

Fox Valley Warming Shelter

Appleton, Wisconsin

Meeting Notes 06/27/16

- I. BASIC OPERATION- Capacity for approximately 60 guests in one large room, providing essential shelter for all those in need
 - a. Both Men and Women are sheltered in the same room, in 5 to 6 rows of 10
 - i. Women sleep in a designated row closest to the supervising office
 - ii. Men's and Women's rows are divided by creating a line of bins, provided to hold guest belongings
 - b. Couples without Children
 - i. While both men and women share the same space, couples are not permitted to stay next to each other or hold hands, and are divided into their designated rows like everyone else
 - c. Transgender
 - i. Guests are treated as the gender they identify with and are permitted access to the staff/accessible bathroom, which has its own shower
 - d. Shelter Minus Component?
 - i. Fox Valley Warming Shelter does not require absolute sobriety; they try their best to shelter anyone who comes to their doors
 - ii. However, they do not permit alcohol to be brought in or consumed within the shelter, and do not identify with the Wet Shelter label, as they feel wet shelters encourage drinking behaviors
 - e. Fox Valley keeps its operation simple and straightforward in order to focus its resources on shelter for those in need. They do not offer a Pay to Stay option

Mel Trotter Ministries

Grand Rapids, Michigan

Meeting Notes 08/04/16

I. GENERAL INFORMATION:

- a. Multiple shelter services located on each floor. Two buildings connected together by a central atrium.
- b. There are approximately 465 beds throughout the complex.
- c. Four-story wing houses approximately 150-177 beds for services to women and women with families
 - i. 37 beds for women's emergency shelter
- d. Three-story wing houses approximately 275-300 beds for services to men.
 - i. **198 beds** for men's emergency shelter with additional 40 seasonal overflow
 - ii. 90 beds for men's programmed shelter space
 - iii. Oldest section of the building and they are looking to renovate their spaces in the near future
- e. First floor houses support spaces, various medical services, program offices, dining, entry and chapel.
 - i. Medical wing contains Medical exam rooms and provides dental, vision and Chiropractic services to guests.
- f. Mission is to identify the gaps in society and to help provide those services. Mel Trotter collaborates with other organizations to help bridge the gap and staff these programs. "Will serve anyone at any time" philosophy
- g. Approximately 90 people on staff, 10 of which are caseworkers. There is a need for more caseworkers.
- h. Complex has a day center to provide resources to help the homeless find jobs and homes. Located on the first floor.
- i. Food Pantry services are provided for families.
- j. There are individual locks on all doors on the floors above the main shelters. Guests receive fob keys coded only for the spaces they are allowed to access. Provides a level of security within the building.
- k. Long-term goals: building satellite services in surrounding area for individuals that do not want to go the downtown area. Looking to build a new permanent supportive housing facility across the street.

II. WOMEN & WOMEN WITH CHILDREN WING:

- a. Fourth floor: Houses women with family's apartments with shared kitchen facilities.
 - i. Model of where the mission would like to be in the future

- ii. One to three bedroom apartments
- b. Third Floor: More like a college dorm layout for families.
 - i. 4 to 5 beds per room
 - ii. Shared bathroom and kitchens
 - 1. There are 22 units currently and they have been at full capacity for the last 1-1/2 years. Currently 30 families are in local Hotels to help meet the demand.
- c. Second floor: Multi-purpose floor that houses three different programs. Currently operating above full capacity.
 - i. Recovery Program: which has 12 bed with shared living spaces. Create small community feel
 - ii. Back to Work Program which helps guests with skills to work towards employment
 - 1. ½ the day participants will engage in hands on job training
 - 2. ½ the day participants will use time to work on personal goals including counseling, job search and resume building, daily wellness activities, etc.
 - 3. Grand Rapids has a low unemployment rate and finding jobs are difficult. Center works with outside agencies for job placement.
 - iii. Women's Crisis Shelter: houses single women

III. MEN'S WING

- a. 3rd Floor: Houses single apartments for men that are in the Recovery Program, Back to Work programs or that have full time jobs
 - i. Rooms contain bed, dresser and desk with a shared bathroom facility for the apartments.
- b. 2nd Floor: Houses more traditional shelter layout with 113 beds
 - i. Beds are located in large open room
 - ii. Would like to renovate this wing to have smaller rooms with 10-20 beds to develop a more communal living for guest to be able to bond. No concern with smaller rooms and maintaining the safety as they use security cameras to help observation.

IV. ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

- a. Youth Emergency Shelter:
 - i. Provides shelter for youths that do not feel safe being part of the general population.
 - ii. Separate space with a separated entrance
 - iii. Eight total beds and are fully occupied daily.
 - iv. Case managers provided for the youth are by outside services and are not part of Mel Trotter staff.
- b. Public Inebriates Shelter:

- i. Guests that are profoundly intoxicated with no medical issues.
- ii. Brought to shelter through police, EMTs, friends, etc.
- iii. Working with local Hospitals, it is a less costly option than bringing people to the emergency room
- iv. Nurses on staff; encourage attendees to seek additional services

V. Limit on Stay:

- a. “Move out or move up” in 90 days policy. Responsibility starts with the individual to want to get better. Approach is to develop the individual and to help them get into other supportive programs they offer and overcome homelessness.
 - i. Make exceptions for people who are doing the best they can will continue to be sheltered
- b. Women’s Shelter: 60 days limit then 30 days out before they can come back
- c. Men’s Shelter: 90 days limit then 30 days out before they can come back
 - i. Both limits are for able body people
- d. Winter rules: If temperature is below 20 degrees, the doors are open anytime to anyone to provide shelter.

VI. ENTRY

- a. Separate entries in separate locations are provide for Women, Men and Youth
- b. Metal detectors are located at the entries to make sure they are safe.
 - i. Weapons will are confiscated and if they are legal will be held and given back to guest upon exiting. Illegal weapons will be kept and turned over to police.

VII. DINING:

- a. Main dining located on first floor in Atrium area is for Single Women, Women with families and men that are part of their programs.
 - i. They found that having men that are recovering co-mingle with women in this setting helps them to prepare for life outside of the shelter. Higher level of responsibility at this stage helps to avoid problems.
- b. Men’s Shelter guests dining hall is located in the basement of the Men’s wing.

VIII. TRANSGENDER

- a. Guests placed into either side of the building based on their anatomical position.
 - i. Understanding that transgender guests can have a “target on their back” in a shelter setting, Mel trotter also provides separate space that has four additional beds.

1. Separate space can give the guests a feel of being secluded and undesirable. Staff monitors to place them in the appropriate setting per individual.

IX. COUPLES WITHOUT CHILDREN

- a. Facility does not currently provided shelter for this population
- b. Currently couples divided upon entry into separate wings.
- c. Couples is a service that they would like to provide but feel they need to address the higher priority at this time, which is the lack of space for families.
- d. If they were to provide space, they would locate the couples on the floor with Family shelter.