

MEETING MINUTES

COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

SOUTHERN NEVADA REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION

December 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
Kenny Young, City of North Las Vegas
Skeet Fitzgerald, City of Henderson
John Bright, Veterans Administration

Absent:

Jacque Haas, Nevada Homeless Alliance
Myra Berkovits, Clark County School District
John Thedinga, Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce

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, Chair, Clark County, at 2:05 p.m., on Thursday, December 20, 2007, in Commission Chambers in the Clark County Government Center, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada.

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

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

A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda for the December 20, 2007, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously. Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, and John Bright, Veterans Administration, had not arrived yet although quorum was met without them.

Agenda Item 3. Approval of Minutes from the Meeting on November 15, 2007.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes for the November 15, 2007, meeting. The motion was approved unanimously. Stuart Ghertner, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services, and John Bright, Veterans Administration, 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, spoke about the Candlelight Memorial Vigil honoring the chronically homeless individuals who had died in 2007 that was to be held at the Center for Independent Living at 3:45 today.

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

Agenda Item 5. Receive an update on Assembly Bill 126 funding from the Nevada Legislature and accept proposed projects to be submitted to the State of Nevada for consideration for funding. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Services Coordinator, stated that it had not been made clear whether the \$1 million allocated by the State in Assembly Bill 126 would be part of the governor's budget cuts; however if funding was received, the following projects were proposed for submittal: Northern Nevada proposed projects totaling \$300,000; Rural Nevada proposed projects totaling \$100,000; and Southern Nevada proposed projects totaling \$600,000 for: enhanced resident services incentives; upgrades, repairs and rehab of existing structures; improvements and expansions to expand capacity for Transitional Housing programs; capital improvements; and transitional TBRA with the Housing Authorities.

There was discussion by the Committee on prioritizing in the event of decreased funding allocations; fluidity of spending allocations; and following the standard RFP process for any project approvals.

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, spoke about the proposed allocations not including any permanent solutions, and that Housing First should be a priority. He also commented on Ivo Plecko's letters and spoke about modular homes and/or shipping container conversions should be considered as reasonable ideas. Mr. Perna recommended a demonstration of the modular homes or shipping containers like was done with the mobile shower unit; and he suggested constructing these in industrial areas to avoid "NIMBYism". He concluded with comments about the impending crisis situation of veterans coming home with mental health issues and problems, the similarities in treating the current returning veterans the same as those from the Vietnam and first Gulf Wars and housing and adequate mental health care for mentally ill patients needed to be funded immediately.

A motion was made and seconded to forward the proposed Southern Nevada projects totaling \$600,000 to the State Legislature as part of the overall AB126 fund allocations. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 6. Receive an update on the Help Hope Home regional plan and implementation schedule. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Services Coordinator, presented the draft Help Hope Home implementation schedule titled "HELP HOPE HOME Southern Nevada's Plan to End Homelessness Implementation Schedule" via a PowerPoint presentation titled "Help Hope Home: Southern Nevada's Plan to End Homelessness – Introduction of the Implementation Schedule – December 20, 2007."

Darryl Martin, Clark County, asked if this was on the website; and Ms. West responded that it wasn't, but once the final report was approved by the SNRPC Board then it would go up on the website.

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

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

Michele Fuller-Hallauer, Management Analyst, stated the Winter Shelter opened on November 26 with 882 motel nights and 506 total shelter beds available. She also stated that no one was turned away at any time.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Services Coordinator, gave a brief report on emergency shelter bed numbers since 2001. She stated that statistics had only been kept by her office since 2006, and before that the

data and information was scattered from different sources and was mostly self-reported. She also stated that no significant trend analysis had been conducted to-date.

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

Agenda Item 8. Receive an update on the Continuum of Care. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Michele Fuller-Hallauer, Management Analyst, gave a brief update on the Continuum of Care.

There was discussion by the Committee on whether there were indications on how budget cuts might affect requested funds; Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Service's level of funding is expected to remain constant; and the anticipated date of HUD's announcement.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 9. Discuss Committee on Homelessness structure and meeting dates. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

There was no discussion by the Committee; and a motion was made and seconded to nominate Orlando Sanchez, City of Las Vegas, as Chair; and Maryann Ustick, City of North Las Vegas, as Vice Chair. The motion was approved unanimously.

Shannon West, Regional Homeless Services Coordinator, announced that the Committee on Homelessness meetings would be moving to the second Thursday of every month, but meetings would continue to be held in Clark County Commission Chambers. She stated that the next meeting would be at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday January 10, 2008.

Agenda Item 10. Receive a presentation from Women's Development Center on agency services. Recommended action - Take any necessary action.

Bridget Claridy, Women's Development Center, gave a summary presentation on the background of the Women's Development Center and services and programs available.

There was discussion by the Committee on when the Center started; how many families are assisted per day; and contact and problems faced by families of veterans.

No motion or action was required on this agenda item.

Agenda Item 11. Public Comment.

Gaylord Pearson, Homeless Advocate, stated that no one had ever mentioned purchasing land for any housing.

Frank Perna, Homeless Advocate, commented on his frustration that the suggestions made in his letters are not added to the agendas. He presented an article from the December 20 issue of the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* titled "Family seeks answers to son's suicide in Iraq" that he highlighted key passages of.

Mr. Perna also submitted a letter addressed to Darryl Martin and the SNRPC Homeless Committee as follows:

“On Nov. 29th I attended the SNRPC Board meeting and made the following request: to

identify homeless services, shelter and housing that were available in Sept. 2001, by regional cities and Clark County. These figures would be matched with a census of the same services available today to accurately measure if services are more equitably available region wide. This would prove if homeless services have been distributed evenly in the region. It is unfortunate that my request was not even mentioned in this meeting.

Six years ago the mantra was housing first and it is about time, six years later, that homeless housing is made a priority. This will require the political will, a request for BLM land and an investigation of housing proposals. It is time for action because without adequate housing homelessness can not be adequately and economically addressed.

The *Las Vegas Review Journal* had a series of three articles addressing veterans and the problems they have getting timely and adequate health care from the VA and DOD. Today there was an article on page 1A about PFC Jason Scheuerman, who committed suicide, (see newspaper article) in Iraq. 152 other troops have committed suicide in Iraq and Afghanistan making this the highest total in 26 years.

Read this article titled "Family seeks answers to son's suicide in Iraq" and see why Congress, the VA, DOD and our government is incapable of treating our present veterans any better than Vietnam and Gulf War veterans were treated.

Nevadans, who have blind faith in government to treat our veterans equitably, will be disappointed. We need more services, in Southern Nevada, to include in patient domicilliaries for TBI, PTSD, alcohol and drug programs.

All citizens should advocate for our 3500 homeless, returning Iraq-Afghanistan veterans and for our 240,000 veteran populations."

Mr. Perna concluded with comments about the need for inpatient and mental health care services and the need to add housing for veterans at the complex on Pecos and 215.

Phillip Hollon, Catholic Charities, stated that 1300 homeless people and families had been served Thanksgiving meals; and Christmas meals would be served, in partnership with the Food and Beverage Association, on Sunday, December 23 from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at the St. Vincent Lied Dining Facility (1502 N. Main Street).

Skeet Fitzgerald, City of Henderson, announced the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new facilities of Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth.

Ivo Plecko, private citizen, submitted a summary information sheet about his organization The Piters Foundation.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.