

**COTTAGE GROVE CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MINUTES
JULY 18, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Jeff Gowing called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

ROLL CALL

City Recorder Mindy Roberts called the roll. The following were

PRESENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS: Mayor Jeff Gowing and Councilors Candice Solesbee, Chalice Savage, Mike Fleck, Jon Stinnett, Greg Ervin and Kenneth Michael Roberts

PRESENT VIA GOTOMEETING:

COUNCIL ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS: City Manager Richard Meyers, Assistant to the City Manager Jake Boone, City Recorder Mindy Roberts, Public Works & Development Director Faye Stewart, Finance Director Roberta Likens and Police Chief Scott Shepherd

STAFF PRESENT VIA GOTOMEETING

CITY ATTORNEY:

MEDIA PRESENT: Cameron Reiten – KNND

Mayor Gowing announced that Council will hear from four presenters regarding homelessness and asked each of them to keep the presentations to half an hour.

Community Strong Cottage Grove presenters Dan and Feather Boustead, Bill Christensen, Linda Olson and Johanna Zee took turns taking the podium to read different aspects of their proposal. They spoke of creating a South Lane collaborative and volunteer force with three main components; an Outreach Team, Transitional Housing with a support team and Permanent Housing. Copies of the presentation were given to Council and are included with the July 18, 2022 Work Session Minutes.

Josh Osban addressed Council in support of the Community Strong Cottage Grove presentation.

Councilor Fleck declared a Potential Conflict of Interest. He said he works for Community Sharing, although they do not have any intention of applying for funds or programs related to the matter.

Councilor Fleck asked if Community Strong Cottage Grove has any written commitments, experts to run the programs, funding mechanisms and liability insurance. He said the information he has heard from the group sounds great, but it also sounds expensive and not something volunteers can do. He added that he did not hear anything that will meet the expectations of *Martin v Boise*, *City of Grants Pass v Blake* and House Bill 3115.

Johanna Zee replied that their group has only been working on this for six weeks and ideas are still being formed. She said professionals and people with training have stepped forward and offered to help. She added that Community Strong Cottage Grove does not want to follow State regulations but rather look at what is most important. She said their group is invested in Cottage Grove and want to see things go well.

Councilor Fleck said he did not mean any discouraging remarks. He said the Community Sharing liability insurance is \$10,000 per year and if the City does not follow the government expectations we risk being sued. He encouraged the group to put concrete solutions to the ideas so that they could be built upon. He added that the City Attorney could then help to determine how those solutions meet the 9th Circuit Court rulings and other cases since then.

Johanna Zee referred to the presentation and explained how she feels they meet those requirements and said it will be clearer when the Councilors read the materials.

Mayor Gowing asked if Community Strong Cottage Grove is moving forward. He said other than asking the City to use the Pallet Shelters they do not need anything from Council to do what they are proposing.

Johanna Zee said they are asking for collaboration.

Councilor Solesbee said it has been established that the City can choose to do nothing and this proposal is going beyond that. She said this group is community driven and their heart is in the right place.

Johanna Zee said the group feels they can handle this issue without having a shelter and they should not be living in fear about liability.

Councilor Ervin said regardless of what Council decides this is a needed element and encouraged the group to reach out to other organizations.

Councilor Roberts said some of what was described in the presentation is a lot like the program he went through. He added that this is a community problem and it should not be left on the hands of government.

Linda Olson said services are already available in Cottage Grove and the City could use the \$200,000 that they were going to spend to help each of those and help the program get off the ground.

Two audience members spoke in support of the Community Strong Cottage Grove plan.

Venice Mason from Rooting out Hunger addressed the previous groups presentation by saying it is aspirational but not concrete. She said to ask a government entity to support them while simultaneously derailing the government is hypocrisy. She continued by presenting information on addressing the root causes of hunger and encouraging food security. She outlined her knowledge and experience with community supported gardening projects, equitable food distribution and her involvement with the Policy Leadership Council with the Oregon Food Bank. Copies of the presentation were given to Council and are included with the July 18, 2022 Work Session Minutes.

Councilor Ervin asked how the different models function.

Venice Mason said she models the program after the Oregon Food Bank's Educational Garden in Oregon. She said the Share the Harvest model allows anyone who volunteers to take what they need and anything left over is channeled to the local food bank and the free market on Sundays.

Councilor Ervin asked what the maximum amount of land that could be handled.

Venice Mason said currently they are doing a 75' by 25' foot garden and could handle up to one acre. She added that 4 to 5 acres are needed to support the community.

