

MEETING MINUTES

COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

SOUTHERN NEVADA REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION

September 20, 2007

In attendance:

Darryl Martin, CHAIR, Clark County
Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services
Rose Ann Miele, City of Boulder City
Adrienne Cox, Focus Property Group
Gary Schofield, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Orlando Sanchez, City of Las Vegas
Kathy Somers, Alternate, City of North Las Vegas
Skeet Fitzgerald, City of Henderson
Kathleen Boutin, Nevada Homeless Alliance
John Bright, Veterans Administration

Absent:

Maryann Ustick, City of North Las Vegas
John Thedinga, Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce
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 Darryl Martin, Clark County, at 2:04 p.m., on Thursday, September 20, 2007, in Commission Chambers in the Clark County Government Center, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada.

The agenda for the September 20, 2007, meeting was duly posted in compliance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law requirements.

Roll Call was held; and all members of the SNRPC Committee on Homelessness, as listed above, were present except for Maryann Ustick, City of North Las Vegas, John Thedinga, Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, and Myra Berkovits, Clark County School District. Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, had not arrived yet although quorum was met without him.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of the Agenda for September 20, 2007.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda for the September 20, 2007, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously. Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, had not arrived yet.

Agenda Item 3. Approval of Minutes from the Meetings on July 19, 2007, and August 23, 2007.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes for the July 19, 2007, and August 23, 2007, meetings. The motion was approved unanimously. Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, had not arrived yet.

Agenda Item 4. Receive resignation and accept nomination for committee membership. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Darryl Martin, Clark County, stated that John Bright would represent the Veterans Administration.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the new nomination for the SNRPC Committee on Homelessness. The motion was approved unanimously. Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, had not arrived yet.

Agenda Item 5. Receive an update on the Help Hope Home regional plan and the joint meeting of the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition's Coalition Board, Technical Committee, Committee on Homelessness, and the Committee on Homelessness Housing Working Group. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, gave an update including: Summarizing the attendees of the joint August meeting and the Coalition Board approved the Help Hope Home Regional Plan to End Homelessness business case. She stated that an Implementation Schedule, including action items, timelines, and cost and funding availability, would be presented at the December Committee on Homelessness meeting for discussion and approval.

Darryl Martin, Clark County, stated that the (Clark County) Board of County Commissioners approved Help Hope Home as the County's guideline for program development and funding prioritization. He recommended other jurisdictions doing the same.

There was discussion by the Committee on a \$250,000 donation by William Pride to the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item. Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, had not arrived yet.

Agenda Item 6. Receive an update from the Regional Homeless Services Coordinator. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, gave a progress update including: the Community Interfaith Council Kick-Off Luncheon would be on September 25 at 11:30 at the East Las Vegas Community Service Center; a Statewide Continuum of Care meeting is scheduled for October 5 in Reno; and Project Homeless Connect is scheduled for November 6 at Cashman Center, including a reception for invited guests at 9:30 that morning.

There was discussion by the Committee on the \$1 million statewide appropriation and suggestions for using it (including a Project Homeless Connect in Reno or holding Project Homeless Connect more frequently than annually); and identifying and tracking more outcomes with Project Homeless Connect, especially benchmarks for the future.

Darryl Martin, Clark County, reminded of the importance of staff participation by the individual municipalities at Project Homeless Connect.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, spoke about affordable housing being essential to end homelessness, and he said he discussed the importance of it six years ago. He expressed frustration that comments and suggestions made during public comments are ignored; and he asked about Arnold Stalk's shipping container idea or the possibility of mobile home conversions, even if these ideas would require zoning changes.

Mr. Martin responded on master leasing at New Genesis and about the visit to Mr. Stalk. He stated that he liked the idea and loved the home, but zoning changes, etc. could not come from this Committee but could be influenced by public input during appropriate zoning meetings.

Agenda Item 7. Receive an update on Inclement Weather Shelter. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Michele Fuller-Hallauer, Continuum of Care Coordinator, reported on the overall numbers served by the various shelters, and she stated that the City of Henderson had much community collaboration with Henderson Allied Community Advocates (HACA) during the summer months. She also stated that the summer shelter program would end on September 30.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, reported that as a result of the end of the summer shelter program there was a meeting scheduled between the cities of Las Vegas and North Las Vegas, Metro and other providers on the potential issues facing the homeless corridor.

There was discussion by the Committee on participation by The ShadeTree and the rescue missions; and Kathleen Boutin, Nevada Homeless Alliance, reminded committee members of scheduling a tour of some of the rescue facilities.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Dr. Leroy Pelton, Homeless Advocate, spoke about Catholic Charities turning men away from their night shelter on September 8. He expressed frustration that no progress was being made in the corridor and more children were seen there. He commented on the immediate need for emergency shelter and not enough was anticipated for the winter; and he concluded with suggesting a heated tent like that used in 2001.

There was discussion by the Committee on winter shelter contracts and available expected beds.

Phillip Hollon, Catholic Charities, responded about referrals made by Catholic Charities as a result of meeting maximum capacity instead of turning people away; and there was lengthy discussion by the Committee on transporting these referrals (by Catholic Charities), WestCare's involvement and Metro's response and involvement.

There was also discussion by the Committee on requirements and participation in Catholic Charities' programs and obstacles to completing them.

