

Present: Ken Russell, Will Eberle, Glen Hutcheson, Jodi Kelly, Dawn Little
Cameron Niedermayer

Notes Only:

Public Introductions: Joseph KIEFER, Matthew Nunnelly, Elaine Ball (UU Church), Ellen Urman, Keron, TJ, and Alex (High School Representation)

Food Resources Conversation:

Montpelier Food Pantry (in the basement of Trinity Methodist Church)

- o **Joseph Keefer:** "Just Basic" is the nonprofit- does food pantry and summer meals for children
 - Warming shelter meals- looking at this they believed there wasn't a lot of coordination.
 - "Taking Stock Meetings"
 - Held first meeting in April 2019
 - Says that each church is stretched- but there are unequal resources- for instance their organization has 60+ volunteers, but not everyone has that
 - October 2019- Second meeting
 - Less turn out and the conversation
 - Trinity Church (Dick Smith representative) discussed feeding services on Thursday
 - Promoted the idea of the food pantry hosting the resources (for food) so that the churches hosting meals have one place to go
 - Met with Elaine yesterday to discuss what the resources were for food hours, etc. per location
 - Planning for a "Taking Stock" meeting 3 in the spring
 - Wants to make concrete goals that are achievable
- o Will Eberly- there are some other entities doing this work- you should reach out to them:
 - Barre Interfaith Group (Coordinating warming spaces and meals- has created a google calendar)
 - Director of Aldrich Public Library
 - Vermont Interfaith Action
- o Elaine Ball: I have made a resource guide for meal location dates and times (Breakfast, lunch, and dinners)- there are others in Marshfield and Plainfield- so I made it for the Washington County
 - Found that there are other resources lying around- Jodi Kelly and Dawn made these from the HTF
- o Will Eberly- idea for people to fill out forms for what needs they have specifically?
 - Jodi- Maybe using FPF for this?
- o Ken- Discussion regarding what a client-based service looks like. Trying to make sure we are not duplicating efforts- Wary of any new layers or entities like that- who would track it? This is a systems issue.

- o Ellen Urman- I think there are a lot of barriers for folks in most need (like having computer access or time/data on their phones etc.
 - How can we get support services to the meals and meet people where they are?
- o Glen- Elaine, are you looking at continuing to update this? Otherwise, you have to pass this on to an organization?
 - Elaine- I am happy to pass it along, but I do not think it's unnecessary right now to passing it on to another agency?
 - Glen- so you're comfortable updating this in the future?
 - Elaine- Yes. As long as it remains small in focus.

Quorum Reached: 12:02- Dawn Little Present

- **Agenda Approval:**
 - Moved to move the Food Systems Presentation to first + a data update from Will on homelessness families numbers/ adding a legislative agenda update from Ken
 - o **Glen Seconded/Passed 12:07**
- **Minutes from January 22nd**
 - Ken- Edits to minutes: Dawn was not present, and Jodi Kelly's name was misspelled
 - o Any other amendments? No
 - o **Passed 12:08pm**

Food Resources Conversation Continued:

- o Jodi- I think that we need to work harder at getting the networking done-people need to be in the same room
 - Ken- Yes, I think we need to figure out where we fit into the situation- think about this group as addressing the food issue- so that's less something that we have to do, and the housing committee is working on housing- so how do we make sure there is no duplication
- o Joseph Keefer- Shared the document that he made to capture sheltering and food etc.
- o Ken- is there more than we need today to help with this effort?
- o Karon- I think that there is a gap working with Good Samaritan, I don't think that folks in the public know that there are these resources available- so how do we share it or get it out?
 - The info at the Bethany Church doesn't match what Good Sam knows
 - Ken- How can the task force help?
 - Karon- Sharing more hard copies of these resources so I can share and teach my co-workers
- o Dawn- regarding warming shelters- There is still miscommunication about people getting turned away at evening shelters?
 - Once the info is accurate- what distribution list to we have to send folks this information?
 - Ken- If Karon, Dawn, Joseph, Elaine get on an email chain and share some of this info
- o Discussion about 211 and how they are supposed to have this type of information
 - The 211 director will be at a HTF future meeting (possibly February)

- Will Eberly- It's hard to stay in the 'homelessness' lane- when homelessness is tied to a host of other issues that are tied to it. There is so much that gets left of the table when the County is needed to help folks
 - Ken- The State feels like the Continuum of Care is who should be the entity that leads these types of initiatives (HUD program)
Meeting: Second Monday of each month 10:00-11:30AM
Location: Capstone Community Action, 20 Gable Pl., Barre VT
<https://helpingtohousevt.org/localcontinuaofcare/washington/>
 - The VT Coalition to End Homelessness
- Joseph- I think it is very great that there is so much going on and that there are folks addressing the issues of food
 - The "Taking Stock" meetings really need to get to a place to help us in sharing resources

Business Association Liaison Presentation:

Jodi Kelly

- Larger concerns that have been brought up by the business community- identified issues that make it hard to succeed as a business in downtown Montpelier
 - Trash on the streets
 - No 24 hour public restrooms- leading to public health hazards
 - Public entrances blocked- panhandling
 - Businesses owners are particularly interested in this topic
- Jodi wants to take a survey of local business owners
 - See what they think are the bigger issues and what they may see as possible solutions
 - May invite other business owners to this group
- Bathrooms
 - Likes our solution- and wants to push it more, but feels like it would need monitoring
- Discussion:
 - Karon- from my experiences, I believe that this town doesn't like homeless folks and see them as an eyesore. I don't believe that the Bethany church is a temporary solution. Montpelier doesn't want homeless people and homeless folks don't want to be homeless.
 - There are no long-term solutions to get housing or supportive services for those in the Bethany Church
 - TJ- Do folks stay at Bethany Church?
 - Yes- It's an overnight shelter
 - Dawn- What about a designated panhandling spot?
 - Glen- at City Council, we've discussed some other options regarding panhandling
 - Basically, there are overlaps with protected free speech, and we cannot legally tell people to go in one place and not another (unless there is a disruption or people blocking the right-of-way). Any movement would have to be voluntarily made

- o Dawn- spoke on some of the reasons as to why someone would panhandle- and the gaps in the system, even if it doesn't address the needs of the business community. Public perception is not helping- it's not always what it looks like
 - Karon- I'm going to disagree because some folks do drink with the money- and I see where it is an eyesore. The answer is subsidized housing.
- o Dawn- I don't think people should be harassed- but we shouldn't sweep people out of town
- o Ken- we do have the same mission. But there is an issue of perception and an educational outreach need for the community
- o Ellen Urman- All of these issues would be answered if there was a building or facility here like Good Sam Housing. There is no need to build a full building. Discussed wanting to take money out of the Art budget or fireworks budget for something like this
 - Discussion around the role of the City, Good Sam, and what steps there can be for housing

Meeting Roundtable:

- TJ- Lives on State Street says that there is a woman, named Lydia, who walks up and down the street? Doesn't know how to help her? Wanted to share concern about her.
- Matthew- I liked what Ellen said about mentoring a family- I think connections are where it's at. As far as businesses, when the least of us succeeds all of us succeed. How do we empower everyday folks who want to help?
- Will Eberly- new numbers for Washington County from the Coordinated Entry Team: 158 Households- made up of- 252 individuals, 192 adults, 60 children, 28 chronically homeless, and 18 households on the list for over a year.
- Joseph Keefer- This is an important communication.
- Cameron- the HTF does need to reiterate the ask for bathrooms and lockers for FY20
- Ken- I think a direct response to the Business Community is needed
- Dawn- those who are causing the most issues in the 'homeless population' (those dealing with police etc.) are the ones who need the most help and are falling through the cracks as it stands

Adjournment: 1:01pm