Councilor Ervin asked if the Food Bank helps with canning and long term storage.

Councilor Fleck replied that Community Sharing does not have a commercial kitchen.

Venice Mason said she has spoken with the Master Gardeners and Master Preservers in the area and it is a goal of the program to be able to offer value added foods.

Councilor Solesbee asked how it is decided where the food goes.

Venice Mason said it is for anybody.

Councilor Solesbee said that she loves the idea of a community garden. She added that everyone has a place at the table and everyone should be able to speak and give their ideas. She said there are a lot of people in the previous group that have personal experiences and asked that people not come down on the other presentations.

Venice Mason said there is validity to her statement and it is not a personal opinion. She said this is a Work Session for solutions that are executable to an urgent situation in our community. She said an aspirational group that has no experience, no infrastructure, does not believe in government oversight but is presenting to a government agency does not have a place.

Kris McAlister, Executive Director and Arwen Maas-DeSpain, Assistant Executive Director from Carry It Forward (CIF) spoke to Council virtually about how their program serves the unhoused people in Lane County, Oregon.

Arwen Maas-DeSpain outlined the services they offer including safe sleep sites, emergency shelters, street outreach, car camping programs and inclement weather activation. Arwen said they have teams that provide operations, case management and program support, builders that create small shelters and a workforce development program. She added that CIF has been doing outreach in Cottage Grove over the last year and they are excited to serve in another capacity if allowed to do so. Copies of the presentation were given to Council and are included with the July 18, 2022 Work Session Minutes.

Jennifer Ferraez said she is a licensed Clinical Social Worker and has offered her services to Carry It Forward and Community Strong Cottage Grove. Jennifer said she is fond of a hybrid approach starting with government support, with sustainable funding and working with professionals who are used to doing this type of work.

Councilor Fleck asked if CIF can incorporate volunteer efforts from Community Strong Cottage Grove in a hybrid model.

Kris McAlister said they are open to volunteer programs and adjusting their models, but they do have to follow expectations depending upon their liability insurance and if there are ties to any funding.

Councilor Ervin asked what limitations or restrictions there might be.

Kris McAlister said sometimes people may want to take a client home, go to their individual church or want them to use a nontraditional method to quit drugs. He said CIF would need to make sure that any services done meet best practices and are in compliance with State and Federal Law.

Councilor Ervin asked if he could state a specific ORS or a law that could be referenced.

Kris McAlister said they check all of their rules by the State of Oregon OHA and local City and County Ordinances.

Councilor Ervin asked who defines best practices.

Kris McAlister said they have been following the basic focus for Emergency Sheltering, FEMA, Alameda County Shelter Structures, and the Americans with Disability Act.

Councilor Ervin asked is Transitional Housing has more restrictions.

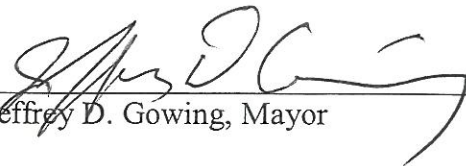
Kris McAlister said yes, with Transitional Housing you have to follow 30 day eviction notice and there are different rights and expectations. He said CIF does not have tenants in the shelter, they are guests, clients or people needing emergency shelter.

There was no presentation from St. Vincent de Paul.

Mayor Gowing adjourned the Work Session at 7:33 pm



Mindy Roberts, City Recorder



Jeffrey D. Gowing, Mayor

Community Strong Cottage Grove Presentation to City Council July 18, 2022

In the short time that Feather and I have chosen to voice our perspectives on our community homeless issue, I have witnessed something truly remarkable—incredible really. In the midst of very passionate discourse, our City leaders decided to suspend the rules, take some time to listen to other perspectives, and then come back together to make a more informed decision. That was an example of strong community leadership and I applaud you for it. Something was overcome, it's almost transcendent when it happens. This was a demonstration of a strong community and, as a result I believe an *up-spiraling* effect was ignited which is having a **positive** effect on the rest of our community. In this time period, a **third** alternative has emerged and other community voices have come forward.

So, why has another community group emerged? This is the proper response of a **healthy** community. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, 1970 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, said, "The line separating good and evil passes not through states, nor between classes, nor between political parties either—but right through every human heart".

For me personally, it was from **conviction** that I took a step of faith to **connect** my belief with my lifestyle to show up at a City Council meeting to voice my perspective. If I say I am truly compassionate towards those in need but do nothing, I'm a hypocrite. I believed there to be a greater number of truly compassionate community members who are willing to make other's conditions their own. As a result of showing up, Feather and I connected with other strong community advocates approaching this issue from a relational perspective, a community first approach.

