

MEETING MINUTES

COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

SOUTHERN NEVADA REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION

May 14, 2009

In attendance:

Orlando Sanchez, Chair, City of Las Vegas
Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services
Skeet Fitzgerald, City of Henderson
Maryann Ustick, Vice Chair, City of North Las Vegas
Nancy McLane, Clark County
Gary Schofield, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Adrienne Cox, Adrienne Cox Consulting
Rose Ann Miele, City of Boulder City

Absent:

Mark Smasal, Veterans Administration
Gina Gavan, Nevada Homeless Alliance
Myra Berkovits, Clark County School District

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 Orlando Sanchez, Chair, City of Las Vegas, at 2:01 p.m., on Thursday, May 14, 2009, in Commission Chambers in the Clark County Government Center, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada.

The agenda for the May 14, 2009, meeting was duly posted in compliance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law requirements.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of the Agenda for May 14, 2009.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda for the May 14, 2009, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously. Skeet Fitzgerald, City of Henderson, had not arrived yet although quorum was met without him.

Agenda Item 3. Approval of Minutes from the Meeting on April 9, 2009.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes for the April 9, 2009, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously. Skeet Fitzgerald, City of Henderson, 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 2009 Continuum of Care process is beginning; the HUD Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) – Joint Project for Homelessness application process is ongoing; an update on the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program; and Project Homeless Connect will be held on November 10th.

Orlando Sanchez, City of Las Vegas, asked whether Project Homeless Connect would be held somewhere other than Cashman Field; and Ms. West responded that other venues were being looked at for future events but the November event would be at Cashman.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 5. Approve the redistribution of funding available through AB629 and receive an update on the process. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Services Coordinator, stated that \$100,000 of the approved AB629 funding would not be used by Clark County Social Service and would be available for redistribution under the following guidelines: the program must be a non-profit providing transitional housing services to the homeless; the request must be for capital expenses only; the request can not be for more than \$50,000; and the money must be completely spent by June 30, 2009.

There was discussion by the Committee about the potential number of RFP's expected; the turn-around time being so short; what happens to the money if it isn't spent in time; and focus should be on purchasing vans or other transportation vehicles for use especially in the Homeless Corridor.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the redistribution of funding and allow the Technical Working Group to make the appropriate decisions, with the stipulation that a focus be placed on identifying transportation options if possible. The motion was approved unanimously.

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, commented that more stimulus money needs to be directed to the homeless, especially with the collapse of the economy.

Agenda Item 6. Receive an update on the 2009-2010 Regional Homeless Budget. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Services Coordinator, presented the 2009-2010 Regional Homeless Budget that includes further detail clarification.

Orlando Sanchez, City of Las Vegas, recommended that Committee members brief their elected officials before presentation at next week's Coalition Board meeting.

A motion was made and seconded to forward the 2009-2010 Regional Homeless Budget to the Coalition Board for approval. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 7. 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 capacities of several providers.

There was no discussion by the Committee; and no motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 8. Receive a presentation on the HELP of Southern Nevada homeless outreach and case management services. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Myrna Pili, HELP of Southern Nevada, presented a short video on the HELP of Southern Nevada homeless outreach and case management services then gave a PowerPoint presentation titled "OUTREACH –

Organizations United To Reach Educate and Assist Chronic Homeless.”

After recognition of the Mobile Crisis Intervention Team (MCIT) staff, the following individuals shared their personal stories and comments: Robert Warner, Adrienne, William Weland, Matt O’Brien, Pamela Klaus, Nishah M., Shawn O’Brien, Edgar Watson, Manvel Vasquez and Nonami P. Ms. Pili concluded with a summary on the successful transition of Rose M. who died on March 8, 2009.

There was discussion by the Committee about how much money it would take to increase HELP of Southern Nevada’s staff by 100 percent.

Linda Lera Randle-El, Straight From the Streets, stated that there were still many people not ready for official admittance into a formal program, and she commented about forgiveness with relapsing patients. She also stated that there were no free handouts given, and people helped had to work for assistance.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Joe Maviglia, H & E Training School, Inc., thanked the people for sharing their stories of picking themselves up and helping themselves get back on their feet, then he provided lengthy comments on looking at what caused the problem in the first place; identifying who was to blame; many people unaware of what was going on; the importance of economic stability and creating jobs; retrofitting mobile homes to create jobs; embarrassed by what’s wrong with America; everyone needs a job so they can pay their bills; and everyone is in the boat together so should work together for the common good. Mr. Maviglia also stated that he disagreed with the three minute limit during public comments. He submitted an undated letter addressed to the Homeless Committee as follows:

“I have spent many years looking for answers on what went wrong in America that put us in the condition we are in today, and I can tell you, if you take the time to look at what happened, it is there for anyone to see. We have become a country of greed, corruption, and abuse, and I know I am wasting my time coming here and telling you about it, because my words will go in one ear and out the other. And the sad thing about it, is the fact you will never solve the problems that face this country, and most important the problems that face the Homeless in America.

