

MEETING MINUTES

COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

SOUTHERN NEVADA REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION

January 19, 2006

In attendance:

Thom Reilly, CHAIR, Clark County
Theodore Moody, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Keith Willoughby, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services
Rose Ann Miele, City of Boulder City
Kenny Young, City of North Las Vegas
Danielle Turner, City of Henderson
Reverend Charles Bowker, Southern Nevada Homeless Coalition
Susan Wright, 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 Thom Reilly, Chair, Clark County, at 2:06 p.m., on Thursday, January 19, 2006, in the North Las Vegas City Council Chambers, 2200 Civic Center Drive, North Las Vegas, Nevada.

The agenda for the January 19, 2006, meeting was duly posted in compliance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law requirements.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of the Agenda for January 19, 2006.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda for the January 19, 2006, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 3. Approval of Minutes from the Meeting on December 15, 2005.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes for the December 15, 2005, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 4. Appoint new members to the Committee representing the business community.

Kenny Young, City of North Las Vegas, introduced Assistant City Manager Maryann Ustick and stated she would be taking over his role beginning at the next meeting.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, recommended Adrienne Cox, Focus Las Vegas, and John Thedinga, Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, as additional members representing the business community to the Committee on Homelessness.

Mr. Young recommended removing the North Las Vegas Police Department representative from the Committee.

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, asked about representation from the casino industry; and Ms. West responded that the individual she'd contacted (not named) had asked to join the Continuum of Care Technical Advisory Committee.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the two representative nominations from Focus Las Vegas and the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce to the Committee on Homelessness and forward them to the SNRPC Board for approval and to remove the North Las Vegas Police Department from the Committee. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 5. Receive and approve the proposed regional budget for FY06/07. Recommended action-Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, presented the proposed 2006/2007 budget and discussed the significant changes from the 2005/2006 one, including the increase in the Inclement Weather Shelter Program, the support of HMIS, the removal of the Fertitta Center and the addition of an annual Homeless and Shelter Count.

Thom Reilly, Clark County, gave an update on the meeting held involving the Fertitta Center and attempted contact with Dr. Preston, UNLV, regarding the final report of the 2005 Homeless Count numbers.

Mr. Reilly stated that Betsy Fretwell, City of Las Vegas, had told him the City (of Las Vegas) was comfortable with accepting the proposed budget.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the 2006/2007 Committee on Homelessness budget and forward it to the SNRPC Board for approval. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 6. Receive a report on the Winter Shelter Program and other housing programs. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, presented the Utilization Report for December 2005 for the Winter Shelter Program and other housing programs. She also presented a summary of West Care's numbers for December 2005, including the Community Triage Center and the Mental Health Crisis Unit.

Thom Reilly, Clark County, asked about the utilization for the Center for Independent Living; and Ms. West responded that they were tied into OUTREACH so rather than youth being placed into emergency shelter at Independent Living, most were moved into more stabilizing programming.

Ms. West clarified a discrepancy on the AB580 Funds section of the Utilization Report. She stated there were 2 youths from Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth (NPHY) and 12 youth and 21 adults from the OUTREACH consortium in Short-term/Stabilizing Housing; and 2 youth from NPHY and 1 adult from OUTREACH in Long-term/Transitional Housing.

Mr. Reilly stated "As of last week, the number in the emergency rooms approached 90 again...so even with the full utilization of these 50 beds we seem to be getting back up to numbers where we declare a crisis...We were hoping that by adding this triage component that we would stay under the numbers for 50."

Ms. West commented on strategic planning involving monthly monitoring and updates for the potential shifting of funds to provide more money toward long-term housing, but the numbers show "...that those beds are remaining static. Even when we add more beds to the community, the way that those beds are filling up are staying at a static rate of being full..."

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, commented on the for-profit hospitals closing their mental health wards so they could use the room for more profitable uses. He stated that each one could open 4 to 5 beds and help

with the crisis situation. He also commented on West Care not being a mental illness solution and his hope that when the new mental health hospital opens they will keep the majority of their beds open.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 7. Receive a report on the status of the AB580 funded “Transition from Homelessness” Programs. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, summarized activities of OUTREACH (the consortium) and Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth and gave an update of their specific status to-date.

Mildred Williams, HELP of Southern Nevada, shared two anecdotal stories on case successes and challenges, including one involving a woman who was admitted to UMC then discharged without her case manager being notified.

Thom Reilly, Clark County, asked if the hospital has been informed on procedures involving discharge coordination with case management; and Ms. Williams replied they had.

Reverend Charles Bowker, Southern Nevada Homeless Coalition, commented that the consortium was an important pilot program, and it would be helpful to have a monthly one-page summary of their activities. Ms. West responded that she could provide monthly outputs, but she said it would be more important to look at quarterly outcomes, especially as they relate to policy.

Mr. Reilly commented on dedicated case management and tracking individuals within the homeless population.

