

**CITY OF SILVERTON
HOMELESS/HOUSING TASK FORCE MINUTES**

Zoom Web Conference Platform

April 28, 2021, 6:00 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kyle Palmer called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The task force members and staff were present through the virtual meeting platform Zoom. Chair Palmer explained the meeting is being held through Zoom in accordance with House Bill 4212.

Present	Excused	
X		Kyle Palmer
X		Rachel-Anne Rapoza (<i>arrived at 6:03 pm</i>)
X		Sara White
X		Helen Thomas
	X	Jess Miller
	X	Dana Smith
X		Jennifer Hannan
X		Sarah DeSantis
X		Hilary Dumitrescu (<i>arrived at 6:04 pm</i>)
X		Karen Garst
	Absent	Joseph Schmaus

Staff Present:

Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk, Angela Speier

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Member Garst made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on March 24, 2021. Member White seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

III. PUBLIC COMMENT – None

IV. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM – NEW BUSINESS

4.1 Community Center options

Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk Angela Speier provided an overview of the discussion that took place during the April 19, 2021 City Council Work Session regarding the future of the Community Center. The key takeaways from the meeting were the City Council is not interested in investing money into the building, because it is not owned by the City and there is a number of very expensive deferred maintenance needs. They asked staff to work with the current tenants on an exit strategy, because the City will be relocating all its needs to the new Civic Center once it is built. In addition, there was talk about the need to further define the City’s relationship with local nonprofits.

Member Garst said she has reached out to Senator Wyden’s Office regarding putting pressure on the National Guard to provide funding to upgrade the building. If they decline to do that it would likely mean the building would have to be demolished and her guess is that it would be more expensive to demolish the building than it would be to bring it up to date. City Clerk Speier noted the Public Works Director has reached out to the Oregon Military Department who owns the Community Center and they have not been willing to put any money into upgrading the facility. Chair Palmer asked for a copy of the correspondence

between the Oregon Military Department and staff. He said the City Council in no way wants the tenants to think they will be evicted or left without a home in the near future. He noted common consensus is none of the current tenants would want to take over the building. Member White said Sheltering Silverton recently received grant funding to help pay for a building lease, but has been unable to find anywhere in Silverton to rent. Sheltering Silverton would like to use the Community Center beginning on June 1, 2021 for the next few years. She said the Community Center is an expected social service hub and people are used to their presence there. They would like to expand their footprint in the building, because it is challenging to see their clients in their current space under COVID-19 precautions. They also have been unable to locate a space to operate the winter shelter. The capacity is going to be lowered and they plan to host no more than ten people per night. Member White asked the City allow them to use space in the Community Center over the two next years to include overnight shelter activities. Chair Palmer asked if the warming shelter would still be seasonal. Member White said yes, it would be a duration warming shelter that would be open from November through March from 8:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.

Member DeSantis fully supports Sheltering Silverton's request to expand their operations in the Community Center and to potentially use the gym for their winter sheltering program. Member DeSantis asked what were the previous roadblocks to allow this use in the gym and if some of the other users of the gym could be relocated to a church. Discussion ensued on the current tenants of the building and their willingness to move spaces. Member White said Sheltering Silverton does not have to use the gym if there are other spaces that could be utilized. In addition, they could also breakdown everything that was used overnight during the day to allow for dual uses. Member Garst strongly hopes people not having to sleep outside would be more important than some of the other uses in the Community Center. Discussion ensued on the need to prioritize sheltering residents in the Community Center.

Chair Palmer asked about a longer term vision for the building once the City and SACA vacates. Sheltering Silverton is looking for more of a near term support for space, likely two years. Chair Palmer suggested the Task Force make a formal recommendation to City Council regarding Sheltering Silverton being able to use the Community Center for their winter warming shelter. Member Dumitrescu reminded the Task Force about the four pallet shelters in their position. Member Dumitrescu referred to the grant money Sheltering Silverton received and said it could be used for repairs needed to open a winter warming shelter at the Community Center. Douglas Jenkins suggested that the group recommend to City Council to direct staff to facilitate discussions with Sheltering Silverton and the Community Center users about the best way to create a usable winter shelter for Sheltering Silverton and its clients in the Community Center.

Member Garst made a motion recommending City Council direct staff to facilitate discussions with Sheltering Silverton and the Community Center users about the best way to create a usable winter shelter space in the Community Center for Sheltering Silverton and its clients. Member Dumitrescu seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously (8-0).

V. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM – OLD BUSINESS

5.1 Code enforcement complaints related to illegally parked recreational vehicles

City Clerk Speier provided an overview of the code enforcement complaints related recreational vehicles.

VI. TASK FORCE UPDATES

6.1 Sheltering Silverton

Member White said Sheltering Silverton will be moving locations in June and noted they are starting to see an increase in new clients. If funding is available, Sheltering Silverton is hoping to do a hybrid approach to sheltering this year between a warming shelter and hotel vouchers. They would limit the warming shelter to ten individuals. Member DeSantis asked for an update on the St. Edwards Cottages and Member White said they are in the process of bringing on an interim priest and is hopeful the program will start within a year.

Member Rapoza asked to revisit the pallet shelter discussion. Members discussed possible locations for the pallet shelters and the challenges with them meeting the Silverton Development Code standards. Member White shared her vision for how the shelters would be used by Sheltering Silverton clients. Sheltering Silverton will reach out to a potential church who has expressed interest in hosting the shelters on their site and then work with the property owner and the Community Development Department to start the conditional use process. Chair Palmer would like to see a massive educational campaign in order to help spread facts and awareness of this issue. Member Rapoza said the Task Force needs to narrow in on a plan and identify a location for the pallet shelters and move forward with a formal request. Member Thomas asked if one pallet shelter could be placed near pool on an empty piece of land in order to house one older gentleman and noted it might help people get used to the pallet shelter concept. The downside of that location is it could possibly be seen from the pool side. Member DeSantis suggested Sheltering Silverton come up with their three top locations for the shelters and present those to the Community Development Director in order to discuss what would be needed at the various sites. Member White explained one barrier for the pallet shelters is Sheltering Silverton has not had the programmatic oversight to start those conversations. She explained they are beginning to access the grant funds and will be able to find someone to manage the pallet shelters.

6.2 Other updates - None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Member White made a motion to adjourn and Chair Palmer adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

/s/Angela Speier, Assistant to the City Manager/City Clerk