I suggest you start looking at what caused the problem in the first place. Once you figure that out, then, maybe, you will find the answer we are all looking for. I hold little hope of this committee doing that because of your track record.”

Agenda Item 9. Public Comment.

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, commented on being disappointed that the V.A. representative was not present; and he submitted two letters one dated May 14, 2009, addressed to the SNRPC Homeless Committee, and one dated May 7, 2009, addressed to the Clark County Manager’s Office and Doug Lyon, Administrator, as follows:

May 14, 2009:

“Words are important. Words have meaning. But, words might have deeper meaning and importance when they are followed by action. In September 2001 we had a Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition/HUD Summit which promoted “housing first”. It was a wonderful motto whose promise has not been reached almost 8 years later. Yes there are buildings being built on the old mash property by the Salvation Army and Nevada Help that

house former homeless veterans and seniors at a cost of \$140,000, per efficiency apartment, with a full staff to provide case management to veterans and seniors. Wonderful, yes. Practical and economical, no! The former mash project, where some of this housing is built, had 250 family beds, 150 unused beds and a 250 bed temporary shelter tent when it was abandoned. These beds have not been totally replaced over six years later.

Let's talk about political will to solve the problems of homeless veterans first. We have about 4000 homeless veterans in Southern Nevada and maybe we have housed 600 since the 2001 summit. President Barack Obama and V.A. Secretary Eric Shinseki. This is not enough progress or change. We desperately need entry level housing that rehabilitated mobile homes will provide through H & E Training and Housing headed by Joe Maviglia, a 501c3, that can rent, sell and economically house 200 veterans in a pilot project at the V.A. health complex at 215 & Pecos. It is only fair and equitable that our 4000 homeless veterans get the benefit of the donation of 140 acres from the BLM. This is an economical solution for 28-30% of the homeless."

May 7, 2009:

"I am writing this letter as a follow up to the May 4th meeting, which I appreciated and consider fruitful.

If our elected officials Federal, State, City and County have the political will and agree that our homeless, civilian and veteran, are worthy and in fairness and equity deserve government funding, in proportion to their population, then any sensible, economical and agreed proposals are viable. After almost eight years since the September 2001 SNRPC/HUD Summit we all must finally work towards actions that will comprehensively address the disgrace of homelessness in the richest country and in our richest valley in America.

The SNRPC Board and Homeless Committee is the mechanism, to debate and reach consensus, and the sharing formula, based on population, to equitably share costs.

I was reminded by Orlando and Tara that housing has been built. But we must be realistic and agree that about \$140,000 per efficiency apartment and cost for staff is too expensive and can never house the necessary goal of at least 20-25% of the homeless population. Entry level housing such as rehabilitated mobile homes, as suggested to V.A. Director John Bright, proposed by Gaylord Pearson, Joe Maviglia and myself, and forwarded through Senator Harry Reid's office, Congresswoman Shelley Buckley's office and Congresswoman Dina Titus's office. My thanks to their veteran representatives for advocacy, Bob Sharp, Roxanne Univerrich and Shannon Bilbray. This is a sensible and economical solution for 28-30% of the homeless made possible by BLM 140 acre donation, through the Land Management Act.

One other viable idea, that should be considered, is Arnold Stalk's shipping container proposal on county land. He is a builder with an exemplary background in social services. There had been a program in which students of the Meadows School had rehabilitated these containers. There is a media record of this program.

I believe that through the Las Vegas Veteran Consumer Advisory Council, V.A. Volunteer Corp. and veterans service organizations mentors can be enrolled to make any endeavor successful.

I will do my part.”

Olivia Nagee, HELP of Southern Nevada, stated that people in the corridor are there to be helped and are waiting to receive services. She praised the MCIT and outreach teams and recommended keeping them in mind for any financial decisions.

Monique Harris, Southern Nevada Children First, commented on working with pregnant teens and teen parents; and she stated many of them don't meet the requirements for adult services.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m.