

## **HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING OF MARCH 15, 2024**

The Housing Committee met at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, March 15, 2024 in Council Chambers at City Hall.

### **Attendance**

Members present included Councilmember Annie Thombs, Councilmember Jay Rhodes, Councilmember Jimmy West and Doug Lawing.

### **Adopt Minutes of January 19, 2024**

Upon Motion and Second, it was unanimously voted to adopt the Minutes from the January 19, 2024 meeting, as presented.

### **Adopt Agenda**

Upon Motion and Second, it was unanimously voted to adopt the agenda.

### **Discussion Regarding Homeless Issues**

Councilmember Jimmy West led the discussion regarding the matter of the homeless community in Kings Mountain. There was an overview of the policy that Council adopted last year, in partnership with the Motel Royal and Kings Mountain Police Department, regarding the handling of this situation in emergency situations such as extreme temperatures or other matters that might require some sort of short-term emergency lodging. There are also issues relating to a small population of children who attend school in Kings Mountain that are sleeping and living in cars. Permanent housing for those who are living on the street and in their cars is a real need.

### **Presentation from Various Community Partners**

There were several community partners present to share their experiences and the opportunities that they and their organizations offer.

Ms. Teresa Wingo contributed to the discussion stating that the Housing Authority will only allow people to stay in someone's apartment for a maximum of 14 days. She has personally housed those in need in her own apartment, but can only do so for the permitted 14 days. There is a community of citizens that make bags for students. She stated that she is also contacted by teachers who come in contact with young people in need. Ms. Wingo was accompanied by several community members who assist her with donations that she passes on to the people that she has contact with in the homeless community. There is a need for better awareness of the homeless community in order for people to know where and how to give.

Larry Greene and others were present at the meeting representing Central Methodist Church to give information regarding the churches efforts to assist the homeless community with food, personal hygiene items and temporary shelter. They distribute food on Thursday's between 3:00 – 4:30 in the afternoon. In addition to this, they offer those who are in need of a shower to come in before 3:00 that day. A guard is posted for both females and males in an effort to provide a safe environment to meet this need. Last month, the Community Kitchen gave out 10,000 pounds of food. That equates to 2500 pounds a week, 415 families, and 830 family members.

A representative from Rhema Church on Slater Street addressed the committee stating that they also assist with food ministry, giving a total of 19,735 pounds of food in Cleveland County last year. A local food drive here in Kings Mountain accounted for 10,116 pounds in one day. She also stated that representatives from their ministry provide backpack food programs for students in Kings Mountain.

### **Feedback from Housing Committee Members**

There is a need for partnership between churches, organizations and Council to provide information on how and where these needs can be met. There is also a need for coordination of the different ministries that provide food. If efforts are coordinated and managed the result might be better. The network that already exists needs to be defined. Once a network has been established of who and what services are available, this can be published and distributed to those in need. This will also provide some direction to those who would like to donate. This needs to be defined locally, then Cleveland County can be a feeder. It also should be distributed to the churches in the communities.

After much discussion, the committee inquired of the community partners present as to what they would like to see happen. Ms. Wingo stated that she would like for someone to go with her to see what we have here in Kings Mountain. She also stated that she would love to see the young people helped.

The Housing Committee is looking ahead to housing issues and bringing our workforce back to Kings Mountain. Anyone with a non-profit organization can be named a Community Housing Development Organization then you would be eligible to receive funds and other services to assist your organization

Councilmember Jay Rhodes asked that the meeting be adjourned and that this group could come back together at the next meeting of April 19, 2024. By the time of the next Housing Committee meeting, it would be appropriate to report back with one another on what has been done as a result of today's meeting. It would also be good to have this network of citizen volunteers and non-profit organizations on paper by that time, so that this group can become a sort of taskforce and determine what direction that is best to take in handling this need.

**ADJOURNMENT** - Upon Motion and second, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen A. Tucker  
City Clerk