provide the actual, hands-on assistance?
- What role will the County play? The Food Bank?
- Who else can offer help?
- Should we reach out beyond Sheridan and Yamhill County, even to State and Federal agencies?

Nicole:

- Salem Housing Authority wants to help smaller communities build resources.
- Goal is to get/keep people housed where they want to be housed.

The question was asked: If we applied for State or Federal funding, would we need a point-in-time count? Answers:

- Not necessarily. Depends on what you're applying for.
- January of every year, there's a new count. We'd need to find out when the local count is going to be done. Suggestions: Host an event that will draw homeless people out: free socks, hair cuts, warm blankets, etc., then engage with, count, and point people to resources. Data can be from the Food Bank, etc.

What would the ongoing process look like?

- Keep in touch with the person who says they want to stay homeless.
- Readiness for Relationship Assessment – some more resistant to help, some more ready.
- Building relationship with neighbors of housing site is important. Church @ the Park tells residents' story to help build understanding between shelters and neighbors.
- A storyteller is an important component of relationships with community and neighbors.
- Unsure of the count and we don't have money to pay for shelters, so Heidi contacted Jon regarding grants and partners and County and State levels. Individual philanthropists and organizations can donate, or grants can be obtained to help pay for shelters and ongoing costs.

- A lot of resources are available when you have plans in place, especially with support from other agencies.
- Call for community help – response can be good.
- Checklist is helpful.
- Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance is a resource the City should utilize.
- Sheridan was encouraged to collaborate with larger agencies.

Presenters were asked to close the meeting with a word of hope:

- Nicole: Stay open to innovation and creativity. Smiling and saying hello helps.
- Sarah: Every step is a step. Start with a small kernel. Don't lose sight of goal but celebrate steps. Don't be afraid to ask for donations.
- Melanie: Give everyone grace.
- Jon: The city of Talent lost 2,200 homes in fires. They developed a communication plan but had no money. Jon pitched ideas contained in the plan to the bank and they gave quarter million dollars to provide homes to people displaced by the fires. Homes will come as you work the plan, share the people's stories, and leverage funds.
- Josh: Exciting to see smaller communities support each other. Important to start knocking – it's an urgent issue.
- D.J.: Get data, but don't get lost in the data – these are real people.
- Heidi: Inmates can help, provide labor to build affordable housing.

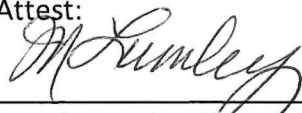
C. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 3:25 p.m.



Marianne Thomson, Mayor

Attest:



Marcie Lumley, Recording Clerk