

# Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance

## CoC Point-In-Time (PIT) Count Workgroup

August 17, 2020 | 11am - 12:00pm

### MEETING MINUTES

#### 1. Welcome and Introductions

DJ Vincent, Committee Chair

DJ Vincent, Chair, welcomed the group at 11:03am and began introductions.

**Attendees include:** Robin Winkle, Shangri-La; Adam Menning, Chemeketa Community College; Gretchen Bennett, City of Salem; Matt McWilliams, City of Independence; Eddie Maestas, Salem Housing Authority; Ben Crosby, City of Keizer; Julie Conn-Johnson, Salem-Keizer School District; Tricia Frizzell, Community Action Agency; Cheyenne McDougall, Church at the Park; Wendy Roberts, federal programs coordinator for Salem-Keizer School District; Andrew Copeland, Keizer Police Department; Sara Webb, Community Action Agency; and Sarah Owens, CANDO Neighborhood Association.

**Members Not Present:** Linda Strike, Community Action Agency

#### 2. Workgroup Administration

An overview of July's meeting was provided by Carla Munns, MWVHA Consultant. Robin made a motion to approve the July Meeting minutes; Tricia seconded the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

Sara answered a question asked to describe what the 'PIT Count is, and how it's conducted. She explained the PIT Count to be data collection gathered by surveying and counting every homeless individual in the region to help inform federal funding needs, grant writing, state funding needs, local needs, etc. This is the 'proof on paper' of the region's homeless population. She stated Marion/Polk region has efficient Coordinated Entry (CE) data which provides current, local data of the homeless population "in the system," whereas the PIT Count is a nation-wide, formal data collection and assessment of the overall population. Sara provided a brief overview of CE data, and how information is gathered on those individuals who have touched the homeless system somewhere in the region. CE's goal is to gather a list of clients to place them into housing and/or services when available, and to provide an accurate snapshot of who in the region is literally homeless and who is waiting for housing. PIT Count data's goal is to *count clients* and their demographic data to better understand the current population.

#### 3. 2021 PIT Count Planning

Needs were identified to include counting shelters, geographies for mobile outreach, and geographical magnet hubs/resource hubs like Dutch Bros or Connect events. PIT Count Workgroup representatives are expected to ensure their local jurisdiction are covered in geographic boundaries and identify underserved areas, assisting with coordination of local champions and service agencies.

Representation for Polk County in the workgroup was identified to be a gap. Commissioner Mordhorst emailed staff stating Polk County does not have a representative able to participate at this time. Matt

McWilliams offered to help lead efforts for Polk County but needs direction on what and how to do help. Breezy with Community Action Agency was the point of contact for Polk County in 2020 PIT Count and can likely offer technical assistance.

- **Geographic Gaps-** geographical gaps in PIT Count surveys in 2020 were identified to be: rural areas further from the Salem-Keizer center (especially those in Polk County), tribal areas of Grand Ronde and Chemawa Indian Center.
- **January Outdoor Sweeps-** City of Salem, City of Keizer, Marion County and Polk County Sheriff's Offices, and ODOT have been contacted requesting to hold off on conducting 'sweeps' during the month of January. If specific areas are identified, determining who owns the property (private property vs. public) will need to be known to make requests. Sarah Owens mentioned Salem Police Department considers "sweeps" to be making arrests. Ensuring consistent language is being used is important to ensure the request is made for avoiding cleaning and relocation sweeps.

#### **4. Regional Hubs**

Potential for coordinating localized regional hubs of resources (similar to Connect events) to assist with surveying during PIT Count week was discussed by the group. Eddie said he can see benefit of hosting Connect events to align with PIT Count. A successful example in 2020 was youth had magnet events at coffee shops to entice youth to attend and complete the survey. Dutch Bros offered to host another magnet event in 2021. Tricia noted high quality incentives and/or magnet events are important for gaining buy-in and making good use of individuals' time. Eddie mentioned the regional hubs should be in tandem with local 'boots on the ground' PIT Count surveying.

#### **5. Updates: Board, CoC Committee Updates, Other Updates and Follow Up**

The group agreed to meet monthly on the third Monday of each month from 11-12p., noting the possibility of meeting more frequently as the event date nears.

**Future Meeting Topics:** Incentives for homeless individuals to participate in surveys; determine endorsement for implementing regional hub/magnet events to coincide with PIT Count 2021.