

## MINUTES

**Purpose:** Engage Okaloosa County community members in a health improvement process through an open, two-way dialogue to impact harmful events such as pedestrian injuries, falls, and substance use, and to reduce the housing burden.

**Attendees:** Robert Bage, Fort Walton Beach Police Department; Christy Craig, Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa); Trisha Dall, DOH-Okaloosa; Emily Pickens, DOH-Okaloosa; JB Whitten, City of Crestview; Tim Gibson, City of Fort Walton Beach; Anthony Sawyer, Fort Walton Beach Housing Authority; Katie Scott, DOH-Okaloosa; Greg Cain, Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services; Crystal Harrison, Homelessness & Housing Alliance; Kat Beedie, DOH-Okaloosa; Demeika McClendon, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office; Autumn McAllister, Lakeview Center.

### Opening – Emily Pickens

- Emily Pickens opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
- Minutes from the March 16th, 2023, meeting were reviewed and approved.
- Emily reviewed the meeting's purpose and agenda. She also shared results from the Community Engagement Survey from the previous meeting.

### Action Plan Updates – Robert Bage and J.B. Whitten

#### Housing Updates:

- Chief Bage opened discussion to finalize the group's housing objective. He reviewed the group's discussion at the previous meeting along with key points from the housing brief. The brief will be attached to the minutes for dissemination.
  - The group reviewed the data and agreed renters in the 60–80% area median income (AMI) category should be updated in the objective rather than those at 30% AMI. This better represented those in the workforce population.
- The group then discussed how to measure the objective.
  - Tim Gibson encouraged the group to recognize that the objective seeks to raise the number of affordable and available rental units at the agreed upon AMI at a rate of per 100 units.
  - He shared it would be better to move the metric less than initially proposed. The group agreed to increase the indicator from 83 per 100 renters to 85 per 100 renters, considering the increase by number of renters in that 60% AMI group.
- Chief Bage asked attendees to share details about how the Sound Side housing complex was successfully built.
  - Anthony Sawyer explained there were unique economic circumstances that aligned for the project. He expressed doubt that it could be recreated in the future due to current issues like steel prices, high interest rates, etc.
- The group also discussed the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP). Tim explained that each municipality gets SHIP dollars. Mayor Whitten shared Crestview's allocation has previously been reallocated back to the county.

- Anthony shared One Hopeful Place was funded through SHIP, but that there are caveats with the current funding.
- Tim explained Fort Walton Beach has funding available, but most residents that contact them are not serious about upgrades to their home that would truly benefit someone of low-income or create substantial rental units.
  - They have tried numerous strategies including incentives and waiving fees, allowing for higher unit density, etc. but have still experienced barriers. Knowledge of the funding was discussed as a barrier.
- Attendees discussed terminology of workforce versus affordable housing. The group agreed that workforce housing is typically better received in the community.
- Anthony shared information about Senate Bill 102, the Live Local Act. It provides ten years of additional funding and incentives.

### **Pedestrian and Pedalcyclist Safety Updates:**

- Chief Bage moved on to discuss plans for National Pedestrian Safety Month.
  - The City of Crestview's Public Information Officer will be responsible for creating the educational videos and will attend the next meeting.
  - Videos will be geared towards pedestrians and motorists. The group discussed topics like safer streets, safer vehicles, safer people, and post-crash care.
- Mayor Whitten shared information from a training through the Federal Highway Transportation. Multiple infrastructure concerns were shared including crowded businesses along roadsides and dimly lit intersections, sidewalks to nowhere, and greater safety concerns being more predominant in minority neighborhoods.
  - Chief Bage agreed outdated infrastructure is an issue and added changes in transportation including walking, biking, electric bikes, and distractions from technology like cellphones, have led to issues.
    - Sidewalk width was also shared as a concern. There is not enough space for people to walk or bike around one another, which also causes issues for those with disabilities or who rely on a motored device to get around.
- Chief Bage mentioned National Walk to School Day and suggested a collaboration there with the school district to promote safety.
  - Emily shared this will occur on October 4, 2023.
  - The group discussed involving students in a campaign. Attendees decided to regroup on this topic in the new school year.
- Mayor Whitten shared information about the Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) and their Traffic Improvement Plan (TIP).
  - He shared pedestrian injury and crash data from Okaloosa and surrounding counties. Chief Bage suggested that the information be further disputed using the [Florida Traffic Safety Dashboard](#) available through FDOT.
- The group also discussed next steps with the Best Practices Guide.
  - Chief Bage suggested it include statewide information, [Complete Streets](#), funding opportunities, information on the TPO, and local processes. The group agreed and will discuss further at the next meeting.

**Action Items – Robert Bage and J.B. Whitten**

- Attendees agreed to focus on pedestrian safety at the next meeting. It will include coordinating the videos, posters, discussion of leverage, and planning for the development of the best practices guide.
  - Members should bring information from their organizations or partners for pedestrians that can be implemented into the best practices guide.

**Open Discussion – All**

- Mayor Whitten updated the group that more than 30 people attended each of the Naloxone trainings held in March at the Crestview Community Center. He also shared that a community member has been working with local faith-based organizations to provide additional training and resources for substance use and opioid overdoses.
- Emily shared DOH-Okaloosa can provide Narcan and Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) at community events and meetings.
  - Both the Crestview and Fort Walton Beach location has Narcan availability at the clinic reception areas as well. Please email [Emily.Pickens@flhealth.gov](mailto:Emily.Pickens@flhealth.gov) to request distribution at your event or meeting.
- Trisha informed the group there will be a low-cost rabies clinic offered in the City of Crestview on Saturday, May 6th. They will offer \$10 rabies shots and \$10 microchips through a partnership with a local veterinary clinic.
- Chief Bage shared the Community Traffic Safety Team meets next on May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00 AM. He will share the meeting invite via Emily with the group.
- Mayor Whitten invited attendees to the tree dedication for Joshua Chrysler on April 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM in Crestview.

**Closing – Trisha Dall**

- Trisha thanked attendees for participating and asked them to complete the meeting evaluation form to provide feedback.

*Next Meeting – Wednesday, June 21<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 AM at DOH-Okaloosa in Fort Walton Beach*

<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Owners</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Status</b>
Submit action items prior to next meeting if not attending	ALL	Each meeting	Ongoing
Contact Mercedes Ferris from Ciclovía to attend next meeting	Emily Pickens	May 12th	Not Started
Share transportation posters/media toolkit with group for discussion at next meeting	Emily Pickens	June 1 <sup>st</sup>	Not started
Best practices in pedestrian and pedalcyclist injury prevention research	ALL	Next Meeting	Ongoing
Assist in video development and production	City of Crestview PIO	Next Meeting	Not started