

**Palm Beach County Homeless Advisory Board  
Meeting  
301 North Olive, WPB  
September 19, 2007**

**Board Members Present**

Commissioner Jeff Koons, Palm Beach County (PBC) Board of County Commissioners  
Lela Jordan for Mayor Lois Frankel, West Palm Beach  
Captain Jeff Linskoog, PBC Sherriff's Department  
Dr. Ron Wiewora for Dwight Chenette, PBC Health District  
Stephen Faroni for Alan Abramowitz, Florida Department of Children & Families  
Scott Badesch, United Way of Palm Beach County  
John Green for Mayor Thomas Masters, Rivera Beach  
Tom Sheehan for Gaetana Ebbole, PBC Children Services Council

**Board Members Absent**

Mayor Rita Ellis, Delray Beach  
Judge Cory Ciklin, PBC Judiciary  
Dr. Jean Malecki, PBC Health Department  
Mr. Bill Graham, PBC School Board  
Mayor Donald Garrett, BelleGlade

**Board Members Yet Designated**

Mayor of Boynton Beach  
Mayor of Boca Raton  
PBC Emergency Shelter Grant Board

**Business and Community Representative Nominees Present**

**Business Representatives**

Philip Lewis  
Bill Oberlink  
Michelle Diffenderfer  
Susan Guillama

**Private Foundation**

Doug Pugh for Shannon Sadler Hull, CEO PBC Community Foundation  
Paul Gionfriddo, CEO Quantum Foundation

**Formerly Homeless**

Michelle Carter  
Stephen Johnson  
Vicki Allen  
Thomas Bell

**Faith Based**

Pastor Leo Abdella, Christ Fellowship Church  
Rev. Andrew Sherman, St Gregory's Episcopal Church

**Housing Authority**

Judith Aigen, Boca Raton Housing Authority

### **Not in Attendance**

Hospital Executive Officer

### **Vacant**

Philanthropist

### **Others in Attendance**

Mike Rodriguez, Criminal Justice Committee

Sgt. Mark Essary, PBC Sherriff's Department

### **County Staff Present**

Jon Van Arnam, PBC County Administration

Tammy Fields, Assistant County Attorney

Claudia Tuck, PBC Community Services, Human Services Division

Georgiana Devine, PBC Community Services, Human Services Division

### **Consultant Staff Present**

Mike Langton, Langton Associates

Krysten Bennett, Langton Associates

**Welcome:** Meeting called to order at 2 PM by Commissioner Jeff Koons, Chairperson.

### **Introduction of all present**

### **Report from Commissioner Koons-**

- Board is subject to Sunshine Laws, need quorum for any vote
- Do not meet quorum to vote on the Business and Community Representative Nominees
- Board not here to waste time, but to bring focus to the homeless issues
- Homelessness is a serious issue that has not been addressed by the BCC to its full extent
- Timeline will be quick and the strategic planning intensive
- A Criminal Justice Advisory Board will be running parallel with this Board
- Both Boards need to look at the issues of mental health and substance abuse services
- Assist in critical planning, advise the BCC and obtain community consensus
- Board will look at coordinating Local, State and Federal Funding
- Bring recommendations before BCC in January prior to FY 09 budget cycle
- Resolution needs to be amended to be more flexible and allow those representing one of the Core members to vote
- Resolution needs to be amended to allow all the formerly homeless to be included on the Board
- The Board of the Miami Rescue Mission has given their approval for the agency to look at providing services to the homeless in Palm Beach County

### **Overview of Sunshine Laws by Tammy Fields**

- Mandated by the Florida Statutes not the BCC
- Meetings must take place in an open setting so the public can see what is happening and what members are discussing
- Ethics Policy – If there is a question as to a possible conflict of interest, seek assistance or direction from Tammy Fields or Lenny Berger in the CAO
- Sunshine Law applies to any step in the decision making process
- Cannot call a meeting or phone one another to discuss policies that will come before the

## Board

- Reasonable notice of the meeting is required
- Meeting facility must be easily accessible, in open area and record of the meeting is required
- Voting must be public
- Voting can be a written, signed ballot that is available for the public to view or by public vote through a show of hands
- Cannot avoid the Sunshine Law by calling staff and asking them to call staff to discuss policies
- Cannot write memos stating position or to advocate on behalf of particular policies
- There are both legal and financial consequences to not following the Sunshine law
- Public Record Laws apply to this Board
- Documents created by the Board are open to the public
- Any correspondence and emails sent by Board members relating to work of the Board are open to the public
- When draft documents are sent for review, Board members can comment or edit, but these are open to the public
- This Board is not under financial disclosure

## **Report on By Laws**

- By Laws are in draft form only
- There are areas in the By Laws that are in conflict with the Resolution that must be corrected
- The By Laws will be revised and redistributed at the next meeting after full review by staff and county attorney

## **Report by Consultant**

- The meeting schedule was discussed and finalized. They will be the third Wednesday of every month except in November which will be the fourth Wednesday. The meetings will be held at 2 PM in the McEaddy Conference Room, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor unless otherwise indicated.
- There will be four Sub-Committees. Everyone needs to be on one. If you have a particular interest, let Krysten know, otherwise members will be assigned.
- Once the plan is developed, then the consultant's role will be to assist the Board in monitoring and evaluating implementation.