Mr. Reilly asked about the surveyed population that Ms. Boutin had conducted; and Ms. West responded that it was based on preliminary data that had been accumulated in HMIS over the first part of the year. Mr. Reilly asked if there could be an update given on the HMIS data and findings; and Ms. West responded that quarterly HMIS reports would be provided soon, and Ms. Boutin would be reporting on the homeless youth count at the March meeting.

Dr. Leroy Pelton, Homeless Advocate, requested more detailed information on the consortium, including a breakdown on the numbers and definition of terms. He stated that the numbers presented didn't seem to be commensurate with appropriation of funds, and he asked about the staff and their specific functions. He commented on Salvation Army and the number of children there that weren't mentioned, and he wondered about the relationship between Shade Tree and families with children.

Mr. Reilly recommended that Ms. West provide Dr. Pelton with a referral to someone at the OUTREACH program, and he asked Dr. Pelton to share his suggestions regarding a one-page summary with Ms. West.

A motion was made and seconded to provide a monthly one-page summary of the OUTREACH program. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 8. Receive a report on the 2005 Continuum of Care award and receive an update on the 2006 Continuum of Care competition process. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Michele Fuller-Hallauer, Clark County Social Service, gave a report on the 2005 Continuum of Care (CoC) award titled “2005 HUD Continuum of Care Consolidated Application Results,” including both new projects and renewals and an update on the 2006 CoC competition process titled “CoC Process for 2006.”

Thom Reilly, Clark County, commented “It appears that we’ve recovered from 2003 where we only received \$1.5 million, so we’re up to the \$5 million mark and it seems to be we’ve sustained it for two years in a row so that’s very encouraging.”

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, asked where the V.A. was, and he commented on their lack of participation and about a letter he wrote to the V.A. Inspector General. He stated he doesn’t think the government will take care of the soldiers coming back from Afghanistan and Iraq any better than those from the first Gulf War. Mr. Perna said he had a question regarding the usage of the 140 acres, but how can he ask them (the V.A.) if they aren’t present; and this is a very serious problem.

Mr. Reilly recommended that Mr. Perna set up a meeting directly with them to discuss it; but he pointed out that 53% of the CoC money was going toward vets which was encouraging, and in order to receive the additional funding they have to have met specific goals. Mr. Reilly added that they would encourage the V.A. to participate in meetings.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 9. Receive a report on the marketing campaign for the Southern Nevada Regional Homeless Trust. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, reviewed the history of the Southern Nevada Homeless Trust Fund then introduced George McCabe, Brown & Partners, who discussed the differences in a marketing campaign, advertising campaign and public relations campaign in support of it. Ms. West concluded by discussing alignment with and increased involvement in some existing efforts (i.e. Homeless Stand Down and Project Homeless Connect).

Thom Reilly, Clark County, suggested identifying some electeds to give key messages to address when they’re out speaking to groups.

Mr. Reilly added that having corporations donate volunteers and volunteer time to a quarterly Stand Down would be a great way to engage them.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 10. Receive a presentation on the Low Income Housing Trust Fund (LIHTF). Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Johnna Triggs, Agency Director of Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, and Nancy Wesoff, Director of Operations at Clark County Housing Authority, presented information related to the Low Income Housing Trust Fund (LIHTF).

Ms. Wesoff discussed the program history and stated “The purpose of this program is to provide two-year housing assistance to mentally ill clients who are referred to us...we had 70 slots for mental health and there were also slots through the Women’s Development Center and Southern Lutheran Services....To date we’ve had 24 referrals and we have 20 clients that have now (received) housing vouchers and who are actively seeking housing assistance on the private market.”

Ms. Triggs stated that they assist the County, and many times vouchers didn’t go directly to the individual, but instead went to case managers or service coordinators who work with the clients. She also discussed other

areas of on-going assistance (i.e. criminal histories, back ground checks and referrals) and follow-up.

Ms. Wesoff added that the Housing Authority waives as many eligibility requirements as possible to expedite service to clients, and she spoke on the voucher procedures and processes.

Thom Reilly, Clark County, asked if it was possible for OUTREACH or Clark County Social Service workers to make referrals or track referrals; and Ms. Triggs responded that if they (clients) came in with their case managers through Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services for evaluation then they may be able to be assisted if they meet the criteria.

There was further discussion on coordinating a meeting on referral protocols and assistance with diagnoses and case management.

Reverend Charles Bowker, Southern Nevada Homeless Coalition, commented on a meeting with the Board of County Commissioners regarding unifying the housing authorities, and he asked if that happened would it streamline or smooth the process for clients; and Ms. Wesoff responded that the processes and regulations wouldn't change.

Kenny Young, City of North Las Vegas, asked about the average time from referral to placement in this program; and Ms. Wesoff responded she was unsure but gave an example of a client who has been looking since November, although most clients had just received their vouchers this week.

