

MEETING MINUTES
SOUTHERN NEVADA REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION
COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
November 14, 2013

In attendance:

Stephen Harsin, Chair, City of Las Vegas
Barbara Geach, City of Henderson
Kathy Somers, City of North Las Vegas
Bobby Gordon, alternate, Clark County
Paula Zier, Clark County School District
Annie Wilson, alternate, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance
Dr. Cynthia Dodge, alternate, Veterans Administration
Jodie Gerson, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services

Absent:

Vacant, City of Boulder City
Tim Burch, Clark County
Captain Shawn Andersen, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Gordon Absher, MGM Resorts International
Dr. Carolyn Hughes, Veterans Administration

Agenda Item 1. Call to order, notice of agenda compliance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law.

A meeting of the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition's Committee on Homelessness was called to order by Stephen Harsin, at 2:03 pm, on Thursday, November 14, 2013, at Clark County Government Center, Pueblo Room, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada 89155. The agenda for the November 14, 2013 meeting was duly posted in compliance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law requirements.

Agenda Item 2. Public Comment. *No action may be taken upon a matter raised under this item of the agenda until the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an item upon which action may be taken. Comments will be limited to three minutes.*

No comment was made at this time.

Agenda Item 3. Approval of the Agenda for November 14, 2013; for possible action.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Agenda for the November 14, 2013 meeting. The motion carried and the Agenda was approved.

Agenda Item 4. Approval of the Minutes from the October 10, 2013 meeting; for possible action.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes from the October 10, 2013 meeting. The motion carried and the Minutes were approved.

Agenda Item 5. Receive an update from the Regional Initiatives Office; for possible action.

Tyrone Thompson, Regional Initiatives Coordinator, introduced Ms. Donna Canada as the Regional Initiatives Office's new part time Program Assistant. She will be responsible for preparing the packets

for the Coalition's Committee on Homelessness meetings and insuring their receipt to Committee members one week prior to each meeting. She will also assume responsibility for the Mainstream Basic Training Program.

Inclement Weather Shelter will open on Monday, November 18, 2013. Night shelter beds will be available from The Shade Tree, Catholic Charities, and the Salvation Army, while HopeLink will provide motel vouchers.

On July 17, 2013, Clark County advertised a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for qualified firms to provide a proposal for emergency housing program services for individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Clark County. The RFQ stipulated that emergency housing must be provided at a single site or campus with a capacity for a minimum of 25 beds per night. Members of the Evaluation Working Group, comprised of representatives from Clark County Social Service, Clark County Community Resources, City of Las Vegas, City of North Las Vegas, City of Henderson, and the Nevada Homeless Alliance, reviewed five proposals. After the reviews were completed and the scores tallied, Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada, The Shade Tree, and WestCare scored the minimum points necessary to be offered contracts. As a result, services for 160 beds for adult males, 25 beds for women with children, and 6 beds for unaccompanied youth and young adults are being funded by Clark County. Start dates are pending the receipt of insurance documentation.

Mainstream Program Basic Training (MPBT) has been completed for 2013 and the next session will be held in February 2014. MPBT offers monthly training, the 4th Wednesday of each month, from February through October, for case managers from governmental and private community agencies, faith-based organizations and community volunteers in our community. Information concerning Mainstream programs in our area is shared and dispersed. The Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act stresses that communities should learn of the basic Mainstream programs and services as a way to stabilize our homeless. The training sessions are held from 1-4 pm in the Organizational Development Center, Room 3, Clark County Government Center, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada.

The Southern Nevada Homeless Census will now be conducted annually, rather than every other year. The Regional Initiatives Office is currently planning and coordinating the 2014 census, which will occur on January 29 and 30, 2014. The 29th will focus on the urban areas of Clark County. In response to an RFQ, our community received a contract from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to collect and provide data on homeless veterans in our community, pursuant to our goal to end homelessness in Clark County by 2015. We have heard that once the census information has been obtained, more finances will begin to roll in to house the homeless veterans. Community partners and volunteers are strong components of our census efforts and are strongly urged to participate in the census. Volunteers can registration at the Volunteer Center of Southern Nevada via <http://www.volunteercentersn.org>. As available, information will also be posted at HelpHopeHome.org. For more information on how to participate, please contact Catherine Huang Hara at c3h@clarkcountynv.gov or 455-5623.

