

Marion County Children & Families Commission

February 20, 2020

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Keizer Room, Broadway Commons

Commission Members Present: ~~Patrice Altenhofen, Phil Blea, Sue Bloom,~~ George Burke, Paige Clarkson, Jayne Downing, Josh Graves, Troy Gregg, ~~Lisa Harnisch, Sheriff Joe Kast,~~ Levi Herrera Lopez, Stacy Lake, Kimberly Lemman, Pete McCallum (via phone), Honorable Judge Cheryl Pellegrini, Allan Pollock, Eric Richards, Jim Seymour, Sam Skillern, Shaney Starr, Commissioner Colm Willis

Guests: Chris Pineda, Mountain West; Kevin Karvandi, MCSO; Mark Chien, OSU Extension; Gretchen Bennett, City of Salem; Tricia Ratliff, MWVCAA; Shemainia Miller, Mountain West; Carla Munns, C-Suite; Jimmy Jones, MWVCAA

Staff: Tamra Goettsch, Melinda Hautala, Heather Johnson

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 11:36 am. Welcome and introductions were made.

2020 Census

Gretchen Bennett from the City of Salem urged the CFC members to use their influence to encourage participation in the census, especially among groups who might not get counted, for one reason or another. Some residents might think it does not matter, but the census determines how much federal funding Oregon is awarded, so it's important to include everyone. Even if CFC members make a point of mentioning the census and talking about it, that puts it into people's focus. Info is on the Marion County website, as well as oregon2020census.gov.

Judge Pellegrini mentioned that she had heard that rumors were spreading about the census that would deter some people from filling it out. Gretchen assured everyone that although she had also heard this, there are no questions about citizenship on the census, and people should spread the word. She clarified that there are questions about race and ethnicity, and Levi shared that Mano a Mano has urged Latinx residents to fill out the census, because the people who make decisions about funding and schools need to have an accurate picture of who lives in Salem. Mano a Mano are so committed to making sure Latinx residents are represented, they have hired additional staff so they can extend their office hours and they will have computer stations in their office specifically for residents to use for filling out the census, as well as staff to offer assistance.

Approval of Meeting Summary Notes

Kim Lemman moved to approve the meeting summary notes for January 16, 2020. Jayne seconded the motion. Motion: Approved

Outward Mindset Activity

Chris asked everyone to pair up and ask three questions about how their organization can specifically affect the project under discussion in East Salem.

George said that the exercise was a good reminder that every CFC organization has its own work and the members need to remember to find ways they can collaborate and support each other.

Judge Pellegrini and Paige realized that the DA's office and the juvenile court have in common that they are reactive in nature. Paige pointed out that the court was in a position to encourage a desired outcome via the plan that the court devises for the family. Judge Pellegrini added that the court also has a particular knowledge about the populations that come into the justice system, and would be able to look at who comes into the system from the East Salem area, what types of services the court would like to direct families toward, and specifically what services are currently missing in that neighborhood or would require an overwhelming amount of effort to use.

Levi and Allan discussed how Cherrits could look at the East Salem area and find out what services currently exist in the neighborhood – or could be developed in the neighborhood – that are difficult to access solely because they are difficult to walk to and there is insufficient public transportation. Cherrits could then consider adding or changing bus routes, or better publicizing routes that are currently available.

Mano a Mano

Levi explained that Mano a Mano changed its mission statement just over a year ago to “strengthen families by promoting hope and reducing toxic stress”, directly focusing on hope as the means to achieve their goal of building a “community of justice” where families thrive. He shared a handout (attached) illustrating some of the work that they have been doing over the past year, including collaboration with the Fostering Hope Initiative at Catholic Community Services.

At its core, Mano a Mano is a community-led organization, and Levi described how it has evolved over the years, to continue to reflect the community it serves, which is not always the mother-father-child version of a family, as depicted in Mano a Mano's original logo. Levi explained that they do not want families who come to Mano a Mano to feel like they are not represented, because that would be a barrier to hope that they experience before they even get started.

One reason Mano a Mano uses the Hope Scale is to help them assess the many factors that might be causing families stress – if they come for a food box, it's important to find out why they need a food box, and what other sources of stress could be alleviated.

Recently, Mano a Mano's board identified four key areas: Basic Needs, Resiliency, Community Health & Safety, and Emergent Community Issues. They have found, however, that the community is currently so overwhelmed with urgent requests for basic needs that Mano a Mano spends most of its resources helping with those, and less on issues that require a “deep dig”. For example, as part of its focus on Community Health, Mano a Mano helps families acquire health insurance, and 90% of families associated with Mano a Mano are covered – but because they do not have access to a medical “home” with a primary care doctor, they are not using health coverage for preventive care.