We are... Community Strong Cottage Grove with a core group of 7, Dan, Feather, Bill, Linda, Laura, Ona, and myself Johanna, along with dozens of others wanting to support this movement.

Thank you for allowing us to make this presentation. We will not have charts and graphs with set prescriptions for a government regulated program. We **were** thinking however about A cappella singers but thought that might be too distracting. Sorry.

Cottage Grove is going through changes as are communities everywhere. We have seen the city bring forth ideas on how to be compliant with new legislation regarding action on behalf of the homeless. These ideas have been met with controversy. We may look at this as a struggle or we can look at it as a time of learning and growth. You are to be commended for all the work and ideas you have come up with, as well as the numerous hours, emails, phone calls, and meetings you have sat through. We know this is a volunteer position for all of you, and thank you for your endurance as we go through this process of change, together.

We also appreciate the neutral reporting by Damien with the Sentinel and with the open discussion Cameron has provided with the Beeper Show.

Out of these discussions on the radio, as well as in the park, and at meetings, was created Community Strong Cottage Grove. We are a group of residents who heard the call to bring forth **new** ideas.

We believe in people empowering others to be the best that they can be. We are moving out of a government run or controlled paradigm into one where the people are coming into their strength. Non profit organizations are **state** regulated corporations. Decisions are often made for you without your

input. Government grants and donations or partnerships with large NGO's (Non-Government Organizations) or corporations all come with strings attached or **centralized compliance**. We bring you an invitation to be a part of something incredibly unique to THIS community, that can serve all the people of Cottage Grove.

We envision a South Lane- wide collaborative and volunteer force that is knowledgeable of needs, necessary steps, and opportunities for community members to be stable and connected with their purpose in life.

It is important though that we first talk about the **true** meaning of Community.

According to Dr Scott Peck from his book *The Different Drum: Community Making and Peace...* It is about Inclusivity, Commitment, and Consensus.

With inclusivity, a community asks, "is it justifiable to keep this person out?" Boundaries are "soft" in this regard. This does not mean we invite everyone into our inner circle. It means that, as a community, we are accepting of people who are different than ourselves, who **believe** differently, and even behave differently. All emotions are accepted as well. There is room for individuality within the group.

Though **commitment** speaks for itself, we are in a culture where we unfriend someone who is different or we exclude people because they believe differently. Are we committed to hanging in there when the going gets rough? Are we willing to coexist? This is where we find a balance between our individuality and the community. When someone is unfamiliar, or not like minded, we tend to push them away, but the more we spend time with people, the more their nuances or quirks become just **who** they are, and we settle more **into** the relationship, **as long as** we are **committed** to a healthy community.

In time, we actually learn to appreciate our differences as they bring new ideas and new perspectives to the group. We learn that, it is through **consensus**, not compromise that we thrive. It becomes more about **cooperation**, not competition. We care less about "voting" to win, and more about understanding each other and exploring what best serves the community. Even the quietest voice must be heard.

Peck goes on to talk about realism, contemplation, and creating a safe place for all. In a genuine community, there are no sides. We learn to be **vulnerable** and we learn to hear others in their vulnerability.

It is with **this** understanding, that we are inspired to ACTION.

What is the purpose of doing anything in our town? Why bother?

First and foremost: We desire a SAFE community, one where homelessness is rare. This means no needles in the park, no human waste on the lawns, and no violent behavior from those addicted to drugs or suffering from mental illness. This also includes safety to those who have addiction issues or are mentally unstable as **they themselves** are vulnerable.

Next, we want to support the community members who are homeless or at risk of being homeless because, it is **the right thing to do**.

As well, we believe a healthy community is **naturally** involved with the healing process of others. A strong community will flourish when we encourage **everyone** to be as healthy as possible.

Lastly, we take action in order to be compliant with public laws. Many laws have come and gone. It is up to us, the people, to decide if a law is just and fair. Is it appropriate for this community? Does it make sense? Or is this government overreach, with money or control factors involved? It makes sense to be discerning, not blindly follow a law because a government agency told us to. We work to change what doesn't fit with creative alternatives.

As we are committed to learning and growing as a healthy community, we will regularly assess our progress. What is working, what is not? There is no blame, rather, next steps and course corrections.

We are Grovers, We are Oregonians, whether we have been here generations or new to the area, we are here now, together, and we have before us an opportunity. An opportunity to take our community to the next level.