A flyer was included with the CoH Agenda packet regarding this year's candlelight vigil. Every year, Straight from the Streets, in partnership with HELP of Southern Nevada, hosts a candlelight vigil to memorialize those homeless who have passed away under various circumstances during the year. Join us at 4pm on December 19, 2013 in the parking lot of HELP of Southern Nevada, 1640 E Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, Nevada to pay tribute.

Agenda Item 6. Receive an update from the Nevada Homeless Alliance with a presentation from Nevada Community Associates; for possible action.

Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance, reminded the members of the upcoming Project Homeless Connect, scheduled for November 19, 2013 at the Cashman Center. She noted that they are still recruiting volunteers until Sunday, November 17, 2013. Donations can still be accepted on the

morning of November 18, 2013 at the Cashman Center, especially clothing donations. Sponsors can no longer be accepted for this year's event; however, sponsors are being recruited for the 2014 Project Homeless Connect and Family Connect, which will take place in May 2014.

Carla Lewis, Executive Director of Nevada Community Associates (NCA), introduced an overview of the organization. It is a 501(C) (3) organization, whose mission is to help residents of Nevada connect the process of life through education, employment, housing and emergency services. The organization conducts several programs, three of which were presented at this meeting, via a PowerPoint presentation: Project E.I.G.H.T., Transitional Housing; Project E.I.G.H.T., Rapid Rehousing; and Project Hope, Emergency Services to prevent homelessness.

Naida Abernathy, case manager for the Project E.I.G.H.T., Transitional Housing program explained that the goal of this program is to end homelessness for youths and young adults, aged 18-25, and equip and empower individuals to transition into independent living as contributing members of society. To be eligible to participate in the program the individual must meet the age requirements, satisfy HUD's (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) definition of homelessness, and have no felony or other serious criminal charges or history (because of the agreement NCA has with the apartment complex that houses the youths). Those with misdemeanors can be accepted into the program. The clients must not engage in drug or alcohol use while in the program. Non-high school and high school graduates are accepted into the program, as well as unemployed and underemployed individuals. Some of the services provided under this program include: case management; substance abuse prevention and counseling; behavioral and mental health counseling; GED and vocational guidance; job readiness training; life skills training; job shadowing and placement; hygiene and personal care; mentorship; individual success plans; referrals to community partners; seminars and workshops; social skills enhancement; financial planning; recreational services; and nutritional services. The program has a very high success rate: 86% of those who lacked a high school diploma or GED certificate when they entered the program obtained them by the time they completed the program; 97% of those who enter the program are employed by the time they complete the program.

Jasmine Young, one of Ms. Abernathy's clients, explained that although, in her words, she was a "mess" when she came to the program, the program has benefited her concerning her confidence level, her desires to further her education, her housing and her sleep and peace of mind during the two months she has been a client. She regards NCA as her "distance" parents who have helped her develop life skills and goals, things she felt should have taught to her by her natural parents.

Misty Michele Prince, one of their clients enrolled in NCA's Rapid Rehousing program, explained how NCA helped her with housing, after she had spent weeks living homeless behind the Stratosphere on the Las Vegas strip. While homeless, she paid other homeless individuals to watch her while she slept because of her fear of being killed or raped. Within 24 hours after being connected to NCA she had housing and clothing. She has also been helped with food, payment of her bills and counseling. Ms. Prince stated that without the aid of NCA she would probably have been dead by now.

Ms. Lewis added that NCA presently receives referrals for the Rapid Rehousing program primarily from Nevada 211, Clark County Social Service and other organizations; however, they are seeking funding to enable them to conduct their own outreach into the community for those who are in need. She also offered that Project Hope, their homeless prevention program, has had a very good success rate, with few repeat clients. During 2013, however, they have serviced over 150 clients for rent and utility assistance or food vouchers. The organization is seeking partners to assist in the following areas: mentors and volunteers; job shadowing and job training; seminar facilitators; funding to expand services through grants; and donations of office space, equipment and supplies, and clothing.

Agenda Item 7. Receive an update on the Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act interim Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) regulations and designation of statewide lead; for possible action.