## **Report from Jon Van Arnam**

- The county's desire is to gain community consensus, not just involvement by the BCC
- Once the process moves from planning to implementation, the expectation is for the Board to tell us how to move forward
- There needs to be an overall strategy to include citizens, cities and agencies
- The members need to become advocates

## **Comments made by Commissioner Koons**

- By January 2008 need specific schedule and funding requests for FY 09 budget cycle.
- This Board needs to be part of bringing community consensus in regards to the issues of homelessness

- This Board is an opportunity to part of the solution in addressing this issue
- Board needs to develop a countywide strategy that includes government, private businesses, not-for-profits, and faith based organizations
- The plan needs to be a living document that does not just sit on a shelf
- The plan needs to carry the county into the future
- The plan needs to identify specific projects or programs that are evidence based and developed based on models that have been successful elsewhere
- The BCC will focus on health care issues once Commissioner Koons becomes the Chairman in a year from now

### **Comments from the Audience**

- How the homeless are counted needs to be addressed. The numbers reported to HUD are much lower than those reported by the School Board
- Emphasis on Mental Health issues needs to be a priority of the Board
- A question was raised as to how the seasons affect the Point in Time Count
- Due to the geographic of Palm Beach County, it is difficult to count the homeless
- Migrant's are a neglected population in the count
- Methodologies of the various counts need to be presented along with the various definitions of homelessness
- How the homeless are counted does not matter; there will always be a population that is segregated
- Look at strategies and utilize GIS instead of numbers
- I am not here to defend Westgate. We need to find solutions. The count was not done correctly; there are homeless who will not come out of the woods to be counted
- There is a homeless population in Boca Raton, may want to contact Community Improvement Department
- Thank you for the opportunity to be apart of this exciting process
- After experiencing a fellow homeless person's death, it hit home and made a difference in my life
- Intervention was needed earlier in my life and maybe I would not have entered jail 21 times. About 10 -15 days after entering jail, you are the most receptive to look at your life. You are the most vulnerable upon discharge. I was not approached or offered services while in jail. We are put in jail, thrown back on the street and the cycle continues. Have to break the cycle of the revolving door.
- This is not the first Homeless Task Force.
- This will be the last.
- Expressed gratitude for Commissioner Koon's passion and his desire to not look at what is but will be.
- Spend time on addressing the issues, not on counting the numbers.
- Homelessness is an issue right now. There are cities that do not want to admit they have a problem and as a result, here we are.
- Let's focus on a tangible, concrete plan
- This is a formidable task which is multifaceted which many of the participants in this room are not even aware of the depth. Need to look all aspects of the issue including law enforcement. The county needs to have the back bone to address the problem. This can not be all hugs and kisses and hope the problem goes away. Need a change in attitude and mindset and that includes those of us in this room.
- I am the law enforcement officer out in the woods. The homeless know me and trust me. There is a lot out there and a lot to be done.

- I volunteered to participate on the Board. I am new to this issue, but I have many years experience in land use and development.

### **Report by Claudia Tuck**

- The 24 hour count is only a point in time count. It is mandated by HUD and driven by HUD's definition of homelessness.
- The Point in Time Count is different than a census. It is completed over a 24 hour period. The week the count is completed is set by HUD and completed that same week nationwide.
- The 2007 count identified 1766 unduplicated homeless individuals.
- The School Board's definition of homelessness includes those doubled up which HUD does not.
- The Point in Time Count involved a 24 hour period from noon to noon. 65 volunteers who included police officers, Westgate Church and homeless service providers conducted the count. It was conducted countywide.
- Some target populations such as families and illegal aliens often choose not to be counted.
- Most families are not found in camps, but doubled up which HUD does not include in this count.
- When applying for funding, must use the definition set forth by the funding source.

### **Action Needed**

- Core members and nominees identify and contact potential Community and Business Representatives for the vacant positions
- Presentation by County Staff regarding the process to complete the Point in Time Count
- Consultant will share the various definitions of homelessness
- Amend the resolution to allow for designated alternative and will allow them the authority to vote

### **Upcoming Meeting**

- Next meeting is October 17, 2007 at 2 PM – location to be announced.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00PM.