



Alachua County Board of County Commissioners

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Administration
Dr. Lee A. Niblock, CM
County Manager

May 14, 2015

Russ Blackburn
City Manager
City of Gainesville
PO Box 490, Station 6
Gainesville, Florida 32627

Dear Mr. Blackburn:

As requested at the meeting convened with City and County staff concerning potential resources to provide outreach and mental health services to the homeless, I am providing viable recommendations which the City may explore. Additionally, referenced below are existing outreach and mental health services that Alachua County, Meridian and the Veteran's Administration provides to the homeless. Consideration will first be given to the Criminal Justice, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Reinvestment Grant (CJMHSAG), as it was discussed at length during the meeting.

The Department of Children and Family Services (DCF) awards Alachua County the CJMHSAG, in the amount of \$1.2 million over three years and \$400,000 annually. Alachua County matches the grant over three years with cash and in-kind services in the amount of \$1,258,530. CJMHSAG supports services which improves access to treatment and case management for adults with mental illness, substance abuse or a combination of these issues.

CJMHSAG eligibility requirements stipulate that services funded with the grant must be provided to persons involved in the criminal justice system. Pursuant to a broad interpretation of this eligibility requirement, the Forensic Diversion Team provides services to residents of the Empowerment Center who have been released from jail, are on bond, or are awaiting a court date. Delineated below are the services provided at the Empowerment Center through CJMHSAG funds.

CJMHSAG Services at the Empowerment Center

The Forensic Diversion Team provides outreach, clinical screening and assessment services five days per week at the Empowerment Center. The Team also provides these services and a broader range of additional services that are available at other locations in the community, including Meridian's offices. Court Services Staff is on site one day per week to assist individuals requiring access to disability benefits and to coordinate the application process. Efforts are focused on expanding services at the pre-booking stage. Meridian in collaboration with the Forensic Diversion Team provides training to law enforcement agencies on crisis intervention, trauma informed responses and mental health first aid. Moreover, law enforcement officers are trained to inform the mentally ill with whom they may interact regarding the treatment and social services which CJMHSAG funds at the Empowerment Center.

Outreach Recommendations

I. Meridian Proposal

Effective outreach expansion at the Empowerment Center will include providing a comprehensive triage approach to mental health and substance abuse treatment services. County Staff conferred with the Meridian Forensic Diversion Team Leader, who recommended establishing a three-person team, comprised of two Outreach Workers and one Clinical Position to provide services from 8:00 a.m. through 8:00 p.m. Salaries and fringe benefits for the three-person team will cost a total of approximately \$165,000, and are as follows: Two Outreach Workers at a total cost of \$50,000 each including fringe benefits; and one Clinical Position at a cost of \$65,000 including salary and benefits.

Outreach Workers will provide intensive outreach and follow-up service delivery and identify persons with mental illness and/or substance abuse issues residing at the Empowerment Center or Dignity Village. Mentally ill persons and/or persons with substance abuse issues will be provided an opportunity to identify personal recovery goals including symptom relief, housing, education and employment.

A Clinical Worker will provide mental health and substance abuse evaluations, treatment, intensive follow-up and service delivery. A continuum of service for mild to severe issues will be provided.

II. Service Provider Consortium and Resource Clearinghouse

Research indicates that approximately fifty entities in Alachua County provide services to the homeless, ranging from fundamental needs such as food and shelter, to job placement assistance. Improved collaboration among these organizations is essential for effective service delivery to the homeless. In tandem with review of the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness, it is recommended that a Service Provider Consortium is established to coordinate services, develop sustainable solutions and reduce duplication. Substantive work products of the Service Provider Consortium include but are not limited to the following: Compilation of a resource provider directory; brochure and social media; and development of a Resource Information Clearinghouse to navigate the homeless through an often labyrinthine array of services.

Existing Homeless Prevention and Support Services

Alachua County Court Services Department

CJMHSAG Services: \$1.2 million grant over three years and \$400,000 annually; cash match and in-kind services from the County in the amount of \$1,258,530

Alachua County Community Support Services Department

Homeless Prevention and Support Services: \$858,925

Rent, Mortgage and Utility Assistance - \$286,955

Empowerment Center - \$279,840

Respite Care - \$5,200

Homeless Veterans Stand Down - \$2,000

Emergency Shelter - \$25,000

CAPP - \$259,930

Mental Health Services: \$1,189,180

Meridian - \$795,556

Crisis Center - \$383,624

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) - \$10,000

Health Care Services: \$1,607,391

Alachua Cares - \$159,495

Pharmacy Assistance - \$225,000

Vision services - \$13,467

Health Department - \$941,992

CAPP Agencies (contracted community partners) - \$267,437

Estimated cost of staffing the Empowerment Center Oversight Board from 9/14 through 3/15- \$54,945. See attached spreadsheet.

Coordination of Donated Goods - The Community Stabilization Program coordinated tangible support for the Empowerment Center/Empowerment Center. Material goods donated included: Office furniture and computer equipment; fifty piece telephone system; and a variety of smaller personal equipment items. These items and twenty-five gallons of paint from the Household Hazardous Coordinator were transported to help prepare Empowerment Center for its opening. Additionally, over 5,000 books and 3,000 pounds of bed linens and other items were donated to Empowerment Center.

Veteran's Administration Mental Health Outreach Services:

Veteran's Crisis Line

VA Medical Center Mental Health Services - Also convenes a biannual Mental Health Summit

Vet Center Off-site Mental Health Provider

Healthcare for Homeless Veterans Outreach - Empowerment Center; Helping Hands Clinic

St. Francis House; Salvation Army Veteran Justice Outreach Mental Health Services

The recommendations contained in this memorandum were developed in consultation with County Staff and Community Service Providers and are not exhaustive by any assessment. However, it is our hope that they will inform your deliberations concerning outreach and mental health services for the homeless. If you should have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at 374-5205. I welcome the opportunity to discuss the recommendations and existing outreach and mental health services.

Best Regards,



Angela D. Montgomery
Assistant County Manager

ADM/adm
Attachment

cc: Board of County Commissioners
Dr. Lee A. Niblock, County Manager
Fred Murry, Assistant City Manager
Betty M. Baker, Project Manager
Susan Myers, Community Support Services Director
Peria Duncan, Court Services Director
Minnie Rolark, Assistant CSS Director
Tom Tonkavich, Assistant CSS Director
Stuart Wegener, Administrative Assistant

Estimated and Actual Expenditures on Homelessness and Oversight Advisory Board Activities

Estimated Staff Time and Expense							
Salaries & Fringe	Hourly Rate	Hours Per week	Weekly Cost	Monthly Estimate	September 2014 through March 2015		
Susan Myers	\$63.64	7	\$445.48	\$1,781.92	\$12,473.44		
Tom Tonkavich	\$51.90	15	\$778.50	\$3,114.00	\$21,798.00		
Marie Small	\$30.47	12	\$365.64	\$1,462.56	\$10,237.92		
Lorrie Smith	\$34.50	4	\$138.00	\$552.00	\$3,864.00		
Karen Johnson	\$30.34	5	\$151.70	\$606.80	\$4,247.60		
Gaile Bellamy	\$18.22	1	\$18.22	\$72.88	\$510.16		
Gwen Keith	\$22.04	1	\$22.04	\$88.16	\$617.12		
SubTotal		45	\$1,919.58	\$7,678.32	\$53,748.24		
Other Expenses (Actual To Date)							
Sound System	\$427.00						\$427.00
Office Supplies	\$374.80						\$374.80
Postage & Copies	\$395.38						\$395.38
Grand Total	\$1,197.18						\$54,945.42