Michele Fuller-Hallauer, Continuum of Care Coordinator, explained that the 2009 HEARTH Act was enacted as a reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento Act, the source of funding for the Continuum of Care (CoC). On December 9, 2011, HUD released the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) interim regulations. HUD has instructed that the CoCs move toward enacting the interim regulations as they stand, rather than wait for final regulations to be released. HMIS interim regulation 24 CFR, parts 580.7 states that a CoC may choose to participate in a HMIS with one or more other continuums, subject to a set of conditions, mainly that they identify an HMIS lead for each CoC. If all CoCs within a state have the same HMIS system, it is considered a multi-Continuum HMIS and they must designate an HMIS lead that has the same governance, technical, security, privacy and data quality standards. The designated HMIS lead is to provide leadership for all of the CoCs in that state. Nevada has Clarity as the software system for all three of our CoCs (the Las Vegas/Clark County CoC, encompassing all of southern Nevada; the northern Nevada CoC; and the balance of the state's CoCs). The latter two CoCs have submitted letters to the Las Vegas/Clark County CoC, (copies of which were included in the CoH packet for this present meeting) expressing their decision to designate Las Vegas/Clark County CoC as the state of Nevada HMIS lead on their behalf.. This will not have any impact financially or with regard to service delivery upon the Las Vegas/Clark County CoC. Acceptance of the designation as state lead is merely to insure continual governance, technical, security, privacy and data quality standards across the board. The two CoCs would adopt the services information that is being utilized in southern Nevada's CoC.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved for Las Vegas/Clark County CoC to accept the role of HMIS lead for the state of Nevada.

Agenda Item 8. Receive updates on and discuss the Committee's 2013-2014 Strategic Plan and its key objectives; for possible action.

Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance, provided an update as the chairperson of the Community Engagement Working Group (CEWG). Team members are Julie Murray and Cori from the Moonridge Group, Tyrone Thompson, Catherine Huang Hara, Michele Fuller-Hallauer, Brooke Reid Dr. Dodge (VA), Rob Herdzik, Marcos Perez; Rey (Bouknight), Dan Kulin; Dave Riggleman; Paula Zier Maria Castillo Couch, Renee Cookson. Mindy Torres and Terry Lindemann. Ms. Sutton Pollard used the CEWG's speaking points at the Lowdown for downtown businesses, which generated additional support for Project Homeless Connect, thereby reflecting some positive results from the work done by this subgroup. Lowdown is a monthly meeting of stakeholders (businesspersons, interested individual and residents) in the Las Vegas downtown area. The purpose of the meetings is to obtain updates on business plans in progress concerning the redevelopment of the area. At the conclusion of each meeting, community members are permitted two minutes to ask questions or otherwise address the stakeholders. CEWG's presentation at today's CoH meeting reviewed data, discussed how the data would be presented to the community in order to engage them, and branding. The ultimate goal is to gain additional community engagement and obtain more support toward reaching the goal to end homelessness.

Julie Murray, Moonridge Group, stated that the success of many non-profit agencies is marked by significant community engagement. To facilitate and encourage more community engagement, a draft of the CEWG's Tool Kit was provided to each CoH member. The Tool Kit offers three major speaking points, which represent the problem of homelessness, the economic impact of homelessness, and the solution for homelessness, as well as more detailed fact sheets concerning the different types of homelessness. In addition, the enhancement of the Help Hope Home logo was presented in the packet.

Ms. Murray added that a DVD would also be included with the Tool Kit. The purpose of the Tool Kit is to enable CoH members, community providers and partners to speak with one voice, sharing a consistent message, using the same information, with interested or potential supporters. Ms. Murray, Mr. Riggleman, Communications Director for the City of Las Vegas, Mr. Kulin, Public Information Officer for Clark County, contributed to the creation of the Tool Kit and demonstrated alternative ways to present the same information in the Tool Kit to others. Mr. Riggleman explained that the DVD would complement the one-page fact sheets regarding the diverse types of homelessness by allowing the viewer to actually see and hear from the homeless as they were interviewed concerning their various situations. Viewing the DVD would also break down stereotypes the public may have about the homeless and, instead, educate viewers to the very important reality that today's homeless come from all walks of life. On behalf of CEWG, Ms. Murray asked the CoH members and other attendees to provide CEWG with feedback concerning the Tool Kit by November 30, 2013, so that finalization of the Tool Kit can be completed by the end of 2013. Feedback should be directed to Ms. Sutton Pollard.

