

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**SOUTHERN NEVADA REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION**  
**COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS**  
**December 11, 2014**

**In attendance:**

Mary Ellen Donner, Chair, City of North Las Vegas  
Julie Calloway, Vice Chair, City of Boulder City  
Tim Burch, Clark County  
Barbara Geach, City of Henderson  
Stephen Harsin, City of Las Vegas  
Paula Zier, Clark County School District  
Annie Wilson, alternate, Las Vegas Metro Police Department  
Donna Jordan, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services  
Dr. Cynthia Dodge, Veterans Administration  
Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance

**Absent:**

Captain Shawn Anderson, Las Vegas Metro Police Department  
Maria Gatti, MGM Resorts International

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**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 Mary Ellen Donner, Chair, City of North Las Vegas, at 2:03 p.m., on Thursday, December 11, 2014, at United Way of Southern Nevada, 5830 W. Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, Nevada, 89103. The agenda was duly posted in compliance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law requirements.

**Agenda Item 2. Public Comment.**

No public comment.

**Agenda Item 3. Approval of the Agenda for December 11, 2014.**

A motion was made to approve the agenda for December 11, 2014. The motion was approved unanimously.

**Agenda Item 4. Approval of the Minutes from the November 13, 2014 meeting.**

A motion was made to approve the Minutes from November 13, 2014. The motion was approved.

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

Catherine Huang Hara, Regional Initiatives Office (RIO), presented the update. Inclement Weather Shelter Services winter night shelter began on November 17, 2014 of last month, and will continue through March 29, 2015. Locations include: Catholic Charities (for men), The Salvation Army (for adults), and The Shade Tree (for single women and women with children). Hopelink of Southern Nevada is also available to provide motel vouchers.

Included in today's packet is the 2015 Mainstream Programs Basic Training (MPBT) schedule. These workshops are geared toward educating social workers and case managers on issues and resources that impact households experiencing homelessness. In 2014, a total of 9 MPBT sessions were held to cover the following topics: Medical/Affordable Care Act; Behavioral Health services; Income Supports;

Housing; LGBT and domestic violence training; and services sections for seniors, Youth and Young Adults, Families and Veterans. Seventy presenters shared program information to over 479 attendees. Straight from the Streets will be holding the annual homeless vigil, which will be in memory of founder Linda Lera-Randle El on December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 3:00pm at St. James the Apostle Catholic Church, 1920 N. Martin L King Blvd, Las Vegas, NV, 89106. The closest cross street is Lake Mead Blvd. Hygiene kits will be distributed to those in need at the event. They are looking for volunteers to help assemble the kits on Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 9:00am at Christ the King, 4925 S Torrey Pines Dr., Las Vegas, NV, 89118.

**Agenda Item 6. Receive an update on the 2015 Southern Nevada Homeless Census; for possible action.**

The 2015 Homeless Census coordination and planning efforts are underway. U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandates each Continuum of Care (CoC) receiving HUD dollars to conduct a Point-In-Time (PIT) Count of the homeless population during the last ten days of January. The information gathered impacts federal funding and allocations. HUD guidance is followed to perform a comprehensive enumeration which includes: expanding census activities to include an annual count, street count canvassing by census tract, surveys to determine subpopulations and a shelter count.

2015 Southern Nevada Homeless Census Event Timeline is as follows:

Urban Area Count, January 28, 2015: The continua of care in the balance of the state will also be performing their counts.

- The general deployment will occur between 12:00am and 5:00am, January 28, 2015. Deployment stations for the urban street count beginning at midnight include: Catholic Charities, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services (SNAMHS), Rawson-Neal Psychiatric Hospital, Cambridge Recreation Center, Walnut Recreation Center, and Henderson Multigenerational Center. Deployment station locations were determined based on density of census tracts which have traditionally had a concentration of individuals to count, as well as the data received from Clark County and Henderson Fire Department on homeless response calls.
- At 5:00am, Tunnel and Wash Deployment efforts will be led by Mobile Crisis Intervention Team with HELP of Southern Nevada. The tunnel and wash population does not traditionally interact with those who reside on the streets, so risk of duplication is minimal.
- Youth Count Deployment will occur at 10:00am on January 28, 2015. RIO staff has been working with Clark County School District and youth service providers to plan deployment from HELP of Southern Nevada Shannon West Homeless Youth Center, Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth, and Southern Nevada Children First. A supplemental survey will also be completed by youth in addition to the regular survey. Clark County School District will continue to provide figures on where students slept the previous night delineated by shelter, street (including vehicles), and doubled-up situations. Figures will be compared and unduplicated with figures from the street count.

