

Auburn/ Cayuga County Homeless Taskforce

Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2022

Present: Renee Jensen, City of Auburn; Tracy Chang, 211; Cassandra Montessor, HHC; Liz Vuillemot, Auburn Housing Authority; James Breslin, Gavras Center; Arlene Ryan, Community Member; Meadow McDowell, Soldier On; Shari Weiss, Cayuga Community Health Network Mary Rathbun, Cayuga County DSS; Miranda Eddy, Tim Donovan, Community Member; Olan Mack, Chapel House; Sherrain Clark, HHC; Grace Carlic, IFW; Gary Mann, Megan Stuart, HHC; Christina Bennet, CAP; Jessica Brooks, Soldier On; Tricia Kerr, City of Auburn;

Next meeting: May 11, 2022, 11 am, zoom/Auburn City Hall

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 11:03 am. Introductions were made.

Renee asked for approval of the previous minutes. No corrections were requested. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. HHC Updates

There is a call for board nominations for the HHC Advisory Board for a service provider slot and a health care worker.

The HHC is still looking to recruit youth from Auburn or Cayuga County. If you know of any youth who would be interested, please reach out to Miranda Eddy at meddy@unitedway-cny.org.

Point in Time count found only one individual unhoused. They did refuse housing/shelter. It was an individual that is known to street outreach. The typical encampments were empty and clear of human habitation. The HHC is still gathering the data but the preliminary amount is an increase of 40%. We have yet to break it down county-wise but the theory is that it was fairly spreadout. Renee thanked Nicole and Gary for all their work.

Tim acknowledged 3 local businesses who provided food and beverages to the volunteers: Panera Bread, Pavlo's Restaurant, and Angelo's Pizza.

3. Cayuga County Coordinated Entry Workgroup

There was a discussion on starting a Cayuga County-specific CE workgroup. There will be a preliminary meeting at the end of March to brainstorm what the agencies would like to get out of this workgroup. It will be an open forum type of meeting to gather concerns and feedback along with case conferencing and workflows. DSS staff, shelter staff and housing projects should be present. Shari helped implement the housing coordination in the CoC in the Southern Tier.

4. CoC Funded Program Updates

Chapel House: 132 individuals in the Men's Shelter, 15 at Roles, 30ish with case management in hotels. Compliance checks are close to 100, between hotels, Men's, and Roles.

Olan has accepted a new position and will be leaving Chapel House on April 1st.

CAP: HUD RRH Program is currently full. There is one family in a hotel. ESV-CV RRH is full at 12. ESV-CV Prevention Case Management is Full but has funding for back rent. It is taking referrals.

5. Agency Updates

DSS reported that the numbers are pretty high. 75 individuals and families in hotels. There have been positive outcomes with people being housed. The Grand Hotel was condemned which unhoused 12 people. Apartments have been starting to open up which is encouraging. Tim wanted to know if there was a known future for the Grand Hotel for renovation? The motel is working on the code updating. Some of the people housed were able to find housing elsewhere or with friends.

Street outreach: the program started in October 2021. 37 clients in referrals. Clientele is varying and diverse. 1 client has been able to obtain employment this month. 2 people have been housed. Nicole is still trying to connect each client to services and resources.

6. Announcements/ New Business

Tim shared some community announcements:

There was a trifold brochure for ending stigma for people with substance use disorder. There is a lot of intersectionality between mental health disorders and substance use. The brochure has information

Community Services of Cayuga County: Lauren Walsh is the new director. She was sent an invite for the taskforce. Elizabeth Burke is the deputy director.

The city received American Rescue plan funding: ARPA- city council decided some of the funds will be distributed to human services. There will be an online application for the grant. There will be a formal announcement when the application is live. The federal government has been updating on what is eligible. You can look at the city website for more information. There is approximately \$500,000. The funds have to be spent by 2026. There will be 2 categories. There will be programmatic application of funds as well. The agency doesn't have to be in Auburn but serve Auburn residents.

Tricia Kerr, Executive Director for Habitat for Humanity shared that they have been looking at alternatives for housing, she is a legislator representing the City of Auburn. She has done a lot of work in the housing sector. The issues that are county-specific with the housing stock and inventory. Ray Bizari was the former chair. There is a small group to work with local human service housing partners to come up with some new solutions. The county voted to fund pre-development costs for shelter expansion, partnering with Housing Visions. The work is focused on a county-wide needs assessment and looking at how much transitional housing, PSH, and shelter needs. They would like each agency to bring their needs. The next step is to bring more people into the discussion. Megan offered to provide the data needs for the need assessment. There may be a subcommittee created from this Taskforce.

InterFaith Works will be hosting a Virtual Community Conversation focusing on Mindfulness Techniques. It's a nice opportunity to relax at the end of the workday. It's taking place on Wednesday, March 16 from 4-5pm. you can learn more here: www.tinyurl.com/IFWconvos.

7. Adjournment

There will be a poll to gauge interest for in-person meetings.

The next meeting will be on May 11, 2022.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 am.