

## **Missoula City Council Public Safety and Health Committee Minutes**

**May 5, 2021  
12:15 PM  
ZOOM Webinar**

**Members present:** John P. Contos, Mirtha Becerra, Heather Harp, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Julie Merritt, Amber Sherrill, Sandra Vasecka, Bryan von Lossberg, Heidi West

**Members absent:** Stacie Anderson (chair), Jesse Ramos

### **1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS**

#### **1.2 Approval of the Minutes for April 28, 2021**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

### **3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

#### **3.1 Update on the Emergency Winter and Non-Congregate Shelter**

Discussion focused on the emergency winter shelter that was managed and operated by The Poverello Center during the 2020/2021 winter season.

Jesse Jaeger, director of development and advocacy at The Poverello Center said that the shelter on Johnson Street has wrapped up its season. During this time, 509 unique individuals were served. The average served per night was 82 people. In addition, he announced that a new executive director of the center has been chosen and will start on July 1, 2021.

Accomplishments for the season included the smallest number of outdoor encampments that their Homeless Outreach Team has ever seen and more younger people were brought into the Johnson Street shelter. Challenges included it took more dollars than they thought it would take to retrofit the building into a habitable shelter. Also, they are hoping that the building will be made available for future use as long as social distancing is recommended by the CDC.

Director for the Missoula Office of Emergency Management Adrienne Beck, gave an overview of the non-congregate shelter operation. As a result of COVID-19 some hotels were used to house homeless individuals, along with The Sleepy Inn which was procured by the City of Missoula. To date, they have served 283 unique individuals in non-congregate shelter since March 2020.

FEMA has set-up a priority system that individuals need to meet in order to be eligible to access non-congregate shelter. First, they must test positive for COVID-19. Second, they must identify as a close-contact through contact-tracing by the local health jurisdiction, and third, meet the eligibility criteria as being considered high risk by the CDC guidance. 98% of individuals that were identified were done so by providers that work with the

homeless population. Two percent where individuals traveling through town and did not have the means to secure their own shelter or quarantine space. The Sleepy Inn housed 262 individuals who were identified as positive for COVID-19 or a close-contact. Twenty-one individuals were in the high risk category and seven of those individuals were moved to permanent housing.

Challenges with non-congregate shelter included food, water and security. To address these challenges, a social worker was assigned to work with non-congregate shelter individuals by the Missoula Health Department. This social worker position was an integral part of the success of the non-congregate shelter program.

The cost of non-congregate shelter was \$1,138,810. To date, FEMA reimbursed Missoula County \$929,531 and they expect to be made whole when it's all done. The County is going to pay the City for the use of the Sleepy Inn. To date, the City has been paid \$345,683 in lease payments.

NA

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

1:01 p.m.