


Today's weather
 **HIGH: 52**
LOW: 47
Sunrise: 7:21
Sunset: 6:02

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MEDINA COUNTY

Emergency homeless shelter pursued

Sara Crawford
The Gazette

MEDINA — A push toward the creation of an emergency homeless shelter is in progress as the Medina County Housing Network works on its coordinated community plan to prevent and end homelessness.

According to Skip Sipos, director of the Medina Metropolitan Housing Authority, he and other county officials came to the county commissioners about a year ago to discuss the three-pronged approach of the Medina Housing Network.

This includes permanent supportive housing for those who are disabled, rapid rehousing to provide temporary housing for those in need and an emergency shelter, similar to other counties.

"We don't have an emergency shelter here in Medina County," Sipos said.

The Medina County Housing Network has worked to do a detailed needs assessment with a vision that all Medina County residents will have the opportunity to have a home and thrive.

Since June, the group has worked to see what needed to be assessed to then create an action plan.

More than 30 organizations, including county organizations, religious groups and nonprofits, were surveyed to learn more about the resources provided already to those in need.

"Hundreds of households per year are assisted, totaling hundreds of thousands of dollars of assistance," Sipos said.

See **SHELTER**, A4

SHELTER

From A1

Sipos spoke during Tuesday's commissioners' meeting to present the plan to the commissioners for them to consider the plan and possibly support it.

Additionally, he asked for the recognition of the need for an emergency shelter for the county.

With funding secured by state Rep. Sharon Ray, the Housing Network has begun to study the idea and concept for the shelter.

The group is studying what the appropriate size would be for a shelter, where it should be located and how much it will cost to develop and run it.

"If someone comes across a homeless per-

son on the street, we don't today have a protocol in place to coordinate, properly approach that person and provide services," Sipos said.

"This plan helps us get to that point."

According to Sipos, the shelter could see only a few people staying at one given time, but could see 15 to 20 people at a later date.

Sipos said that the study and concept should be more concrete in 30 or more days, with hopes of presenting it to the commissioners to receive support shortly after its completed.

"This county has an amazing history of not only addressing problems but providing the resources and the support to get good outcomes," Sipos said.

Contact reporter Sara Crawford at (330) 721-4063 or scrawford@medina-gazette.com.