Agenda Item 8. Receive an update on the 2007 Summer Point in Time Count and Panhandling Study. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Peter Connery, Applied Survey Research, presented the final draft of the 2007 Summer Point in Time Count and Panhandling Study via a PowerPoint presentation titled "Southern Nevada Summer Homeless Census and Panhandling Study."

There was discussion by the Committee on youth enumeration not being done during the summer; panhandling breakdowns by race; incentives used on panhandlers and validity of self-reporting; location shifts of the homeless from winter to summer; plotting census tracts on a GIS map; and veteran percentages within overall homeless numbers as well as within panhandling figures.

There was also discussion by the Committee on some expected next steps.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 9. Receive a presentation from Family Promise on agency services. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Terry Lindemann, Family Promise, gave a PowerPoint presentation summarizing Family Promise services titled “Sheltering Program for Families with Children”, and she recognized key staff members within the audience.

Darryl Martin, Clark County, commented on the new facility Family Promise recently moved into; and Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, announced their inclusion into the OUTREACH team.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 10. Receive an update on the development and implementation of the Public Awareness Campaign. - Take any necessary action.

George McCabe, Brown & Partners, and Kim Sherwood Schofield, Clark County Channel 4, presented a newly developed video that would be included with the overall media and/or outreach marketing package. They also presented a public service announcement (PSA) for Project Homeless Connect.

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

Agenda Item 11. Public Comment.

Joe Maviglia, H & E Training Schools, shared an anecdote on the history of the American West; and he commented on the current economic structure being an “effort in futility”, the importance of economic restructuring so people can afford the basics, and problems he’s facing with attempted retrofitting of manufactured housing trailers. He also discussed a how-to book he’s writing on economic restructuring.

David Shakespeare, private citizen, recommended getting everyone who attends the Stand Down in November a photo I.D.

Ted Russell, private citizen, complimented the video, and he suggested sending it to Channel 8. He expressed concern about the constant reliance on the four major shelter facilities and the lack of medical oversight; and he also commended Catholic Charities for the work they’ve done and continue to do.

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, commented on his pleasure at seeing representation for the veterans at the meeting, but he expressed frustration that he gets no response to any of his contacts to the Congressional Delegation. He presented an article from the July 24 issue of the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* titled “VA failing troops, lawsuit says” that he highlighted key passages of. He also submitted a copy of the Southern Nevada Advocates for Homeless People’s informational pamphlet.

Mr. Perna read a letter he submitted to the SNRPC Committee on Homelessness and Darryl Martin, Chair, as follows:

“Southern Nevada has the highest percent, per capita, of military veterans in the country which represents about one eighth of our population. The SNRPC Board must protect the interests of these veterans, approximately 3500 homeless veterans and Iraq and Afghanistan veterans returning from the battlefield. When I petition local politicians I am told that this is a federal issue but I remind them that as citizens they have the responsibility to protect those who sacrificed for us all. We all have that responsibility.

Our federal politicians must accelerate the building of the new veterans hospital and outpatient clinic to 2009, two years in the future and build domiciliaries to house therapy programs for traumatic brain injury, PTSD, alcohol, drug and respite programs to ensure Iraq and Afghanistan veterans do not suffer the neglect that Vietnam veterans have endured for decades. These veterans are suffering the highest ratio of fatalities to casualties ever in mental and physical injuries which far exceed those suffered in the first Gulf War. The social cost for this war will last for many decades.

Support our veterans and homeless veterans.”

Mr. Perna also submitted a letter he presented at the July 26, 2007, SNRPC Board meeting addressed to the SNRPC Board and Mayor Oscar Goodman, Chair. The letter submitted is as follows:

“I am a charter member and veterans representative in “Southern Nevada Advocates for Homeless People”, a 501c3. On May 24, I made public comment about the reasons for inadequate veterans healthcare in Southern Nevada, due to the unnecessary and deceitful closure of the V.A. Guy Ambulatory Clinic in 2003. I am submitting a SNAHP brochure, a Support our Veterans petition and a copy of a federal court judgment in which the court awarded Moreland Corp, builder of the Guy Clinic, \$17,992,215.85 plus interest.

This board, to protect the interests of about 250,000 veterans, 1/8 of our population, should not cite federal government sovereignty as a reason for inaction and not protecting the interests of Southern Nevada veterans. Please join with me in advocating an accelerated completion date, to 2009, of the V.A. Health Complex, at I-215 and Pecos, and the construction of domiciliaries to provide housing for essential TBI, PTSD, alcohol and drug programs.

The July 24th news article, “VA failing troops, lawsuit says” demonstrates how this rigid bureaucracy is unwilling or unable to serve our troops returning from the battlefield. Just imagine that the Vietnam War ended 35 years ago and claims are still outstanding for those suffering from agent orange illness.

It is a disgrace that “Veterans for Common Sense” and “Veterans United for Truth” have been forced to sue the Veterans Administration. Support out troops is a meaningless political mantra.

Please “Support our Veterans.” “

Dr. Leroy Pelton, Homeless Advocate, stated that the “no admittance” to Catholic Charities on September 8 was not an isolated incident and has gone on every week. He also stated that the work program offered by Catholic Charities depends on people saying they want to join; and he asked if shelter inclusion should depend on joining a work program. Dr. Pelton recommended that people continue to read the *Forgotten Voice* publication.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:07 p.m.