It is with **this** spirit that we offer you this model for our community.

Regarding the homeless issue, our strategy for a strong program has **3 main components**:

1st is an Outreach Team. Next is Transitional housing with a **support team**, and finally, Permanent housing with follow up- as a long-range solution.

The **Outreach Team** addresses **safety**, and includes 3-5 **trained** people who can refer to services, make connections, and establish relationships. They are not enabling in any way, but empowering. In this phase, we allow police to enforce current laws, and work with judges to offer rehab programs vs. jail time for repeat offenders. Warming shelters for cold nights for those not housed will continue, perhaps enhanced. Other programs such as Serenity Lane, or Councilor Roberts' program, once developed, would be a strength. This is both a time of deep caring, and tough love. We are here when those with addiction or mental health challenges are ready for a change. This is the message we put forward. We feel that we will have more community involvement, and the expectations of unhoused residents will increase. The desire to improve oneself, over time, **will** strengthen. Many will see similarities to the Cahoots program in Eugene.

For those carefully vetted folks who pass a drug and alcohol test, are fairly stable mentally, and desire a change, or those just needing a hand up, we offer the next level:

Transitional housing which includes 2 aspects: temporary housing with an **exit strategy** and a **support team**.

The temporary housing can look like pallet shelters or Conestoga Huts placed in parking lots of established healthy communities, such as local churches (with no requirements in regard to participation). It can be a room in a home- this is the time to get creative. There would be guidelines

and a personal goal towards permanent housing: **An exit strategy**. This housing track would be for approximately 6-18 months varying of course for each individual.

The **Support Team**, perhaps the most important part of the program, is made up of a case manager, a mentor, an advocate, and potentially a counselor or therapist, along with a new healthy community. It can take a lot of energy to work with someone facing the challenges that many deal with. They need a team, and responsibility is not on any ONE person to assist. The focus is on empowerment. We believe in **each person's inherent worth**. We don't judge them. We hold them to clear, consistent boundaries.

A **case manager** is the point person who connects the individual with the right team members. If there is an issue, this is the person to go to. They are Organized and Resourceful.

A **Mentor** is similar to a big brother/big sister. He or she is a successful member of the community. They are kind, caring, with strong values of personal freedom and responsibility. They inspire the individual to be their best.

The **advocates** are very familiar with what resources are here in the community. They speak up for the individual when they cannot. They help to ensure that there are no victims, in that if there is something that is needed, they help that person to help themselves by directing them to the right people or places. They are street smart, resourceful, and will help drive change for increased services in the community as needed.

If necessary, there are mental health professionals, sponsors of 12 step programs, therapists, or social workers to step in.

For those just needing a hand up, this part of the program will be smoother. We connect people to resources. We will vet those carefully coming into this part of the program. By connecting with existing programs and people already working in this field, we **can** make a difference.

The long term goal is re-engagement into the community with **Permanent Housing**.

How can we support Cottage Grove and its residents in this way?

We feel that creating a large number of low income housing would further devalue the homes and decrease the appeal of this charming small city. Furthermore, housing people together who all may be facing a desperate financial or life situation does **not** help to uplift people. We believe we can create unique, perhaps eco-friendly housing that can serve the chronically homeless and others on the verge of homelessness. Let's get innovative with a village of about 5 to 25 homes to start, which the future residents and volunteers help build, similar to Habitat for Humanity's model where the resident builds theirs and the next home- **our own barn raising**.

Whenever you are building houses, you have the opportunity to use that product as a "workforce-development" training program. Include in this aspect, a way for residents to feel like they have a purpose by creating a product or service or growing food they can sell, they then can become independent and thrive.

We have separated ourselves from each other, and this has been perpetuated over the past couple of years. We **can** learn to communicate in a healthy way, discuss our differences and tensions in **safe**

spaces, set goals that we reach collaboratively, with a vision of a **prosperous** and healthy future for **our** community.

So, with this initiative, what then, would we ask of our City Government?

1. We ask you to **Encourage Collaboration**: share the informational resources regarding residents, our neighbors, who may be in need, thereby assisting with the vetting process;
2. Utilize recent administrative changes allowing micro-shelters at certain locations.
3. Network with us to further enhance this unique program, rather than being an observer to our progress. How can we best work together on this?
4. Possible use of the city's pallet shelters for temporary housing.
5. Empower local authorities to develop a strategy to get those who need help, to get it.
6. Continue to direct law enforcement to keep our parks safe and clean.

With that, how is this compliant with Martin vs Boise?

We want to keep a few parks free from camping, those that offer children's play areas: Bohemia, Coiner, Harrison, as well as Trailhead Park. Make those off limits and talk to the campers to get input. What about the warming shelter site? We want to support, but not cater to anyone. We seek to empower, not enable. We want to help the residents to be the best they can be, and find their way, whatever that may look like.

Those who don't have the capacity to be a part of the community, **do not have to be cited** for lying, sleeping, sitting- we expect the authorities to do their job for unlawful activities as needed. We work with the justice system to help those get services. Oftentimes, this is their way out of a self-abusive life-style. We have heard from many people that it was the court mandated interventions of treatment programs that saved their life.

We do not have to build a shelter in order to address the issues of the unsheltered. Martin v Boise addresses only those unsheltered, not all those who are considered homeless by definition, which can include couch surfers for instance. We cannot be afraid to do **the right thing** because of someone's interpretation of the law.

To address House Bill 3115... which includes a delayed implementation until July 2023, giving us a year, it seems quite "reasonable" to prohibit camping in a few specific parks and allow the others to remain accessible, while enforcing the current laws and ordinances regarding littering, disruptive behavior, etc. This is where the Outreach Team comes in. As they build relationships with people, they will be more aware of what is going on and be better able to help those to be compliant, directing them to services where they can get the help they need.

In closing, we **are** considering other potential options for this fluid and flexible program such as a day center, a Renter's Rehab, and a Temp agency.

As part of our presentation, we now ask that those in this community, who believe in neighbors helping neighbors, who believe in Cottage Grove and the parts that make us strong, that you stand up now, and say a few words, tell us your name, and how you might want to contribute to this endeavor. We will take a few minutes with this, and after we'd like to take your questions.

And, in the meanwhile, anyone interested in becoming a part of this dynamic program, who has not already signed up with us, please see either Linda or Ona in the back with clipboards. We will get your contact information and your area of interest. What is your strength, what is your passion, how do you feel called to serve?

You can also find us on FB – Community Strong Cottage Grove.

We would be pleased to answer any questions.

COMMUNITY STRONG COTTAGE GROVE

*Healthy People Empowering Positive Change
To Support a Thriving Community*

Our Mission

Healthy People Empowering Positive Change to Support a Thriving Community.
We believe strong family connections, whether natural or intentional, are formed from healthy individuals, and contribute to the key building blocks of a strong community. Therefore, we encourage and empower community leaders to become positive influencers in all aspects of society.

Our Vision

We envision a South Lane-wide collaborative and volunteer force that is knowledgeable of needs, necessary steps, and opportunities which brings forth a strong and thriving community.

Our Values

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Individual Sovereignty. | We honor each person's free will to make choices for themselves. |
| Accountability. | We expect each person to be responsible for their actions and the consequences of their decisions. |
| Awareness. | We pay attention to ourselves, to others, and to the world around us seeking to understand and respect other perspectives. |
| Consensus. | We embrace a decision-making process as a collective of leaders that values the opposing voice within an environment of high trust and accountability. |
| Hope. | We are committed to a shared vision of a sustainable, vibrant community. |



Rooting Out Hunger:

Growing Community Food Security

We are a community group of folks committed to addressing the root causes of hunger and encouraging food security in the Cottage Grove community. No one should go hungry and we strive for social justice through community supported garden projects, education, advocacy and capacity building for equitable food access for members of the community.

Founders and Senior Advisors: Venice Mason and Jasmine Locklear

- Venice serves at the local Community Sharing Educational Garden Project and on the BIPOC Leadership Council for Oregon Food Bank. She is an award winning scholar of Cherokee Culture and holds degrees and certifications in Anthropology, Culturally Based Indigenous Health, and the Art and Science of Botanical Medicine. Her lived experience includes many years of homelessness and single parenting in poverty. She has been both a recipient and provider of multiple programs serving homeless people here locally and in Lane County.
- Jasmine, a member of the Lumbee Tribe of NC, serves as a Program Officer for the Native American Agricultural fund and has extensive experience as an Ag teacher and FFA youth organizer as well as experience with USDA Native Agriculture programs. She serves in an advisory capacity.

Mission: Rooting out Hunger and encouraging food security. Addressing hunger in our community can be achieved through food sovereignty for those in need.

Method: Community supported gardening projects and equitable food distribution, along with advocacy and capacity building for alternative food systems.