January 29, 2015, 5:30am Deployment: Rural and Outlying Area Count

- First responders are assisting with the rural count in Laughlin (Colorado River Food Bank) and Mesquite.

Surveys will be administered from January 28, 2015- February 13, 2015. Information from the surveys is used to extrapolate demographics, subpopulations, and reasons for homelessness. The target is for 1500 surveys to be completed, which will include a distribution among geographical areas, types of shelters, and input from those on the streets. There will also be a specialized survey for youth that will be added in addition to the regular survey.

The Shelter Count, January 28, 2015: Agencies that provide emergency and transitional housing services will be providing program utilization figures for this night.

The Census requires extensive coordination and strong partnership to execute successfully. A critical part of the process includes recruiting volunteers, preferably with vehicles and flashlights, to travel into the census tracts and perform a visual count of the homeless population. The aim is to recruit 500 census volunteers. Community Volunteer Training will occur on January 22, 2015 at the Clark County Chambers at 8:00am, 12:00pm, and 5:45pm. It is requested that volunteers arrive promptly by 11:30pm on January 27<sup>th</sup> for deployment. To show your interest in volunteering, please visit [www.helphopehome.org](http://www.helphopehome.org) or email [helphopehome@clarkcountynv.gov](mailto:helphopehome@clarkcountynv.gov). For more information on how to participate, please contact Catherine Huang Hara at [c3h@clarkcountynv.gov](mailto:c3h@clarkcountynv.gov) or (702) 455-5623. A select number of those who are homeless or formerly homeless will assist as guides in locating areas where homeless individuals are likely to be found. The guides will be in pairs or small groups with general volunteers. The guides are referred by service providers from housing and residential programs.

The RIO has met with County Multi-Agency Response Teams to help strategize regarding areas they can cover. Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department is contributing officers and air support to assist in the canvassing of uninhabited areas. Clark County Fire Department is assisting with urban deployment and resources for rural area deployment. Clark County Public Response Officers are assisting with the canvassing of outlying areas.

Ms. Geach asked if HUD requires communities to conduct the count at a particular time on the set date. Ms. Huang Hara stated that Las Vegas' local leaders set the time and date of the event. Dr. Dodge inquired about the breakdown of surveys administration in various locations throughout the valley, and of the 1500 surveys, how many are administered on the streets and in shelters. Ms. Huang Hara stated that about 60% of the surveys are administered on the streets spread out in various geographical areas and other areas where homeless are known to congregate and 40% in shelters. Dr. Dodge requested additional information about the methodology of survey administration and how the local community determines which areas to cover. This is particularly important to identify the homeless veterans. If possible, housing and other supportive services can be offered to the homeless veterans. She would also like to have conversations around the survey questionnaire and the possibility of getting full social security numbers.

**Agenda Item 7. Receive an update from the Nevada Homeless Alliance and a presentation from Hope Christian Health Center; for possible action.**

Stacy Sutton Pollard, Executive Director, Nevada Homeless Alliance, gave the update and introduced Steve Flores, Hope Christian Health Center, to present. Ms. Sutton Pollard gave the preliminary results of Project Homeless Connect held on November 19, 2014 at Cashman Center. Over 130 organizations or departments were in attendance with participation from approximately 320 volunteers. On the day of the event, 2,935 clients received services including 283 through the family entrance, 576 clients through preregistration entrance, 41 clients brought in through Outreach efforts, and 95 children served in the Children's Activity area. In total, 77 dogs and 8 cats were served in the pets section of the event. A full report will be shared with the CoH within the first quarter of next year. The December Service Provider Meeting is cancelled due to the holidays and will resume the third week of January.

For more information, contact Stacy Sutton Pollard at [director@nevadahomelessalliance.org](mailto:director@nevadahomelessalliance.org), (702) 743-1487.

Ms. Donner commended Nevada Homeless Alliance for the impressive coordination efforts at Project Homeless Connect. Ms. Sutton Pollard emphasized that PHC has been a growing and successful event primarily because of strong community partnerships.

