

Yakima County Homeless Coalition

MEETING MINUTES

August 19, 2019

CALL TO ORDER The August 19, 2019 came to order at 1:30 p.m.

INTRODUCTIONS Members present: Tara Sadler (Entrust), Kelly Penfold (Entrust), Jeanne Olney (Catholic Charities), Jane Chesley (Catholic Charities), Teresa Carlson (DOC), Vicki Baker (Yakima Grocery Outlet), Josh Jackson (Rod's House), Scott Thielen (YUGM), Lee Murdock (Homeless Network), Annette Rodriguez (YNHS), Beth Dannhardt (Homeless Network), Melissa Paul (Yakima County BOCC), Esther Magasis (Yakima County Homeless Program)

NEW BUSINESS

Goals

1. Understand the PIT count
2. Develop intent and scope for 2020 PIT count
3. Identify volunteers for a YHC Pit Count/Data Needs Subcommittee

Action: *Establishing the agenda for the meeting*

Understanding the PIT Count

The PIT Count is required both by HUD and the Dept of Commerce – must be done annually to receive funding.

Presents a snapshot on the same day across the Country. Captures demographic information and number of people experiencing homelessness.

Census vs Sampling

- Different methods for conducting the PIT count
- Census is a count of *all* people experiencing homelessness
- Sampling is a *partial* count of the population, which is used to estimate the number and characteristics of the entire population
- Communities may choose to combine approaches

Who is counted?

- Sheltered
- Unsheltered
- Not counted: not literally homeless (e.g. doubled up, couch surfing, institutionalized)

Timeline

- Begin planning in September
- PIT to occur during the last 10 days of January

Action: *Discussion and information*

Intent and Scope

PIT can be an opportunity to meet other objectives (i.e. outreach, engagement, screening, triage)

Street Count

- Strategies:
 - Complete count
 - Known locations
 - Random samples
- Volunteer training and safety is very important
- Easier in the winter because many individuals are already in extreme winter weather shelters

Service-Based Count

- Can be supplemental to street count

Project Homeless Connect (PHC)

- Offers incentives for people to come and be counted
- Best practice as identified by HUD and Dept of Commerce
- Services *not* contingent on completing survey – reduces false responses and leads to cleaner data
- Paired with street count

Partnership needed with Yakama Nation

Feedback: What should the goals and methodology be for the 2020 Count?

- Josh: In the past, YVCOG contracted with a third-party consultant who was not locally based, and the community may not have been as involved as they could have been. This year strong consideration for Yakima County to lead the PIT effort contingent on support of community organizations and volunteers.
- Teresa: I was involved when it was done locally, as well as when it was done by the third party, and community engagement and logistical coordination was much worse under the third party.
- Kelly: Community engagement and training was poor under the third-party contractors.
- Not doing PIT locally was a bad idea – only 2 counties in WA that outsource the PIT survey to a contractor. One of the Counties is Thurston County, and the contractor is locally based there.
- Buy in from service providers would be necessary to keep it local.
- Creation of YCH Subcommittee that would become task force for PIT
- Lee: Use of incentives is not a best practice – it increases the likelihood of false surveys responses. Should not be pay to play system.
- Project Homeless Connect: donations obtained for clothing, sleeping bags, food bank, etc. Also including drivers license DOL, court services, etc. to help resolve challenges. Transportation provided to DMV. Not just a resource fair, but a *service* fair.
- Homeless Network could use Project Homeless Connect to distribute Starbright kits.
- County funding approx. \$36,000 for consultant that could be used in the community.
- Consensus was that community would like to conduct the PIT count locally and use the funding that had gone to pay contractors for local costs and to implement a Project Homeless Connect model.
- Multi-approach plan to include both street outreach and Project Homeless Connect.
- Last year providers who do not use HMIS were excluded. Expand shelter count to include all emergency shelter and transitional programs regardless of if they are receiving local, state, or federal dollars.
- Need a budget
 - Provide stipends for consumers who participate in the work

Action: Discussion and planning

YHC Pit Count/Data Needs Subcommittee

Ability for County to conduct the PIT count locally depends on community engagement and participation on the PIT Count subcommittee. Subcommittee meetings will begin in September.

- Potential need to contract a vendor for support

Individuals/orgs that committed to participation:

- Lee Murdock
- Tom Gaulke
- YNHS
- Josh Jackson/Rod's House
- Teresa Carlson

- Catholic Charities
- YUGM
- Kelly Penfold

Individuals/orgs that were suggested to engage in participation:

- Mockingbird society
- Janice Gonzales
- Tino Alonso
- Julia Hart
- Joan Souders

Action: Discussion and commitments for subcommittee

Next Steps

Action: Esther to email out slides and minutes, Lee to share with Homeless Network

Action: Esther to establish first subcommittee meeting time, orgs and community members to identify and engage individuals for participation

Next Meeting

Tuesday, September 17th at 1:30 p.m.

Will be the last opportunity for comments on goals, objectives. Request deliverables suggestions from Coalition members.

Adjourn

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned