

## MEETING MINUTES

### COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

#### SOUTHERN NEVADA REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION

October 18, 2007

**In attendance:**

Orlando Sanchez, Alternate Chair, City of Las Vegas  
Rose Ann Miele, City of Boulder City  
Adrienne Cox, Focus Property Group  
Nancy McLane, Alternate, Clark County  
Skeet Fitzgerald, City of Henderson  
Jacque Haas, Nevada Homeless Alliance  
Myra Berkovits, Clark County School District

**Absent:**

Darryl Martin, CHAIR, Clark County  
Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services  
Gary Schofield, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department  
Maryann Ustick, City of North Las Vegas  
John Thedinga, Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce  
John Bright, Veterans Administration

---

**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, Alternate Chair, City of Las Vegas, at 2:18 p.m., on Thursday, October 18, 2007, in Commission Chambers in the Clark County Government Center, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada.

The agenda for the October 18, 2007, meeting was duly posted in compliance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law requirements.

**Agenda Item 2. Approval of the Agenda for October 18, 2007.**

A motion was made and seconded to remove item 8 (Receive a presentation from the Center for Independent Living) from the agenda and to approve the revised agenda for the October 18, 2007, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Agenda Item 3. Approval of Minutes from the Meeting on September 20, 2007.**

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes for the September 20, 2007, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

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

A motion was made and seconded to approve Jacque Haas as the new representative for the Nevada Homeless Alliance on the SNRPC Committee on Homelessness and to accept the resignation of John Thedinga as the representative from the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Agenda Item 5. 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: an update on Project Homeless Connect, scheduled at Cashman Center on November 6; a Homeless Funding Workshop scheduled for October 23, including an update on the CoC and changes to how Clark County would disburse funding; and an update on the development of the HelpHopeHome Implementation Schedule.

There was discussion by the Committee on possible follow-up on individuals helped at last year's Project Homeless Connect; increasing the level of accountability for providers for tracking participants of Project Homeless Connect; fees charged by Cashman Center for Project Homeless Connect; and CDBG funds and the Homeless Trust Fund management and current balance.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

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

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, reported on the overall numbers served by the various shelters, and she stated that if the weather became severe enough that the emergency shelter was prepared to open at any time.

Orlando Sanchez, City of Las Vegas, asked if a historical summary could be provided of how the number of beds had grown since the Committee on Homelessness began; and Ms. West responded that she could provide that at the next meeting.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

**Agenda Item 7. Receive an update on the development and implementation of the Public Awareness Campaign. - Take any necessary action.**

Orlando Sanchez, City of Las Vegas, stated that Kim Sherwood Schofield had taken a new job at Channel 3.

George McCabe, Brown & Partners, reported that PSA's promoting Project Homeless Connect were currently airing on Cox cable channels, including channel 8, and he stated that some new PSA's were being developed in Spanish as well as English.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, stated that the Panhandling Study had been referred to by *USA Today*, and she commented on the possibility of using meters as potential donation sites for the homeless trust fund.

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

**Agenda Item 8. Receive a presentation from the Center for Independent Living on agency services. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.**

This item was removed from the agenda.

## **Agenda Item 9. Public Comment.**

Ivo Plecko, private citizen, presented three letters he submitted to Mayor Oscar Goodman and the City of Las Vegas and one letter submitted to the Committee on Homelessness. They are as follows:

First letter dated August 6, 2007:

“Re: HOW TO END HOMELESSNESS IN THE CITY OF LAS VEGAS

If, deep in your heart, you do believe that the goal of the Government of the U.S.A. is to end homelessness in ten years (three of them passed away already) by 2014, there is not much time left to achieve this noble goal in the City of Las Vegas.

You are, while still in the office, in an extraordinary position yourself to end homelessness in the City of Las Vegas, which has entrusted you to handle the affairs of this great city.

I have, many years watched the situation, to figure out what really needs to be done as the very first step to end homelessness in the State of Nevada.

The first step is resolving housing problems with a twist, and approach from the totally new angle, not tried or used before.

In Europe, in the country of Holland, City of Amsterdam, city officials have decided that housing for more than 1,000 students was needed. Obvious answer: container apartment housing. So, the city within the city was built in the year 2006 where 1,100 students now happily live in an affordable, comfortable housing complex.

Why don't we repeat this example from Amsterdam? If the container housing is acceptable for students, the same could be said for the homeless, which at this very moment, populate the streets of Las Vegas in greater and greater numbers. By the last census count, 11,417 homeless and counting, live in inhuman conditions. All, because we are constantly bickering (I am referring here to organizations, servicing homeless population) between ourselves for funding our numerous programs.

Why shouldn't we, for a change, listen to what the new kid on the block, Piters Foundation, has to say and propose to end homelessness in the State of Nevada!?

From Slovenian perspective where, “unfortunately” homeless problem is practically non-existent, I arrived to attend in Nevada 10 Point Sessions brainstorming on resolving homelessness in the years ahead, and I came to the conclusion that drastic measures have to be undertaken to end homelessness; providing affordable (low-income) housing to the homeless not next year, but starting this year.

Technology allows us to offer solutions. Smart PitersHome container units can and will be designed to accommodate single, youth and young, and family homeless. When we are talking SMART, we refer to integration of advanced technologies in housing, where wireless Internet access capabilities are already built in.

But, we already have one big stumbling block: we need spacious LAND with infrastructure, ready for developing, where we can build PitersPark, an integrated services/accommodation complex of smart PitersHome units for the homeless.

Here, it is your domain, to help us. We can start with a mini PitersPark pilot project, so that everybody in the City of Las Vegas will be able to see by their own eyes, what we are talking about, when actually affordable housing is provided.

I have extended my stay here in Las Vegas until the end of August 2007 to have your POSITIVE response back in my hands. You will be able to contact me in Slovenia at

Piters fundacija, U1. Poh. bat. 211, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia, Europe  
[Ivo@plecko.zzn.com](mailto:Ivo@plecko.zzn.com) [www.piters.org](http://www.piters.org)

I will work in Slovenia on the business plan and feasibility study for the State of Nevada on smart PitersHome container units design, with our Dutch friends.

Once this work will be finished, my intention is to approach HUD, as well as the business community, other cities, and counties in the State of Nevada, including the gaming industry to make them aware of the acute problems of the homeless population in their own backyard, and fund our Foundation programs.

You, dear Mayor of the City of Las Vegas, can start by giving an example in assistance to the organization of ours, inform your friends and business partners to help us in achieving our objective, to provide affordable housing to the homeless, and get them off the streets of this great city today, not tomorrow.

The ball is in your court now, Mr. Goodman. We hope, that you will be remembered by your posterity, and the community of Las Vegas, as the farsighted Mayor, who was responsible for ending the homeless problem in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.”

Second letter dated August 27, 2007:

“Re: AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR THE HOMELESS

Three weeks have passed since my letter of August 6, 2007, and no response was received from you, which makes me wonder whether you have sincere intentions to resolve the problems of housing for the homeless population, as proposed already to you by our Piters Foundation, from the perspective of the Republic of Slovenia.

The cost of custom built PitersHome unit (\$10,000 per person)

Pricing includes all the amenities necessary for decent daily living conditions.

If the City of Las Vegas can donate land to our organization (R-5 lot of 500 square feet to comply to get Boarding House status), we can provide smart PitersHome prototype unit within maximum 3 months period after all permits will be issued by the City and the Clark County to put prototype unit on the land lot provided.

If One acre of land will be donated, we can put a prototype PitersPark settlement of PitersHome units, where ONE STOP center will also be provided to serve the homeless in their administrative requirements, and an Internet connectivity.

I am looking forward to hearing from you at the earliest opportunity.”

Third letter dated August 31, 2007:

“Re: EXAMPLE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING SOLUTION FOR THE HOMELESS,  
FROM THE CITY OF LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA

In continuation to our August 6, and August 27, 2007 letters addressed to your attention, it might help you to make your decision easier if you will be familiar with how the City of Ljubljana, the capital city of the Republic of Slovenia in Europe, resolved their affordable housing availability for the homeless population.

The City of Ljubljana provided land and container housing to the homeless, so that they have a roof over their head, and do not populate the streets of this beautiful city. Slovenian social services agencies, non-profits provide services to the homeless, as needed, on a daily basis, and assist homeless in improving living conditions.

We can't expect the same to happen here in the City of Las Vegas, as it is done in the City of Ljubljana, Slovenia, or can we with your support and willingness!???

You, as the Mayor of the City of Las Vegas have the power to change things to the better. You have our proposal, and if the prototype of the smart PiterHome container unit will be put on a land, provided or donated to our organization by the City, this will be your first POSITIVE step in the right direction to follow the example from Slovenia, and do the same for your City of Las Vegas, located in the State of Nevada, this great Country of the U.S.A.

Hope we can get some response by you. Sooner the better for the homeless.”

Fourth letter dated October 18, 2007 (to the Committee on Homelessness):

“Re: HOW TO END HOMELESSNESS IN THE STATE OF NEVADA?

Kindly carefully read our proposal to the City of Las Vegas, Mayor Oscar Goodman, outlined in our letter to his attention of August 6, 27 and 31, 2007.

I will be returning to Slovenia latest in the middle of October 2007 to start work on interior design for smart PiterHome container unit for the homeless population in the State of Nevada.

Besides attending over 20 meetings since my arrival to Las Vegas on March 25, 2007, I have carefully listened to many homeless people about what they would like to have to start the road out of their homeless situations.

It was: To have a roof over their head for life, and not temporary, transient locations to live in.

I was carefully listening to what amenities they would like to have, and all this information and suggestions received, will be considered in designing PiterHome.

Technology solutions allow us to retrofit existing transportation 40 feet container units, and make a comfortable single room occupancy for

6 (six) people

at the maximum cost of US\$60,000.00 per PiteraHome container unit.

I believe that there is absolutely nobody on the market, who can offer such comfortable SRO boarding house units with so many amenities, wireless Internet connectivity included, and so much care taken by designing it to meet or exceed housing standards for such units.

What I have been confronted during my staying since March 2007 in Las Vegas is, that it is not the technology solutions, not the extremely low pricing for PiteraHome units but understanding that we NEED TO HELP HOMELESS to provide to them roof over their head, and use our heart and passion to do that.

If there is no political will from the people involved in politics not to pay lip service only, but actually act to get moving toward resolving homelessness, my proposal will fail before even starting to realize it.

I am therefore addressing this message to all who DO CARE to end the homelessness in the State of Nevada, and start action/s.

The very first goal is to assist us in getting a piece of land, where we can permanently put

Smart PiteraHome Container Prototype Unit,

to be designed and developed in the Republic of Slovenia, Europe.

Here donation/s of the land, sponsorship, financing assistance is and will allow us this to happen, not in the next century, but in the year 2008.

Once the prototype unit will be put in place in the City of Las Vegas, everybody will be able to see how comfortable living in it will be.

Then, we can start working on pilot PiteraPark project, where PiteraHome units will be situated in an affordable housing complex.

At the end, if all of the above will happen, we can enter Phase Two, opening the most technologically advanced Pitera Foundation ONE STOP Center to serve the homeless and nonprofit agencies, helping the homeless population in the State of Nevada.

But, being at the mercy of the powers to be, no good will and effort will help, if I will not have a support of Nevadans, business community included.

Let us help each other and do positive things together: Help the homeless to have a roof over their head for life, not only for a night.”

The meeting was adjourned at 2:42 p.m.