Current Participants:

Ecumenical – First Presbyterian Church

Local Government – City Council Members, Volunteers from Community Service

Grassroots – Blackberry Pie Society, O.U.R Cottage Grove, Rural Organizing Project

Service Providers—Community Sharing Food Pantry

Environmental Groups—Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council

Commercial Donors—Log House Plants, Territorial Seed Company, The Old Mill Store, Walmart and Safeway

Volunteers—local individuals and groups

Share the harvest model allows volunteers to benefit directly from the labor they put in!



Volunteers helped build the alter-abled access beds, opening up the garden to those who cannot bend or are in wheelchairs.

Though a number of food banks include community input in decision-making processes, Oregon Food Bank is among the first in the nation to ensure community members are in the lead on public policy and advocacy decisions. The food bank's Board of Directors embraced creation of the Policy Leadership Council as a critical step in advancing a shared commitment to equity and racial justice.

BLACK, INDIGENOUS, PEOPLE OF COLOR, IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES,
TRANS & GENDER NON CONFORMING PEOPLE, SINGLE MOMS, CAREGIVERS
NEW LEADERS LIVED EXPERIENCE IS EXPERTISE

"This is an incredible moment for Oregon Food Bank and the broader movement to end hunger and its root causes," said Susannah Morgan (she/her/hers), Oregon Food Bank CEO. "Together with our Board, the Policy Leadership Council will build the grassroots power we need to achieve our vision for resilient communities that never go hungry."

Source:

[PRESS RELEASE: Oregon Food Bank Launches Statewide Policy Leadership Council | Oregon Food Bank](#)

Venice Mason

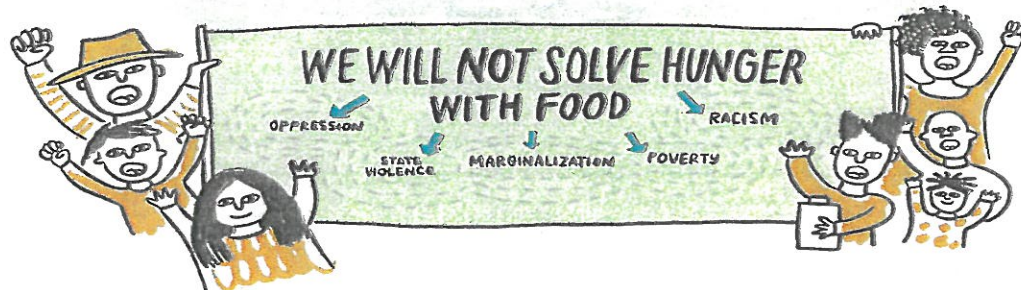
(she/her/hers) Cottage Grove, Oregon

Venice is a racial-justice and food-security activist in the Cottage Grove area. She has volunteered with the Rural Organizing Project for years and is deeply involved in their work. Venice volunteers and helps distribute food at the local food pantries in Cottage Grove and knows how food insecurity shows up in her community. Venice has her own garden at home so she can supplement her weekly groceries with the produce she grows. Venice is very passionate about racial justice in rural communities. Venice sees that the differences in communities tend to ease away when everyone has access to resources, particularly food. Venice is excited to be part of the Policy Leadership Council so she can help address the root causes of hunger locally and statewide.

Source: [Our Team | Oregon Food Bank](#)

Oregon Food Bank Systems Change Platform

At Oregon Food Bank, our mission is to eliminate hunger AND its root causes. Hunger is a community-wide symptom of poverty and injustice. Poverty and hunger is the result of state violence, racism, marginalization, poverty and other forms of oppression. So, we cannot solve hunger with food alone.



Solutions to hunger and its root causes start with people-people who are most impacted by racial, gender

BLACK, INDIGENOUS, PEOPLE OF COLOR, IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES, TRANS & GENDER NON CONFORMING PEOPLE, SINGLE MOMS, CAREGIVERS
NEW LEADERS LIVED EXPERIENCE IS EXPERTISE

and economic injustice. Through lived experience, communities build expertise in preventing, surviving, navigating and healing from hunger and its root causes. **The leadership of people most impacted is critical to defining the problem of hunger and the solutions to hunger.**

Crafted by the Policy Leadership Council of Oregon Food Bank, this **Systems Change Platform** describes the policy change priorities that will bring our communities closer to the lived experience of food justice.

Housing for All

Our vision: all people and families living in communities and homes that create the conditions for well-being, sustainability and stability.

