

MEETING MINUTES
SOUTHERN NEVADA REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION
COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
February 13, 2014

In attendance:

Kathi Thomas-Gibson, Chair, City of North Las Vegas
Julie Calloway, City of Boulder City
Barbara Geach, City of Henderson
Stephen Harsin, City of Las Vegas
Tim Burch, Clark County
Paula Zier, Clark County School District
Annie Wilson, alternate, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Jocelyn Bluitt-Fisher, MGM Resorts International
Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance
Jodie Gerson, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services
Dr. Cynthia Dodge, Veterans Administration

Absent:

Captain Shawn Anderson, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

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, at 2:03 p.m., on Thursday, February 13, 2014, at Clark County Pueblo Room, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada 89155. The agenda for the February 13, 2014 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.*

(Paula Zier and Jocelyn Bluitt-Fisher arrive.) Tamara Collins, Las Vegas Urban League, introduced the new Veterans employment grant providing employment opportunities and operating out of the Workforce One-Stop office, 6330 W. Charleston effective February 18. Services are available to homeless veterans, their spouses or widows, and provides limited support with rooms, housing, and crisis assistance offered from the new crisis center. They are currently taking calls and records of interest and will report back to the Committee at the March meeting. Kathi Thomas-Gibson asked about transportation availability. Ms. Collins answered that bus passes are available on demand for veterans and their family members at the 930 Owens office, but no physical transportation available to get clients to one-stop.

Agenda Item 3. Approval of the Agenda for February 13, 2014; for possible action.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Agenda. The motion carried, without opposition, and the Agenda was approved.

Agenda Item 4. Approval of the Minutes from the January 9, 2014 meeting; for possible action.

(Jodie Gerson arrives) A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes from the January 9, 2014 meeting. The motion carried and the Minutes were approved with 2 abstentions from Tim Burch and Jodie Gerson.

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

Tyrone Thompson, Regional Initiatives Coordinator, presented the update. The Continuum of Care application was submitted by Michele Fuller-Hallauer before the deadline, and the application was close to 3000 pages. He thanked the community providers for all their help in getting the applications in timely and mentioned the use of Zoom Grants, with a little technical assistance, the process went smoothly.

The Inclement Weather program runs through March of 2014. Although weather in Las Vegas has been beautiful, during inclement weather, the Shade Tree, Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, and HopeLink are open. It was noted that HopeLink provides hotel stays for people and has proved successful as a stopgap just to get people stabilized for a short term to get them into permanent housing.

The Mainstream Program Basic Training Schedule for 2014 was distributed. This year, the workshops will take place at various agencies and centers in the community in order to showcase some of the services they offer. The workshops are always held the 4th Wednesday of each month (from February through October), from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The first workshop, Medical Services/Affordable Care Act, will take place at the Cambridge Recreation Center, 3930 Cambridge Street, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119. From 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. there will be speakers addressing the topic, and at the close of the workshop session, from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. there will be an optional tour of the facility for the attendees. The tour will be optional for both the co-hosting service provider and the attendees.

The Homeless Census is in progress due to the various components of the census. The census is usually conducted in odd-numbered years during the last 10 days of January. The Regional Initiatives Office applied for the VA (Veterans Administration) funding, on behalf of Southern Nevada, and was one of 16 communities that were approved, so conducted an even-year census and plan to do so yearly. A point-in-time count date is determined in coordination with the rural communities and the northern part of the state. This year we had over 300 volunteers, including Las Vegas Councilman Ricky Barlow and County Commissioner Mary Beth Scow.

Components of the census are:

1. Shelter Count, where providers, who must put their information into the HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) on the evening of January 28th.
2. A new addition to the census was to conduct surveys of the homeless, as well as take a visual count, in two specific areas. This was accomplished by using volunteers who worked with first responders, code enforcement personnel, firefighters and certain very skilled community workers along the Las Vegas strip, from Sahara to Russell, and on Bonanza, Main Street and Fremont, all the way to Bruce. The census count began at

midnight, rather than 1 or 2:00 a.m. Bus passes were given to the homeless individuals who assisted with the surveys in these areas, to thank them for their services. There were about 30 surveys done on the Las Vegas Strip area and about 15-20 done in the Fremont Street area.