Steve Flores, CEO of Hope Health Christian Health Center presented. Within the 10 day period following Project Homeless Connect, 40 new patients visited the clinic with referrals/follow-up appointments. The clinic has been open since August, 2014 with 400 visits from over 300 new clients. The organization mission statement is as follows: "We exist to glorify God as we demonstrate Christ's love among our

neighbors in Las Vegas by providing excellent and affordable healthcare for all.” There are over 15,000 members in the 89030 zip code, where Hope Health Christian Health Center is located, who live below 200% of the poverty level. Last year, 4.7% of the community had access to healthcare. The clinic aims to provide same day appointments for anyone coming in through the doors, both insured and uninsured to provide services for free and sliding scale fees.

Two years ago, health professionals from a Las Vegas local church went to Haiti to provide medical services to those in need. With similar intent, the church members choose to open a clinic in North Las Vegas to offer medical services to homeless and/or low-income residents. In January of 2014, Hope Christian Health Center obtained their 501(c) (3) status and opened the clinic to the public in August, 2014. The clinic is able to serve up to 150 clients per week. Office visit and lab charges are based on a sliding scale. For patients at or below 200% of the federal poverty level, office visits are \$20; however, clients will still be seen even if they are not able to pay the minimum charge. No one will be turned away regardless of their ability to pay. Onsite Nevada HealthLink Certified Application Counselors are available to enroll clients for health insurance. About 25% of clients without insurance actually qualify for Medicaid.

Over the last 18 weeks since the clinic has been opened to public, over 500 patients visits have occurred. Fifty two percent of patients are uninsured. The average uninsured patient can only pay about \$28. 22 of each clinic visit. A number of patients are under age of 18 (35% of these children are uninsured). Fifty percentage of the clientele require a translator. The most common reasons for office visits are diabetes, hypertension, and routine well care. Some challenges include: start-up costs, contracting with insurers, cash flow and getting the word out.

Primary partners include: numerous local churches, Boy’s Town of Nevada, Behavioral Bilingual Services, Lutheran Social Services of Nevada, Las Vegas Municipal Courts, Brooks Behavioral Health Centers, and the Mexican Consulate. Community members can help Hope Christian Health Center by forming partnerships, volunteering and sending referrals. The Christmas under the Bridge event is scheduled to take place December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014 from 11:00am-3:00pm at 4357 Corporate Center Dr. #450, North Las Vegas, NV, 89030. This is a free event for the public. Services include: medical care, flu shots, lunch, clothing, hygiene kits and much more.

Donna Jordan, SNAMHS asked about the address of the clinic and if behavioral health services are offered. Mr. Flores stated that Hope Christian Health Center is located at 4357 Corporate Center Dr., #450, North Las Vegas, NV, 89030 and is open from 7:00am-6:00pm. The second clinic is located at 4660 South Eastern Ave, Las Vegas, NV and is only open on Tuesdays. Hope Christian Health Center partners with Brooks Behavioral Health Centers to provide behavioral health services.

Paula Zier, CCSD stated that the school district often has difficulty offering medical care to unaccompanied youth, primarily because they do not have parents to sign consent forms to seek appropriate medical attention. Mr. Flores stated that the clinic may be able to see the youth depending on the medical needs. Further discussions will take place between Mr. Flores and Ms. Zier to determine feasibility of offering medical care to unaccompanied youth. Mr. Flores can be reached at 213-215-8855 or via email at [steve@hopehealthvegas.org](mailto:steve@hopehealthvegas.org).

**Agenda Item 8. Receive a presentation from UNLV School of Nursing on a grant proposal to research the environmental impact of homeless encampments on local eater quality; for possible action.**

Nancy Menzel, UNLV School of Nursing gave the presentation. Ms. Menzel has been working with civil engineers from Howard Hughes College to test water quality in Las Vegas washes. The university has applied for a grant through National Science Foundation to conduct further, in-depth research on how the homeless population’s limited access to sanitation facilities impacts water contamination by human fecal matter in Lake Mead. Ms. Menzel’s team aims to look at the sources of contamination.

Other communities such as those in California are taking legal action against municipalities for not mitigating the adverse impacts of these coupled human and natural systems.

Tim Burch, CCSS, stated that some committee members have had discussions with the Southern Nevada Health District to make homelessness a public health concern but no traction has been made. Mr. Burch commended Ms. Menzel and her team for spearheading such an effort through UNLV and allowing the community to look at homelessness through a unique perspective. He asked if there are any conversations around how communicable diseases are spread in encampments or mass sheltering situations. Stephen Harsin, City of Las Vegas, also thanked Ms. Menzel and her team bringing this to the committee's attention. He offered to support her efforts in any way.