Mr. Young asked about the average time for regular Section 8; and Ms. Wesoff responded that no vouchers had been issued in months, but the average time was 45 days once they'd been issued the voucher, and there was a 70% success rate in locating a unit.

Ms. Triggs stated that they could keep that data and report back as often as requested.

Danielle Turner, City of Henderson, asked if the LIHTF money came from the County or State; and Ms. Wesoff and Mr. Reilly responded it came from the State.

Ms. Turner asked if it was from the regular trust fund or if it was from the Welfare Set-Aside; and Ms. Wesoff responded she was unsure but could find out and report back.

Ms. Turner commented that she was asking because the Welfare Set-Aside from the trust fund was much more flexible.

Mr. Reilly commented on further coordination to increase involvement in sustained housing possibilities.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, asked if the LIHTF was different from the other trust fund previously discussed; and Mr. Reilly responded it was different from the Housing Trust Fund. Mr. Perna asked about the lack of accountability and responsibility in government, and he commented on the exceptions being made to place ex-offenders in housing. He also commented on the need for a "more comprehensive look at what's happening," and he referred more to the V.A. and the lack of representation by HUD. Mr. Perna referenced an article titled "Conditions Worsen for Tenants," and he suggested hiring a few of the homeless to work undercover.

Agenda Item 11. Receive a presentation on the status of mobile home park closures in Southern Nevada. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Sue Rhodes, Clark County Social Service, gave a presentation on the crisis situation involving Clark County Mobile Home Park Closures.

Reverend Charles Bowker, Southern Nevada Homeless Coalition, commented on the closures and the movement for a moratorium on them, and he asked if there was specific representation for the Committee on Homelessness on the SNRPC Board; and Thom Reilly, Clark County, responded about the levels of the SNRPC (i.e. Board of electeds, Technical Committee of City and County Managers, etc.) as well as the (Sub)Committee of Affordable Housing with this as one of the issues to be addressed by them.

There was further discussion on floating a resolution to the Board advocating a moratorium and challenges that would be faced by a moratorium.

Kenny Young, City of North Las Vegas, stated he was "...troubled why this is even on the agenda for us to tackle as a Homeless Committee. These are market driven land use decisions that each of the entities is entitled to make...Most of these trailer parks are in need of redevelopment, and what these developers are doing is making the highest and best use of these properties...There does come a time when each development has run its useful life...so I guess I just don't know how far over the line we're going in terms of addressing a homeless issue then bringing on all kinds of ancillary issues that...may have an impact but not necessarily directly connected to the problem we're trying to address here at this Committee."

Mr. Reilly responded that this was requested by a Committee member; and Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, responded on awareness and implications to impending homelessness as it relates to how many spaces are closing.

There was further discussion on working with the jurisdictions and the appropriate group working on this (Subcommittee on Affordable Housing) but with the understanding that there would be an impact.

Reverend Bowker suggested fitting this in with the protocols developed over the past summer.

Mr. Young commented on the people being relocated don't own the land.

Mr. Reilly re-emphasized that the Affordable Housing Subcommittee is working on this issue.

A motion was made and seconded to craft some language to be forwarded to the SNRPC Board and the Affordable Housing Subcommittee, which is tasked with dealing with this issue, talking about the concerns the Committee on Homelessness have. The motion was approved by the majority with Kenny Young, City of North Las Vegas, opposing and voting against it.

Agenda Item 12. Public Comment.

Reverend Charles Bowker, Southern Nevada Homeless Coalition, commented on an article in the December 27 issue of *City Life* naming Thom Reilly as the number one local community hero.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Coordinator, stated that the next Committee on Homelessness meeting was next month, and Thom (Reilly) would be taking the items from today's meeting forward to the SNRPC Board at their meeting on January 26.

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, stated that the Growth Task Force Committee was a waste of time and didn't touch on real problems like those discussed here. He mentioned HELP of Southern Nevada building apartments, and he asked what the median income was for eligibility since anything above 20% is not considered homeless. Kenny Young, City of North Las Vegas, responded that he thought it was 30% and higher, but Mr. Perna could contact his office for the actual number.

(Please note that recording stopped at this point in the meeting, although notes were taken.)

Mr. Perna referenced the "Conditions Worsen for Tenants" article again and stated that the building(s) didn't get that bad overnight. He commented on the mobile home park closures, and he mentioned the County guaranteeing tenants that the land would be available long-term but then getting sold in three years. Mr. Perna expressed disappointment that the man with the petition and signatures from the last meeting didn't get mentioned at all during this meeting; and he concluded with more frustrations on veterans being ignored and not cared for by the V.A. as well as the Meadows location of US Vets being at 100% capacity.

Rodney Jones, private citizen (homeless), stated he was at the last meeting with the petition, and he was still homeless and would like help. Thom Reilly, Clark County, directed Ms. West to meet with him.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.