3. On January 29, 2014, at 1:00 a.m., the 2014 urban count began. There were 5 deployment stations: Catholic Charities; Walnut Recreation Center; Cambridge Community Center; Rawson Neal; and HopeLink in Henderson. There were walking tracts and driving tracts.
4. Around 5:00 a.m. on January 29th special teams of outreach workers went into the tunnels, to count the homeless in those areas.
5. From about 9:00 a.m. to about 1:00 p.m., a count of the youth in Southern Nevada was done. At the Cambridge Recreation Center at around 12:00 p.m. we did a “Kick Back Party” for the youth which involved a brunch and conducted close to 40 surveys.
6. On January 30, 2014, the rural areas census count took place in Mesquite at the Family Resource Center, and in Laughlin at the Colorado River Food Bank, where we conducted about 35 interviews. Clark County Code Enforcement was involved as was the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department with their helicopter for the mountainous areas.
7. Street and shelter surveys are in the process of being conducted. There have been a large number of volunteers to assist in this, including the Downtown Rangers, which also helped the night of the census.
8. The phone surveys help identify hidden homeless. By mid spring, we should have the final census report.

Through the HEARTH Act (Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing Act), implementation of a coordinated intake system is to begin by July 2014. Agency director meetings have been held to discuss the structure and method for coordinate intake. From the meeting held in November 2013, we came up with a feedback survey because of the various sizes of organizations involved. An informal bid request was posted for facilitation of this effort on a daily basis, and four bids were received. A group of directors from our social service agencies volunteered, and selected the Corporation for the Support of Housing (CSH). On February 5, a kickoff meeting was convened with about 40 participants who serve the homeless in our community. The Charrette meetings to finalize the intake process will occur in May.

On February 25, at 4:00 p.m., a presentation will be given at the Clark County Government Center in the Commission Chambers about asset mapping to discuss where services are in our community. Also included will be how Housing First works with intensive case management that has been provided by HELP of Southern Nevada for over 6 years with our chronic homeless. Also to be discussed are the collective efforts in working with downtown business operators and specifically addressing homelessness in the downtown area.

Jodie Gerson suggested staying in touch with the volunteers throughout the year to keep them abreast of things so that next year when various activities occur, i.e. Project Homeless Connect and the Homeless Census, trained and experienced volunteers will be available. Mr. Thompson mentioned that volunteers in the office have actually made a database as well as continuing to work with United Way of Southern Nevada. We also conducted five training sessions, and utilized up to 75 homeless guides/navigators that included homeless veterans, or individuals from transitional or permanent housing programs. Ms. Gerson asked how the committee could

push to keep volunteers, since it is such a big thing. Mr. Thompson suggested that through Stacy Sutton Pollard and the Community Engagement Working Group could out periodic blasts to keep volunteers updated. Ms. Sutton Pollard mentioned putting on the agenda of the next Community Engagement meeting suggestions on how to maintain the communication throughout the year.

Agenda Item 6. Receive an update from the Nevada Homeless Alliance; for possible action.

Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance, announced that the February Provider meeting is set for Wednesday, February 19, 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. For the first quarter of 2014 Salvation Army is hosting the meetings, which is the rolling location. Ms. Sutton Pollard thanked the city of Las Vegas and announced that the scheduled date for Family Connect is May 29. More information will be coming out in the next few weeks. We will resume the provider presentations beginning in March with Living Grace Home and Project 150 in April.

Agenda Item 7. Receive updates on and discuss the Committee's 2013-2014 Strategic Plan and its key objectives; for possible action.