Solutions

- Zoning laws are inclusive and responsive to all forms of housing options—not solely single-family homeowners.
- Rents shall not exceed $\frac{1}{3}$ of the region's average wage.
- Public funded housing effectively provides access to housing for all.
- Section 8 vouchers are aligned with the local rental market so that renters using Section 8 vouchers have choices. Section 8 vouchers support housing stabilization in addition to cessation of houselessness.
- Affordable housing in planned communities providing access to work, transportation, services, and recreation.

Healthy Environment, Healthy People

Our vision: Food systems built on clean, sustainable, and healthy food production strategies. Infrastructure that is built using clean, sustainable, and health-promoting practices.

Solutions

- Land Back to Indigenous Nations to steward and protect the land.
- Investment and incentivise in diversification of the food system prioritizing regional, culturally specific, organic, and community-based solutions.
- Investment in community centered regional food systems that prioritize the use of sustainable organic agriculture practices.
- Investment in sustainable, affordable public transit systems.
- Community and corporate environmental accountability through Incentivization of lower environmental footprints, and full accountability for corporate environmental harm.
- Divestment from fossil fuels and major polluting industries, with a Just Transition for workers to renewable green jobs.

**Community Sharing Program
Profit & Loss by Class
January 1 through July 18, 2022**

	<u>FFLC (CSC)</u>	<u>Total CSC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
4 · Contributed support			
4012 · Churches/Organizations	<u>3,000.00</u>	<u>3,000.00</u>	<u>3,000.00</u>
Total 4 · Contributed support	<u>3,000.00</u>	<u>3,000.00</u>	<u>3,000.00</u>
Total Income	<u>3,000.00</u>	<u>3,000.00</u>	<u>3,000.00</u>
Gross Profit	<u>3,000.00</u>	<u>3,000.00</u>	<u>3,000.00</u>
Expense			
8200 · Facilities			
8206 · Garden/Landscaping	<u>2,464.67</u>	<u>2,464.67</u>	<u>2,464.67</u>
Total 8200 · Facilities	<u>2,464.67</u>	<u>2,464.67</u>	<u>2,464.67</u>
Total Expense	<u>2,464.67</u>	<u>2,464.67</u>	<u>2,464.67</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>535.33</u>	<u>535.33</u>	<u>535.33</u>
Net Income	<u><u>535.33</u></u>	<u><u>535.33</u></u>	<u><u>535.33</u></u>

CARRY IT FORWARD

COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR UNHOUSED PEOPLE



7/12/22

City Recorder
City of Cottage Grove
400 E. Main St.
Cottage Grove, OR 97424

To whom it may concern,

Carry It Forward is excited to present to the Cottage Grove City Council during the work session on July 18, 2022. Attached you will find an introduction to Carry It Forward and description of our experience with similar projects, our team, and partners. We will be sharing a visual presentation, submitting tomorrow.

The following people will speak in support of our project on the 18th:

- Kris McAlister, Executive Director, Carry It Forward
- Arwen Maas-DeSpain, Assistant Executive Director, Carry It Forward
- Lisa Saldana, Program Director, FAIR Program, OSLC Development, Inc.
- Clay Allen, Operations Director, Integrated Holistic Aid Collective

The following organizations are currently partnering or expressed supporting projects with Carry It Forward in Cottage Grove and greater Lane County

- Integrated Holistic Aid Collective
- OSLC Development, Inc
- Square One Villages
- Peacehealth
- South Lane Mental Health

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration for the unhoused people of Cottage Grove.

Best regards,

Kris McAlister and Arwen Maas-DeSpain

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Introduction

Founded in 2015 and receiving 501(c)3 status in 2017, Carry It Forward is a non-profit organization that serves unhoused people in Lane County, Oregon, with primary concentration of services in Springfield, Eugene, and East-Lane rural communities. We are approved vendors for Lane County, and the Cities of Springfield and Eugene, and currently have contracts with Lane County and the City of Springfield. In all the communities we serve, we seek to partner and collaborate with local government, organizations and businesses that share common goals of eradicating homelessness.

The name "Carry It Forward" is meant to highlight the mutual benefits of direct service to our unhoused neighbors. Initially, our services focused on outreach and delivery of survival goods. All of our programs are actively informed by the population we serve, and approximately 65% of employees are unhoused or have lived experience with homelessness.

Our PAVE Program (Personally Assessed Vocational Engagement) consists of unhoused workers who receive wrap-around support to overcome barriers and accomplish personal goals, while working in projects that benefit the entire community.

