

Mid-Willamette Valley Homeless Alliance CoC
Warming Task Force (WTF) meeting minutes
Wednesday, July 28, 2021

1. WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS

In attendance:

Name	Organization	Email
1. Lindsay Dent	MWVCAA - manager of Arches' sheltering services and warming network; Chair of this task force.	lindsay.dent@mwvcaa.org
2. Bennett Teal	MWVCAA - Arches Hotel Coordinator, since January 2021	Bennett.teal@mwvcaa.org
3. Noelle Gore	Church at the Park Coordinator for Warming Services	noelgore@comcast.net
4. Stephen Goins	Director of Transitional Programs for Northwest Human Services (NWHS)	sgoins@nwhumanservices.org
5. Mari Anne Gest	Church at the Park	mgest@msn.com
6. Shyanne Tovar	MWVCAA - Arches' Warming Coordinator, also staffs hotels as needed	shyanne.tovar@mwvcaa.org
7. Lynelle Willcox	SafeSleep United Program Manager; Warming Task Force Secretary	lwilcox@unitedwaymwv.org

2. **Minutes** - The May and June 2021 Warming Task Force meetings were cancelled due to warming managers and staff still unburying from the warming season. Task force members approved March and April 2021 minutes as submitted.
3. **ANNOUNCEMENTS/UPDATES** - Lindsay shared that this committee was tasked with expanding emergency warming centers, and collaborating to create a blueprint for best practices for warming centers. Yet with the Covid pandemic, more people lost jobs and became homeless, and warming centers needed to significantly reduce capacity in order to attain the social distancing to reduce the risk of Covid spreading. Funds became available for hoteling people who are vulnerable, and we also had tent camping indoors at the state fairgrounds, pallet shelters for the first time ever for a duration time period that was not contingent on weather, cooling centers as needed, with more research and sheltering options in progress.

With these changes and options, warming centers have become just one alternative for keeping people safe and sheltered. Emergencies that involve sheltering people now include cold weather, hot weather, fires, smoke and unhealthy air, or displacement. As a result, this task force's role has shifted to be much more diverse. Lindsay will take the lead on revising the task force's role, charter, and work plan concepts to reflect the broader scope of emergency shelters.

Stephen Goins noted that last year had more proactive warming planning, more partnerships, and more options. As usual, HOAP gets the word out about when warming centers are open, and he has also connected with Sergeant Gil at the Salem Police Department, so they can also let people know of warming center openings. Cherriots continues to offer free transportation to warming centers.

The new UGM has a large day center and perhaps they can also offer mats and warming space there as needed. If more notice can be provided about when and which warming centers will open, outreach teams and partners would have more time to get the word out, and homeless individuals would have more time to plan where they will go, what to bring, and how they will get there. Crisis lines can share about warming openings, and we may also try using reader boards to get the word out.

4. **EMERGENCY SHELTER PLANNING** - Goal: Provide and expand safe place options for individuals who are homeless to be during any type of emergency that requires sheltering people.

Gretchen Bennett of the City of Salem continues to research and coordinate some shelter options for people who have been displaced by sweeps, yet there are way more people needing places to be than there are places for them to go. Church at the Park has stepped forward to run multiple shelter options.

Arches formed the **Arches Shelter Assistance Program (ASAP)** to take the lead in developing and implementing emergency shelters as needed, in collaboration with the City, property owners, and any partners that are also working to create and implement more shelter options for homeless individuals who have been displaced or need temporary shelter for an emergency.

Action steps:

- Draft revisions of the task force charter to reflect the broader scope of emergency shelters. *Update: **Done!** New name is Shelter Network Committee (SNC), and charter revisions have been drafted.*
- Submit proposed charter revisions to the CoC Collaborative Committee for their review and approval. ***Done!** Charter revisions were submitted to the Homeless Alliance Collaborative Committee. That committee approved the revised Shelter Network Committee charter on 9/15/21.*
- Create a work plan to reflect the broader scope of emergency shelters, locations, roles, thresholds, and other details to quickly shelter people for any type of emergency that requires sheltering people - warming, cooling, wildfires, unhealthy air quality, etc. Try for geographic diversity, so there are options for people who are homeless in different areas of Salem, and so that community impact is spread more equitably.

- Share draft work plan with WTF members for their input.
- Assign tasks and timelines as needed.
- Consider if there are ways for people to store property if they leave their campsite to seek shelter; see if there are ways for someone to be designated to watch property that is left behind temporarily as people use emergency shelters as needed; see if more transportation options may be available to get people to AND from emergency shelters.

5. **RESOURCE LIBRARY** - Goals: Create online resource library of shelter Policies and Procedures so new and existing shelters do not need to reinvent the wheel. Identify some common best practices and requirements. Status: Lynelle has received policies and procedures from some shelters, and will continue to ask for others to share theirs as well.

Some people (including Lynelle) have been hesitant to share theirs because they are not done yet. While it is tempting to wait till documents are complete, in this work there is always something new to add or change, so things will never be done. Yet having documents available for others to use as a starting point is a valuable resource, even if the documents are not done or perfect yet.

Action steps:

- Continue to request and organize policies and procedures from shelter programs.
- Choose online file-sharing system - Drop Box and Base Camp have been suggested. The Homeless Alliance website might also share the files, or a link to the site where files are posted.
- Post policies and procedures online, adding as more are received.
- Plan steps for identifying and sharing some common best practices and requirements.

6. **SHELTER LIST** - Goal: Market and promote shelter programs. Create shelter list, as a shelter inventory and for use for easy and appropriate referrals.

Action steps:

- Create form to solicit shelter capacity, criteria, referral and entry process, timeframes, and other info.
- Distribute form for shelters to complete and submit.
- Compile responses to create a list of shelters, for marketing and promoting shelter programs, and for easy and appropriate referrals.
- Post master list in the file-sharing programs, and distribute it widely so partners, homeless individuals, and community members are aware of options, and can make referrals as needed.

7. **TRAINING** - Goal: Develop mentoring and training opportunities for shelter staff and volunteers

- Identify mentoring options and process
- Identify effective ways to share training resources, links, opportunities

- Solicit input for useful training resources, links, opportunities
- Share those options so shelter staff and volunteers can choose trainings they prefer, at whatever pace fits them.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE PLANNING - Goals and status:

- **Update Warming Task Force name and role.** Based on the revised Shelter Network Committee charter, the revised name and purpose statement might be:

*The purpose of the CoC **Shelter Network Committee** is to:*

- *Develop and expand emergency shelter options for individuals who are homeless.*
- *Create and share a resource library of shelter programs, policies, procedures, and best practices.*
- *Market and promote shelter programs.*
- *Create and share training opportunities.*

- **Update meeting frequency.** Committee members identified that since emergency sheltering can often be seasonal, monthly meetings may only be necessary on an intermittent basis. Members proposed meeting at least quarterly, with additional meetings scheduled on an as-needed basis. The committee charter revision reflects this proposed change.
- **Update quorum criteria.** Shelter Network Committee members discussed the challenge of determining a quorum when different people may attend each meeting. Committee members suggested having five core members who would count towards a quorum, with those 5 core members officially representing key agencies and areas: 1) Arches representative, 2) Sheltering Silverton representative, 3) Church at the Park representative, 4) Polk County shelters representative, and 5) a homeless advocate or someone with lived experience. Other Shelter Network Committee members may be attend meetings as they are available, yet they do not count towards a quorum.

9. NEXT MEETING: The next Shelter Network Committee meeting is planned for the last Wednesday of October: 10/27/2021 from 2:00 to 3:30 pm.

10. MEETING ADJOURNED.