**Agenda Item 9. Receive a presentation on emergency management disaster preparedness, response, and recovery; for possible action.**

Carolyn Levering, City of Las Vegas; Irene Navis, Clark County Office of Emergency Management Homeland Security; and Sean Ward, American Red Cross, gave the presentation. Ms. Navis presented on emergency preparedness, response, and management. Through coordination and partnerships with Clark County Social Service, National Weather Service, and HELP of Southern Nevada, the homeless population is being assisted during inclement weather by offering Cooling/Warming Stations as respite care to escape from extreme weather conditions. Individuals residing in Las Vegas tunnels and washes are notified when it is expected to rain to ensure no fatalities occur as a result of flooding in the tunnels. Over the last two years, Clark County Fire Department has distributed water to the homeless during extreme heat days to prevent heat exhaustion related fatalities. Social Service agencies provide welfare checks in areas where homeless are known to congregate. Clark County Emergency Operation Plan includes various annexes to address major components of a disaster, to include shelter and mass care options, and protective actions (evacuation). Community Organizations after the Disaster (COAD) is composed of over 40 local partners (homeless services agencies and non-homeless services agencies) how to respond to emergencies. COAD committee will have further conversations around how to serve the homeless populations during times of emergencies.

Carolyn Levering, City of Las Vegas, discussed existing hazards that currently pose a threat to Southern Nevada and determining the consequences of an emergency. For instance, if Las Vegas was hit with a 4.7 magnitude earthquake on Frenchman Falls (Eastern Mountains in Las Vegas), there could be an additional 12,000 people who would become homeless overnight, in addition to all the existing homeless individuals that are currently in the community. Ms. Levering encouraged committee members and the general public to be prepared for emergencies and develop a family emergency plan so the community at large can continue to be served after a disaster. The City of Las Vegas offers a regional mobile pet shelter to house or to co-locate families with their pets during emergencies. The City of Las Vegas has designated potential facilities that could be used to house large numbers of individuals during a disaster.

Sean Ward, Disaster Program Manager for the American Red Cross, gave an overview of implementation of sheltering options after a disaster. Local American Red Cross frequently responds to household fires in apartments and homes and offers an array of services to get the family back on their feet. In the event of a major emergency, American Red Cross will be one of the primary respondents to provide immediate sheltering options. The agency has mobile trailers full of equipment to serve about 500 individuals, and more resources can be brought to Las Vegas from neighboring Red Cross agencies in other states. In conjunction with CCSD and other governmental entities, American Red Cross will utilize mass facilities such as Junior High Schools or community centers to provide immediate shelter. Services include: immediate shelter, health services, mental health counselors, case management, food, clothing and referrals to outside agencies. Shelters are open for a few days to a week until families are able to relocate to a stable option. American Red Cross offers a free program that allows self-evaluation of organizations to gauge emergency preparedness and how to deal with the aftermath so services can be offered without

break. For more information, visit [www.readyrating.org](http://www.readyrating.org). Ninety seven percent of the Red Cross's services are carried out by volunteers.

Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance, stated that Ready Rating program information should be shared with local agency leaders at the Directors' Meeting. Ms. Sutton Pollard would like to have further discussion around aligning Clark County Fire Department water distribution efforts with City of Las Vegas Mayor's Faith Initiative efforts to hydrate our homeless population during extreme heat conditions. Annie Wilson, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, would also like to partner with the Clark County Fire Department to strengthen hydration efforts. Mr. Harsin thanked the presenters for sharing this important information and challenging the committee to examine emergency preparedness options for the homeless. He also commended the American Red Cross for providing excellent services to the community. Ms. Navis stated that emergency preparedness for the homeless can be further discussed at COAD meetings. She requested a committee member to attend the COAD meeting to do a homelessness 101 presentation. Barbara Geach, City of Henderson, echoed Mr. Harsin's sentiments and thanked the three presenters for raising awareness. Ms. Geach attended FEMA training to learn about what emergency preparedness looks like in our community. Although it was an informative and necessary training, she was overwhelmed by the needed services for those displaced individuals after a major disaster and inquired who is responsible for evacuating tunnels during flooding. Ms. Navis stated that when the National Weather Service notifies local leaders of anticipated rain, CCSS and HELP of Southern Nevada visit Las Vegas tunnels to notify the homeless of flooding dangers. Mr. Burch stated that the CCSS Assistant Director regularly attends the COAD meetings. Dr. Dodge expressed further coordination efforts to ensure that the outreach teams and first responders communicate with each other in tracking and mapping where the homeless population is in the community. Ms. Levering offered to create a GIS map of where the homeless are in the community based on existing local data. Ms. Navis invited committee members to discuss mapping and tracking homeless population at the Local Emergency Planning Sub-Committee to develop a plan to identify where the hazardous materials are located in relation to where the homeless are known to congregate.