Ms. Thomas-Gibson referred everyone to the chart with each of the Champions listed. Going in the order of the chart, each Champion will give a brief update if they have anything to update. Tim Burch stated the UFA working group has sought out technical assistance from HomeBase with a kickoff call after this meeting to discuss scope of work assigned to begin to compile individual guidance. TA feedback assistance was compiled and will give back universal check list for readiness & apply it to Southern Nevada CoC. Set up individual status for those who wish to apply to see where gaps are. Team members are: Lisa Morris Hibbler, Kathy Somers, Michele Fuller-Hallauer, and Kathi Thomas-Gibson.

Tara Ulmer, City of Las Vegas and chair of the implementation group to develop the monitoring and evaluation plan for the region. Efforts have been suspended to assist in development of the Continuum of Care Plan. Efforts will start up again in the next few weeks to ensure a thorough evaluation and monitoring of all CoC grantees for the next application process which HUD states will be sooner than before.

Stephen Harsin, City of Las Vegas, stated the committee for the governance structure has been meeting for the last several months and he feels that a clean draft will be available for presentation by the April meeting.

Michele Fuller-Hallauer, Continuum of Care Coordinator, reported on the written standards, policies and procedures. The CoC policies are in draft form and are ready to go to the CoC evaluation working group at their next meeting for review, modifications (if necessary), and then will come before committee for approval. HMIS written standards come under same component. HMIS governance is in complete draft form and ready to go to local HMIS and statewide HMIS working groups. Once approved, it will be brought back to committee.

Catherine Huang Hara, Senior Management Analyst, reported that the document was completed in July and the last update was a couple of months ago.

Ms. Fuller-Hallauer reported that many of the directives to achieve the goals of the CoC Community Action Plan are in process of being implemented. Many components and moving parts in action plan including the gaps analysis plan done last summer informed of action steps that needed to take place under that cap. The process involved in the recent intense CoC

application helped to get to that point. By next meeting will be able to give written idea as to status of implementation.

Ms. Gerson reported that team has met and everyone working on getting alignment of local plan with the HEARTH Act. Half of the plan has been submitted and just waiting on second half of plan. Although the January deadline was not met, it is anticipated that the report will be submitted at the March meeting.

Ms. Huang Hara, reported that the document evaluating the progress on current objectives was done at the same time the gaps analysis was done and has already been completed.

Ms. Sutton Pollard reported that a sub-group meeting regarding Community Engagement will be held on February 25, but a brief update was given. Informed that of toolkit presented in December meeting, review of feedback from Committee on Homelessness was done and moving forward on publish results. Presently the team is just waiting on templates to make it more aesthetically pleasing regarding wording and language. These results will be posted on Help Hope Home and Nevada Homeless Alliance website once that is done. Also, they are working to spread speaking points for community buzz, which was initially introduced at Mayor's Faith Initiative and will be introducing it at provider meetings. Also, they will be asking providers to start using same language with regards to homelessness so everyone is using the same points, and are adding additional pages to address certain areas of homelessness to address "Donating Responsibly" and "Feeding Responsibly."

Mr. Thompson reported that the committee he champions is the same as the committee championed by Ms. Gerson.

Agenda Item 8. Receive an update on coordination of mobile crisis intervention and outreach services in Southern Nevada; for possible action.

Lisa Morris Hibbler, City of Las Vegas, reported that the mobile outreach committee met on Tuesday, February 4th, to discuss the different outreach services available and how to collaborate better. It was discussed how to improve the services. One way is through coordinated contracts. Based on recent national conference, it was thought that perhaps having a qualified mental health professionals conduct outreach, improve on wrap around services, and have a stronger emphasis on helping clients navigate through the system in obtaining stability of permanency. Meetings will be held with outreach providers in order to get input and receive feedback. Opened up the opportunity to have volunteers from the non-profit community to contact her, Mr. Thompson, or Ms. Ulmer to participate in the group. Dr. Morris Hibbler mentioned that although other things have been tried in the past, outreach is a critical step in the process of getting clients into services. Through the outreach, it is hoped to achieve insight that if there is certain area not funded or a certain population not being reached, improvements could be made. Dr. Morris Hibbler stated that a meeting notice for the next meeting will be sent. Dr. Cynthia Dodge volunteered to attend the meeting and stated correctness of setting up structures and getting people involved in outreach, but also that it needs to tie into centralized intake so that would inform on how to do outreach. Dr. Morris Hibbler stated that the City of Las Vegas and Clark County, who fund the majority of services, have discussed what can be done to spread the services around. Ms. Gerson volunteered her agency to assist with any needs.

