

LEGISLATIVE #

100948B



**City of Gainesville/Alachua County
Office on Homelessness**



10-Year Plan to End Homelessness Implementation Committee Meeting Minutes:

March 28, 2011

Committee members present:

Comm. Rodney Long
Mayor Craig Lowe
Maggie Labarta
Gordon Tremaine

Other attendees:

John Skelly	Martha McInnes	Diane Dimperio
Tammy Carmichael	Laureen Ricks	Kay Rogers
Dan Kahn	Kathleen Pagan	Kevin Putansu (via conference call)
Caroline Schultz	Christy Finnegan	

Committee members absent/not represented:

Bill Cervone, Brent Christensen, Vivian Filer, Ken McGurn, Gail Monahan, Ted Welcome, Tina St. Clair

Staff: Theresa Lowe

- I. Call to Order / Quorum Call: The meeting was called to order by Comm. Long at 1:02 p.m. A quorum was not immediately established.
- II. Introductions: were made
- III. Adoption of Agenda: A motion to approve the agenda was made by Ms. Labarta and seconded by Mayor Lowe. The agenda was adopted.
- IV. Adoption of Minutes: The minutes were not adopted as there was not a quorum until later in the meeting and we did not return to this item.
- V. Old Business:
 1. GRACE Marketplace Update: We are working to finalize the road design and road Improvement cost for the project. In February, the City Commission held a "Shade Session" to discuss the legal issues and the Law suits. The Commission directed staff to continue the development and construction of the One Stop Homeless Assistance Center and continue to provide them with periodical report on the status of the project. Also, the City Commission approved additional funds for the Water and Sewer installation in the area. The Original cost estimate for the Water and Sewer Line installation include a private pumping station. We made changes to the Water and Sewer Line installation phase of the project to include a public pumping station. In addition, City and County Staff are beginning to meet to discuss the RFP for the Operation of the One Stop Homeless Assistance center. Comm. Long noted that the project is moving along. Mayor Lowe added that the City is committed to moving forward to serve the community in need as soon as possible.
 2. Interim One Stop Services Update: As of March 22, 2011, approximately \$285,580.58 in Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing funds were spent 333 households have been assisted which is an average of \$857.60 per household (the household count is unduplicated and served between September 17, 2009 and March 22, 2010).
 3. Update on EBT Restaurant Pilot Program: Mr. Skelly stated that this was to be a 6-month pilot, but has extended to 9-months due to a slow start. Currently participating restaurants are: 3 Domino's, George's at Phil-Nick's, and Satchel's Pizza. Within the next month or so, we expect to add four Subways and the Sandwich Inn. One of the Subways is near the Health Department. Not all of the people who have signed up for the program are actually using cards. We are beginning an assessment to provide feedback to DCF and USDA. We have found out how mobile this population is. Many who entered the program 6 months ago are now in other areas. There is an intended expansion of the pilot, hopefully later this year, to include elders and disabled persons who receive food stamp benefits. We have found that the homeless are not abusing the program. Comm. Long stated that is good to know we have Subway as they offer more nutritious options.



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4. Respite for the Homeless Sub-Committee Report: Mr. Putansu was joined to the meeting via conference call. Ms. Dimperio introduced the committee, both those present and not. A PowerPoint presentation was made (see attached.) We are not calling the program we hope to institute “medical respite.” We are calling it “homelessness respite.” There is no economy of scale to do more of a medical respite type program.

It is the committee’s recommendation that we purchase the use of 3 beds at St. Francis House for now and then look at re-locating the program to GRACE Marketplace in 2 years to see if that is then an option. Mr. Skelly noted that regarding GRACE Marketplace, the planning team discussed this concept months ago. Issues that exist are primarily standard p&p issues, such as discharge, oversight, and liability. GRACE Marketplace is being planned as a transitional shelter; the respite folks more closely resemble emergency shelter people. There are additional reasons that the planning team wanted for having GRACE Marketplace open for a year or 2 before expanding into other services. It was generally noted that there is a tremendous amount of service that could be provided by existing agencies if the City/County can come up with funds for room. There was discussion and concerns raised about capacity at St. Francis House and whether they are currently full or could spare the beds we were discussing reserving. Our community is already short on emergency beds; will we be further reducing the number of beds available? Procedures will be developed to reduce the impact of the proposed program, including releasing the reserved beds at 5:00 p.m. if they have not already been identified as being needed for respite that evening. The beds are currently tiered at St. Francis House based on need. The length of stay in the respite beds will be determined by the physician at the time of hospital discharge. Anticipated downsides include inconsistent application of policy. We will need to provide ongoing monitoring. Ms. Carmichael will be working with the clients, in addition to the St. Francis House case manager. The hospitals will continue to pay for medical care. We see this model as meeting our local economies of scale. Many communities who start a respite program do so with a similar program in a shelter. After program is in effect for six months, we may see that we need something different.

Mayor Lowe noted that this is currently a pretty easy decision since GRACE Marketplace is not yet open. He thinks there may GRACE Marketplace may have more of an emergency operation aspect than currently thought of at the City Manager’s office. He perceives that GRACE Marketplace will be a place where Shands and others could provide services for residents and clients. Respite could benefit from that. But, we are not there yet. He would like more conversation with City staff to make sure it’s going where it was intended to be going. It sounds like there has not been a lot of thought about this by St. Francis House. Ms. Dimperio noted that her committee did disagree with City staff but the timing was such that there was no point in going to the mat since it’s at least a year and half down the road and there did seem to be a need for a recommendation for now. There was a concern about respite reducing the number of beds available for cold night shelter, however, the two programs operate out of different space. A stand alone facility was considered, however, the committee could not come up with a plan to make that option feasible.

Comm. Long stated that he is interested in doing it on a pilot basis for two beds and would like to see if we could pilot this program now instead of having to wait for new fiscal year. He would like to see how program works before we allocate for a full year. Diane, could put together a pilot to see how it works. Mr. Skelly suggested that the program could be contracted through an intralocal agreement between the City, County and St. Francis House, with the County monitoring and managing the contract. This would be preferred over modifying the Office on Homeless contract. If the program is funded, it is estimated that it could be up and running within 30 days of contract execution. Ms. Labarta made a motion, seconded by Mr. Tremaine to direct the Office on Homelessness and County staff to develop a plan for respite for the homeless and present the plan to the joint commissions. The motion was approved. Mayor Lowe noted that this could be done at separate meetings if need be. The dollar amount being



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requested is small, so the presentation need not be too extensive. Ms. Labarta suggested we try to include the costs associated with not providing respite, for example, ER visits, going to jail to receive medical care, etc. and what we could save by providing respite. Comm. Long thanked Mr. Putansu for joining us via conference call.

- VI. New Business: For our next meeting, we will review and update the priority grid. The grid will be e-mailed to members in advance of the meeting for review.
 - VII. Committee comments: None
 - VIII. Citizen Comments: None
 - IX. Next meeting: May 23, 2011 @ 1 pm Grace Knight Conference Room
 - X. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 2:19 p.m.
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