

**Shelter Providers Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020**  
**9:00-10:30 AM**

Attending: Madeleine Martino Fox, Sarah Lim, Tara Barica, Jael Currie, Lisa Hemauer, Joel Girard, Kim Sutter, Sarah Hayes, John Adams, Casey Yanta, Preston Petterson, Peter Twiss, Susan Schmitz, Kim Tesch, Terri Johnson, Jani Koester, Torrie Kopp Mueller, Rosa Rhoden

1. Introductions

2. What are we seeing as far as numbers? Trends? Challenges?

- The Beacon: Served about 250 meals on Thanksgiving- 100+ in house, coordinated with outreach programs that took about 120 meals to encampments; averaging about 100 people per day; hasn't had a positive case with COVID for a while; # of people going to Medical Respite Center has gone down, too.
- Porchlight men's shelter: Has not seen positive cases for a while now, still diligent about health assessment; 78-100 people average-lower than previous years; the First Street facility will open on 12/16; there will be a shuttle bus to and from the Beacon; hired 8 new staff; Reasons for lower census - 49 people who had used the shelter regularly in the past are now at the COVID-19 Vulnerable Population hotels; also many people are still at Medical Respite Center for quarantine.
- Porchlight Safe Haven: Opened on Thanksgiving; average about 30 guests per day; haven't had a positive case; 8 intakes last week.
- Healing House: remained open through the pandemic, no positive case yet; low census
- YWCA family shelter: Had some staffing issues, hope to bring in more families in soon; some shelter families used the Medical Respite Center and recovered
- TSA: 52 families in hotel today, prioritizing unsheltered families; 30 families on the waitlist (3 reporting sleeping in their cars, TSA is actively working with them to get them into the shelter; rest report being doubled up with friends or families); TSA diversion staff provides referrals and light touch case management services to families on the waitlist; seeing good trend of people obtaining permanent housing and moving out
- TSA women's shelter: The number went over the max capacity of 65 couple weeks ago, up to 68, now down to 50 due to many women moving into Vulnerable Population hotel

- Why are people not using the shelters?

According to the previous PIT surveys, people reported not using the shelter because of the concerns about safety –violence, theft, etc. Preston reported that those incidents do not happen often, the frequency went down quite a bit at the new location with ample space. John reported that violence does not happen often, theft more often, but the Beacon takes those reports seriously and address them immediately. People need to feel safe at the shelter and addressing those concerns is important for people to build trust with the shelter.

John Adams from Catalyst reported that three encampments they visited including Starkweather, people indicated not wanting to go into the shelter because they felt they were safer outside than inside related to COVID-19. Some people did clear up some misunderstanding about the shelters and went in. COVID is definitely one of the main concerns that people are not using the shelters.

- Language barriers – Beacon and Porchlight Men’s Shelter both have two Spanish-speaking staff members; Housing Navigation has a Spanish speaking staff member. Shelters use Language Line to provide support.

### 3. New Temporary Shelter Site Info

Porchlight Men’s Shelter is relocating from Warner Park to 200 N. First Street on 12/16/20.

Quite a bit bigger than Warner Park, can easily accommodate 250 with proper social distancing without using the bunks; indoor waiting area for health screening (vacuum system for max ventilation); a big lounge areas with two TVs; a fenced-in smoking area so staff doesn’t have to do smoke breaks; top-tier ventilation system; 11 showers (now 4); will continue with food, cleaning, laundry vendors for a while; changes with staffing –new and increased staff- trying to make more welcoming and safe shelter; no negative feedback from the guests about the relocation, many positive feedback.

### 4. Updates/announcements

John said the Beacon worked with all outreach providers to deliver Thanksgiving meals to people who were unsheltered. It was a great collaborative work. Let’s make more collaborative efforts among providers beyond the holiday and the pandemic. Preston agreed and encouraged providers to proactively work together to assist people experiencing homelessness.

### 5. Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 3, 2021