Experience

In 2019, we first started developing our model for running microsites that incorporate our services and vocational programming. Our longest-running microsite is at our county-provided site on HWY99 called our "sandbox" camp, in which we pilot service concepts and target unique populations in cohorts up to 6 individuals at a time. This is also a training site for PAVE and outreach workers.

In 2020, during the first three months of COVID-19, we ran a 24/7 respite shelter in collaboration with Lane County and the City of Springfield, managed four temporary respite camps in collaboration with the City of Eugene and White Bird, and provided laundry services for the Wheeler COVID shelter run by Occupy Medical and Lane County. We also provided laundry services to Sponsors for post-release individuals in quarantine. Our workers and guests are well-trained in CDC guidelines for reducing the spread of COVID-19. In all of these projects we incorporated our unique employment model, utilizing strengths-based empowerment strategies to help employees and residents engage, build skills, and accomplish steps toward their own goals. Toward the end of 2020, we opened the "Garden SPOT" Shelter, a 10-bed emergency shelter designed to serve individuals who are at highest risk for death from COVID-19 (if contracted.)

During 2021, we served Cottage Grove's unhoused community through our outreach program, and continued operating the Garden Shelter. To date, we are the only congregate singles shelter in the area that has not had a COVID outbreak among its clients.



Over 80% of individuals exiting our shelter have gone on to longer-term housing. This year, we managed and provided services to a small microsite funded by “Out Of The Cold” (OOTC) dollars for Lane County, with direct referrals from local law enforcement and community providers. We also established solid relationships with two churches that are hosting our car-camping sites, in contract with the City of Springfield.

Currently, we are running a safe sleep site in Eugene, and will soon be opening a medical recuperation site. The Garden shelter will soon be converted to a medical respite shelter, in partnership with Peacehealth.

Our Team

Kris McAlister

Executive Director, Carry it Forward

Department Director, Field Engagement and Response Department

Chair, Lane County Poverty and Homelessness Board (PHB)

Chair, PHB Executive Committee

Vice-Chair, PHB sub-committee LEAGUE (Lived Experience Advisory Group for Unhoused Engagement)

Member, PHB RFP/HMIS/Evaluation sub-committee

Co-Chair, PHB Shelter Stakeholders sub-committee

Steering Committee Member, PHB Healthcare sub-committee

Member, PHB Employment sub-committee

Chair, Springfield Utility Board Budget Committee

Member, Square One Villages Board of Directors

Member, Springfield Housing Code Update Technical Advisory Committee

Member, Occupy Medical Advisory Council

Member, Escudo Latino Board of Directors

Background: has lived experience with homelessness as a youth, has served 22 years in social justice and service-oriented boards and organizations focused on homelessness issues, medical access, poverty intervention, disability, and youth.

Arwen Maas-DeSpain, LMFT, QMHP

Founder and Executive Assistant Director, Carry It Forward

Director, Administration, Educational, and Vocational Department

Clinical Supervisor, FAIR program at OSLC Developments, Inc.

Registered Supervisor, Oregon Board of Licensed Professional Counselors and Therapists

Background: has served 30 years service-oriented non-profit organizations focused on underserved populations.

Garden SPOT Support and PAVE staff

Carry It Forward staff represent a wide range of background and experience working with our



target population. Our seasoned shift leads have dedicated many years at Egan Warming Centers and other organizations that serve unhoused people, have training in peer support, and excel at “barrier busting.” Additional support staff assigned to this project were vetted and trained at our temporary COVID shelter in Springfield. Some have lived experience with homelessness, some identify as Black or LatinX, five speak Spanish, and all are dedicated to serving the community. We have three PAVE workers currently planning to engage in this project

Community Partners and Network

- South Lane Mental Health
- Community Sharing (Cottage Grove)
- ShelterCare
- ODI/FAIR program
- Escudo Latino
- CALC, Shelter Rights Alliance
- G.Street Oasis, Springfield
- Catholic Community Services
- White Bird / CAHOOTS
- The Alliance
- Chrysalis/NEST
- Occupy Medical
- Looking Glass
- CORE (Community Outreach Through Radical Empowerment)
- Laurel Hill
- St. Vincent dePaul
- Eugene Mission
- SquareOne Villages
- Black Thistle
- Herbalists without Borders
- Volunteers in Medicine
- Community Supported Shelters
- Nightingale Hosted Shelters
- Food for Lane County
- Lane County Health and Human Services
- City of Eugene
- City of Springfield
- Veterans Affairs HUD-VASH program
- PacificSource (OHP) and PacificSource Foundation
- Trillium (OHP)
- PeaceHealth
- Mckenzie-Willamette

