

MEETING MINUTES

COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

SOUTHERN NEVADA REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION

January 8, 2009

In attendance:

Orlando Sanchez, Chair, City of Las Vegas
Maryann Ustick, Vice Chair, City of North Las Vegas
Nancy McLane, Alternate, Clark County
Annie Wilson, Alternate, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Adrienne Cox, Focus Property Group
Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services
Danielle Turner, Alternate, City of Henderson
Gina Jackson, Nevada Homeless Alliance
Mark Smasal, Veterans Administration

Absent:

Darryl Martin, Clark County
Gary Schofield, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Skeet Fitzgerald, City of Henderson
Rose Ann Miele, City of Boulder City
Myra Berkovits, Clark County School District
Mike Darley, Fitzgeralds Casino and Hotel

Agenda Item 1. Call to order, notice of agenda compliance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law.

The meeting of the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition Committee on Homelessness was called to order by Maryann Ustick, Vice Chair, City of North Las Vegas, at 2:05 p.m., on Thursday, January 8, 2009, in Commission Chambers in the Clark County Government Center, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada.

The agenda for the January 8, 2009, meeting was duly posted in compliance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law requirements.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of the Agenda for January 8, 2009.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda for the January 8, 2009, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously. Orlando Sanchez, City of Las Vegas, and Nancy McLane, Clark County, had not arrived yet although quorum was met without them.

Agenda Item 3. Approval of Minutes from the Meeting on December 11, 2008.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes for the December 11, 2008, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously. Orlando Sanchez, City of Las Vegas, and Nancy McLane, Clark County, had not arrived yet.

Agenda Item 4. Receive an update from the Regional Homeless Services Coordinator. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Services Coordinator, gave a progress update including: the HUD Neighborhood Stabilization Program , the National HMIS Conference, and Committee member Mike Darley's resignation.

There was no discussion by the Committee; and Maryann Ustick, City of North Las Vegas, directed Ms. West to contact the Las Vegas Convention and Visitor's Authority (LVCVA) about replacing Mike Darley's member position with a representative from the LVCVA.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item. Orlando Sanchez, City of Las Vegas, had not arrived yet.

Agenda Item 5. Receive an update on the 2009 Winter Census/Count. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Services Coordinator, gave an update on the 2009 Homeless Census via a PowerPoint presentation titled "2009 Southern Nevada Homeless Census and Survey".

There was discussion by the Committee about any problems noted in past counts (i.e. safety, fear, confrontations, etc.); including questions in the surveys on foreclosures; and specifically including questions about renters affected by foreclosures.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 6. Receive an update on the Inclement Weather Shelter Program. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Services Coordinator, gave an update on the Inclement Weather Shelter Program; and she stated that overflow beds had been consistently used over the past five weeks as a result of increased numbers of freezing days and nights.

There was discussion by the Committee about utilization of warming stations and the decreased number of homeless deaths as compared to last year.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 7. Public Comment.

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, recommended that Ms. West speak to Vince Alberta at the LVCVA and he commented about helping veterans, especially during wartime; no responses to any of his letters or phone calls; and offering support to Joe Maviglia's rehabbed trailer idea. Mr. Perna also submitted a letter dated January 8, 2009, addressed to the SNRPC Homeless Committee, as follows:

"Vince Alberta of the L.V. Convention & Visitors Authority should be consulted.

Recently I received a phone call from a homeless veteran who had his non-service connected disability discontinued in 2003. Since then he has been trying to exist and has tried every avenue. When I met with him I was impressed with his articulate understanding and the way he presented himself. After making a failed attempt from a non-profit, whose goal is to help

veterans, I called Bob Sharp, veterans representative in Senator Reid's office. He gave us an immediate appointment and both of us are waiting for the results of his investigation.

I do not get paid for my volunteer efforts, as a self appointed veterans representative in Southern Nevada advocates for Homeless People but I take them seriously and follow up on every avenue. Are the persons in state, local and federal government as well as the nonprofits doing the same? I have my doubts. Maybe they are getting burnt out or have given up.

Where is the urgency in this meeting? How can anyone not realize that conditions for the homeless are going to get worse before they get better?

Where is the urgency on the part of some persons in the veterans administration during wartime, in the veteran service organizations and state and federal veteran agencies when advocates, relatives and friends of veterans complain or request help? We need an ombudsman! Do they receive the same poor treatment that I receive?

No answer to letters or phone calls. I hope that this committee supports Joe Maviglia in his program to rehab trailers."

David Shakespeare, private citizen, stated that he thinks this committee is doing too much, not everyone is in crisis and only those who want to be helped should be helped. Mr. Shakespeare recommended specifically designating areas that should be cleared and allowing fires to be built (there); and to save money bus fares should be lowered and providers should consider moving people to cheaper hotels (i.e. the Golden Nugget) instead of hospitals.

Annie Wilson, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, and Phillip Hollon, Catholic Charities, summarized the success and some statistics of the Home for the Holidays program and presented several award certificates.

Mr. Hollon then stated that 5000 toys had been distributed, over 1500 clients had been served at the early Christmas meal and over 1800 had been served at the "Christmas Celebration" on December 20 at St. Vincent Lied Dining Facility.

Ivo Plecko, private citizen, commented on continued efforts toward getting funding together for his housing project.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:43 p.m.