Stephen Harsin asked Ms. Sutton Pollard to send an email and all relevant Tool Kit attachments to the CoH members, to remind them of the deadline to provide feedback. He added that he has had opportunity to utilize the talking points and fact information in the Tool Kit in his conversations with others, with very positive results. It enabled him to stay focused on the subject matter, enlighten the listener to the real plight of the homeless, and encourage their engagement in the goal to end homelessness. The CEWG was commended for their efforts in this endeavor. Ms. Murray added that a City of Las Vegas employee conducted a survey to find out what prevented or concerned residents most about coming to downtown Las Vegas. She found that panhandling and homelessness were the two top responses. She felt that the Tool Kit information and the consistency in the message spoken by the CoH and partners would have a positive ripple effect in addressing these concerns of the public.

Barbara Geach, City of Henderson, echoed Mr. Harsin's comments and applauded the CEWG's work as outstanding, even in the draft stage. She felt that the Tool Kit provided the piece that was missing. A number of other CoH members and partners applauded the CEWG's efforts. Mr. Harsin suggested that when the final piece is completed a PSA should be shown on some of the local Las Vegas channels.

Mr. Harsin gave an update on Governance Structure. The subgroup is still working through it and hopes that a draft can be presented at the January 2014 CoH meeting.

Jodie Gerson, SNAMHS, said her group met and should have everything finalized by January 2014.

Agenda Item 9. Receive an update from each committee member regarding relevant activities within their respective organizations relating to homelessness-*the SNRPC Committee on Homelessness members may speak on any item under this section of the agenda. Members may comment on matters including, without limitation, future agenda items, upcoming meeting dates, and meeting procedures. Comments made cannot be acted upon or discussed at this meeting, but may be placed on a future agenda for consideration by the SNRPC Committee on Homelessness.*

Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance, reminded all that Project Homeless Connect would take place on November 19, 2013, from 9 am – 4 pm. Volunteers are asked to arrive by 7:30 am. The December provider meeting is canceled.

Dr. Cynthia Dodge, VA, reminded that the VA Community Resource and Referral Center still has office space for community partners. If one wants to form a partnership with her, contact her directly. There are also a couple of people at VA who can offer outreach to other community partners and speak to their clients.

Agenda Item 10. Public Comment -*No action may be taken upon a matter raised under this item of the agenda until the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an item upon which action may be take. Comments will be limited to three minutes.*

Philip Hollon, Salvation Army, announced that members of the Las Vegas Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America will participate in the largest single-day food drive on Saturday, November 16, 2013. This is the 25th year this event has been performed in Las Vegas. The food will then be delivered to 34 Salvation Army collection sites. The goal is to collect 200 tons of canned goods and dry good items. Thus far in 2013, Salvation Army has served over 33,000 clients out of its Food Pantry. On October 1, 2013, Salvation Army Family Services staff started registering children up to 14 years of age for their annual Christmas Angel Program. Thus far, 1677 families have been registered, encompassing 4,797 children. The goal is to reach 7,000 children. On December 21, 2013, Salvation Army will be at Cashman Center to distribute 2 gifts each to all of the children, as well as a gift card to a local food store. The last pre-registration, for this event for children in need will be held on Saturday at the Salvation Army Family Services building, from 8am - 12 noon and 1pm - 3 pm. On Monday, November 18, 2013, from 4pm to 6:30 pm, Salvation Army and Zappos are partnering for the first time for their first annual Thanksgiving Day Turkey Giveaway event. It will be held in the courtyard of the former Las Vegas City Hall. Flyers were distributed concerning Salvation Army's 14th annual Coats for Kids event, which will be held November 20th, 21st and 22nd at their Family Services Office, 1581 N. Main Street. Flyers were also distributed announcing their Soles for Souls giveaway event Friday, November 22nd from 11:45am – 2:30pm at the Owens Social Services Campus, 35 W. Owens. On November 27th beginning at 3 pm at the Owens Social Services Campus, Salvation Army and Circus Circus hotel will host a Thanksgiving Celebration feast for all who are hungry. The event is free. On Thanksgiving Day, November 28th, from 1:30pm – 3:30pm, Salvation Army will provide a traditional Thanksgiving meal. Vincent Pollard, Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth, informed that the organization was selected as the 2013 recipient of Nevada Women's Philanthropy Community Impact Grant of \$350,000, which will be used toward expansion of the organization's drop-in center. This will allow them to serve more youths. They will also host their 7th annual Plastic Food Drive event, the goal of which is to obtain as many food gift cards as possible to insure that homeless youths have a meal during the holiday season. Information will be available through Nevada Homeless Alliance.

Meeting adjourned at 3:12 pm.