Because Mano a Mano is the largest Latinx and immigrant community organization in the area, they have built a reputation that leads families to seek them for assistance with a large variety of issues. Some of these are outside the scope of their work—but they help as much as they are able anyway, because there are no other organizations providing these types of services.

Since 1996, Mano a Mano has offered an extensive youth program, to make sure that kids have stable adult figures in their lives, which is known to be a strong alleviator of stress and trauma. The program is youth-led, and teaches skills like civic engagement and leadership. Since about 2000, they have also had a program that targets at-risk youth to help with case management, workforce development, and other assistance. Some of the kids come on their own, and some are referred by the Juvenile Department, yet they have not seen any gang-related activity for many years. What they see instead are disconnected and disengaged youth with extremely high stress levels. This stress has been shown to be reduced when families have access to family preservation services and support.

They have been holding regular Community Café meetings, where they have administered the Hope Scale to adults, and have seen that for those who use the services, their hope scores rise. At the moment, however, Mano a Mano is beyond the capacity that their resources should allow, having assisted over 300 families already this year—but he reiterated that a lot of those families are coming to Mano a Mano because they are not aware of what services are available in their local communities (if any), and they come for referrals. Mano a Mano would like to have more staff who could work one-on-one with families, beyond meeting the basic needs, and are working on partnerships as well as looking for additional space.

Tamra asked how much of their work is taking place right now in the East Salem targeted project area. Levi shared that their Northgate Center on Portland Rd just north of Catholic Community Services, services approximately 1,000 families per year that are from the Northeast Salem and Keizer areas.

Shaney asked Levi to clarify what kind of numbers they have been seeing with their use of the Hope Scale. Levi said adults coming into Mano a Mano average a score of about 30, well below the threshold score of 40 that indicates some hopefulness (Hope Scale attached). He added that on the Toxic Stress scale that they are using, the average score for low-income Latinx adults is 14, and they consistently see adults who score an average of 17 when they start, and youth who are scoring between 18 and 23. Mano a Mano are currently in the process of gathering new data, so they should be able to get a sense of whether these scores are improving.

At their location in southeast Salem, they hold a Community Café group every week, as well as exercise meetups 4 days a week. Participants also get together now for other social events, like family celebrations. Altogether, they are getting about 6 hours per week of support, both from peers and from a Family Promoter. Tamra asked if they had done any organizing that was community-wide and neighborhood-focused, rather than centered at their location. Levi said that their Northeast location draws people from throughout that area, and they also have sites for specific communities, such as at a local farmworker housing community of about 48 families.

Levi reiterated that a lot of Mano a Mano's resources—both funds and staff—are currently used to help with food and shelter at crisis levels. Shelter is especially difficult for at-risk youth. They would like to offer financial assistance, but have had difficulty securing funding to do that.

Tamra asked what percentage of families served by Mano a Mano are currently employable but underemployed. Levi said that some of the families are unemployed, but the majority are underemployed, averaging \$1200/month for a family of four--but the data is self-reported, and they have documented families with up to ten people living on that income. The main source of income for immigrant families in Marion County is seasonal agricultural, so the average is about \$17,000/year, and because they are not employed year-round, it is very difficult to find permanent stable housing. It is typical for people in the immigrant community to work multiple jobs.

Paige remarked on the statistic that Mano a Mano served people in 14 languages last year, and Levi explained that they serve whoever they can, and people come to them because they can't find anyone else providing services for immigrants. They had a Russian-speaking intern for a limited time, but again, their resources are inadequate in this area. Mano a Mano has 20 regular staff, but not all are FTE, and they rely heavily on volunteers.

Levi referenced a report from a few years ago showing that statewide less than 5% of available foundation grant money is allocated to communities of color, but about 30% of Salem-area residents are persons of color.

Tamra asked how the CFC can better support Mano a Mano. Levi said that Salem is a divided community, with major issues of equity and social inclusion. Promoting equity and inclusion throughout the county, and approaching work through a social justice lens would go a long way toward understanding the root causes of why so many families need food boxes. Levi would like to be able to move past providing food to communities and find out why 20,000 children in the community are hungry each day.

Levi said that there is a tendency to think about families in terms of what they need or what they lack, but this is counterproductive, because it encourages thinking only about the surface issue. He explained that he tries to think instead about families in terms of their strengths and values, and that tying this with the Hope Scale has allowed Mano a Mano to understand why struggling families persist through adversity and why they stay in a community where they have sometimes been told they are not welcome.

East Salem Community Event Task Force

Sue was not present to lead this discussion.