**Agenda Item 10. Discuss orientation of membership for the Southern Nevada Homeless Continuum of Care Board; for possible action.**

Ms. Donner stated that in January of 2015, the Committee on Homelessness Board will be expanding to welcome new members. It would be beneficial for current and new board members to go through an orientation process to get an overview of all the efforts led by the committee. She requested a few months of past minutes to be included in the orientation packet. Mr. Harsin, Ms. Geach, and Dr. Dodge all supported and offered to work with the committee chair to formulate an orientation process. Ms. Sutton Pollard would like to include a general listing of providers in our community and what type of services are offered at their respective agencies. Dr. Dodge would also like the orientation process to include detailed information about the Continuum of Care, Regional Initiatives Office roles and responsibilities, a dictionary of local terms, and Homeless 101 training. Ms. Huang Hara suggested that it might be helpful to hear short presentations of all the initiatives and plans to reduce and end homelessness that are currently underway in our community. RIO does have a Homelessness 101 presentation that can be made available to committee members as well as the public.

**Agenda Item 11. Receive updates to the Committee's strategic plan and discuss future planning objectives; for possible action.**

Ms. Donner encouraged board members to review the current plan and provide any relevant updates to each of the key initiatives of the Committee on Homelessness 2013-2014 Strategic Plan to share at the upcoming meeting in January 2015. Ms. Geach asked for an update of the action items of initiatives listed in the plan. Ms. Sutton Pollard stated that many of the action items listed under the Community Engagement Committee have been complete but are not reflected in the presented plan. Mr. Burch

inquired about setting a date for the next Strategic Planning Session for 2015. Ms. Harsin recommends holding a planning session in March or April of 2015. Ms. Huang Hara stated that an email was sent out to all champions/organizational drivers to receive updates of individual action items but no feedback was provided. She also informed the committee that a final report of the 2015 Point in Time Count would be available around April or May, and inquired if that should be taken into account for the strategic planning session.

**Agenda Item 12. Receive an update from each committee member regarding relevant activities within their respective organizations relating to homelessness.**

Donna Jordan, SNAMHS, stated that SNAMHS facilities are giving out free flu vaccines and TDAC shots to the public.

Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance, stated that American Winter, an HBO documentary that highlights poverty and homelessness in America, is scheduled for a free showing at the East Las Vegas Community Center on January 21, 2015 at 6:00pm through the Mayor's Faith Initiative. This is event will also recruit for 2015 PIT count volunteers. Project Homeless Connect Debrief is scheduled for January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015 from 9:30am-11:00am at CCSS, 1600 Pinto Ln, Las Vegas, NV, 89106.

Tim Burch, Clark County Social Service, stated that Nevada was the first to host a Stable Housing, Better Health Initiative on December 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at CCSS. This technical assistance training included partners from local homeless services agencies, jurisdictions and state and federal partners to discuss policies, case management billables under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), discussing possibilities of bringing bridge housing for homeless and other vulnerable populations, etc. A formal report will be presented to the CoH by HomeBase, the technical assistance provider.

Dr. Dodge, Veterans Administration, would like to work with the Community Engagement group to incorporate media outlets to reach the community and raise awareness for homelessness. The VA is currently in process of coordinating an open house at the VA Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC) location.

**Agenda Item 13. Public Comment**

Phillip Hollon, The Salvation Army, gave an update of relevant activities at the agency. Boy Scouts of Southern Nevada were able to collect 84 pallets of food (close to 100,000 pounds of food) to replenish the food pantry at Salvation Army Family Services Department. In partnership with Zappos, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Turkey Giveaway was held on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014 where more than 700 families in the community were provided with turkey and all the fixings. In partnership with The Salvation Army, Zappos, and Three Square, The Hearts to Sole event was held on Zappos Campus to provide 1500 pairs of shoes to low-income and/or homeless men, women and children in the community. Circus Circus staff members visited Salvation Army on Wednesday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014 to serve almost 1000 meals. Thanks to MGM, Circus Circus staff, and family members for all their efforts.

The meeting adjourned at 3:12 p.m.