Next Steps

Authors Day will take place at Haysville Elementary on Tuesday, March 17th from 1:45 pm – 3:00 pm. They will be engaging their students in an exercise to give the students an opportunity to share what their ideal neighborhood would look like. Tamra reminded everyone that parking will be limited and everyone will need to go through the visitor check-in process. An appointment will be sent to members for this activity.

Updates

Eric shared that the school district has been awarded 35 million dollars and they are currently trying to determine how to most effectively use that funding. He shared that there will be public comment next Tuesday on this topic at the School Board meeting.

Troy shared that the Juvenile Department will be starting a culinary program in the next couple months to offer more skill-building activities. Their new building is now complete.

Josh shared that Catholic Community Services has hired its first Pacific Islander Community Health Worker, who will be working with the Marshallese population near Auburn.

Allan said that Cherriots will resume Sunday service in May.

Levi shared that Mano a Mano is hiring a community outreach worker to identify neighborhoods that would benefit from assistance.

Tamra reminded the CFC that the Community Resource Network is in the process of expanding, and that they should not only use the system, but promote it when interacting with other organizations.

Jim said that CBEL is working with Willamette Homeless Alliance to try and secure funding for them.

Jayne shared that after a slight delay, they will be moving forward with their Safe Paws facility, which will allow survivors to bring their pets to shelter, which has been a barrier in the past. They are about 1 year away from breaking ground on their low-income housing facility for survivors.

Kevin said that new transitional housing has opened right next to the correctional facility for those leaving incarceration. This removes one of the biggest barriers to reentry, as well as giving easy access to resources like the DeMuniz Center.

Judge Pellegrini shared that Governor Brown has appointed Judge Manual Perez to the new judicial post in Marion County Circuit Court, and she voiced her support for him. She also invited all CFC members to come to Juvenile Court to observe proceedings and see firsthand the kids and families who appear, to get a sense of the needs and difficulties that she sees every day. Judge Pellegrini also reiterated the desperate need for a navigator who can help families who come into the justice system get the services that are available. She explained that she can give them directives and phone numbers, but they are rarely at a capacity to follow through without assistance, even for simple things like making phone calls and securing transportation.

Paige said that the Court Care bill is still alive in the legislature and is currently in Ways and Means, so they hope it will pass soon.

Jimmy said that CAA recently compiled data for 2019 and their 8 programs have touched approximately 45,000 people in Marion County. He added, however, that they have about \$1 of resources for every \$15 of need and sometimes have to turn away adults and youth seeking shelter.

George shared that the new police department building should be completed by September. They will soon begin recruiting for a new chief, using surveys for community input about what they hope for in a new chief.



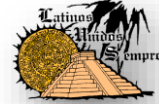
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2,700 **11,000** **35%** **14** **16** **35,000**

Families Served

Individuals benefited

Increase from 2018

Languages Served

Oregon counties reached

Oregonians reached through direct service and outreach efforts

👤 ABOUT US

Established in 1988, we are one of the oldest Latino or Immigrant-led grassroots nonprofits in the Marion-Polk area. We envision this area as a community of justice, where families are Strong, Safe and Nurturing, and where ALL Children Thrive. Our mission is to Strengthen Families by promoting Hope and Resiliency, and by reducing stress among the people we serve. Our programs address basic needs, support resiliency, promote community wellness and health, and address emergent issues.

2019 By-the-Numbers

● TOP NEEDS MET

- Basic Needs
- Positive Youth Development
- Resiliency
- Health



Radio Poder 98.3 FM

Radio Poder was launched on Sept. 15, 2019, to serve a maximum population area of 822,000 Oregonians. This noncommercial community-owned radio station was launched in partnership with PCUN, CCTV and Alianza Poder. It broadcasts for 8 hrs a day, seven days a week, with programming in four languages. Thanks to our funding partners Meyer Memorial Trust, The Oregon Community Foundation, The North West Area Foundation, and other friends and neighbors.

● OUTCOMES

% of children with health insurance in families served by Mano a Mano



Average Perceived Stress



Among adults receiving 1-on-1 Support, compared to overall client average of 17 points

● SPOTLIGHT

- Our main NE Salem site is now offering a weekly *cafecito* (community café) for monolingual Spanish-speaking elders.
- Our CHWs supported about a dozen refugee families in their integration into Salem-Keizer area, from places in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East.
- Our team supported about 20 youth with graduation, restitution to the community, and re/connecting to the community and to their families.

● ABOUT THOSE WHOM WE SERVE

\$1,200

Avg. Monthly Family Income

4

Avg. Family Size

450

Persons served, living "on the streets"