Agenda Item 9. Receive an update on the coordination and distribution of items to the homeless; for possible action.

Tara Ulmer, City of Las Vegas, discussed the problem of uncoordinated street donations in specific areas that cause many problems, including increased blight, health and safety issues, negative impact on businesses and residential neighborhoods, increased cost for street cleaning and maintenance. Also the street donations are discouraging the homeless to seek services from the service providers. A sub-group was developed to focus on the issue of street donations. A survey was conducted to determine why people prefer street donations. Some of the feedback showed that many do not believe the donations reach the homeless; the volunteers get first pick of the donations and give the leftovers to the homeless; some just like the feeling of dealing directly with the homeless person on the street; others felt it was their biblical directive to feed and care for the homeless; some use it as a lesson to teach young people of those less fortunate or as a community project. The committee came up with three ways to approach the issue:

1. Educating the community of the negative impacts of donating directly to the homeless
2. Provide alternatives
3. Enforcement of rules and policies in place and possibly developing new rules and policies

Things occurring around the approaches are:

Community Engagement team was asked to include in their development efforts messaging and materials regarding street donations to ensure communications are consistent and clear. Once final documents are available, it is planned to have ongoing PSA's, media alerts, printed materials, postcard/letter campaign, and information on as many websites as possible.

Mention was made of the public awareness that was done by Metro regarding the negative impact of direct homeless donations via the news media. Metro is currently involved in an initiative called "The Giving Project", which provides a coordinated venue on a rotational basis for those that wish to provide a direct donations with the homeless. Lt. Fagal has been asked to come to the next CoH meeting to give a presentation on this project, if agenda would allow.

Mayor has Faith based program which has seven different areas, one of which is homeless. A sub-group was formed, within the homeless sub-group, to specifically focus on street outreach and developing specific ideas targeting faith organizations which feed and do on the street donations. The group continues to meet but Maria Castillo-Couch has developed a faith-based website that has a homeless web-page which talks about responsible donations as well as alternatives to donating on the street. The City of Las Vegas identifies AmeriCorps Vista contact, Brandon Thomas, to any callers who inquire about donating responsibly. He works with the individuals to coordinate healthy, safe donation opportunities, as well as opportunities for youth to learn about homelessness and community services. He accomplishes this by partnering with homeless service providers, churches, and other faith organizations.

The committee is also working with Metro and Councilman Barlow's office to determine what laws or ordinances are outdated or need to be created to help combat the problem. Tara offered the opportunity to get involved with the sub-group or get more information about responsible donating by calling 229-4280 or email corridorofhope@lasvegasnevada.gov. Kathi Thomas-Gibson asked about the videos that were done, to which Tara stated the videos are uploaded on the faith website, www.clvvn.net. Annie Wilson of Metro Police Department stated that she and Lt. Fagal will be at the next meeting to answer any questions or concerns anyone might have about "The Giving Project". At this time, there are three tentative locations being considered, as

well as possibly the library on Las Vegas Blvd. (who is willing to work with Metro) and maybe some other groups. Dr. Dodge praised having the faith based website, but questioned whether there were links to HelpHopeHome.org or steer it to Stacy, to keep the consistency of information at all the websites. Tara stated that intention is to make sure it is all cross-linked and cross-referred as soon as the HelpHopeHome.org website gets updated.

Agenda Item 10. Receive an update from the Clark County School District on the Youth Working Group; for possible action.

Paula Zier, Title I HOPE Coordinator for the Homeless Outreach for the Clark County School District, reported that a meeting was held on January 22nd, with youth providers; however, a representative from the center is still being sought. There is the possibility of having a library outreach representative on the team. Based on the strategic plan, some of the goals set on a regional level are:

Focus on communication to inform every one of resources available.

Building engagement that accompanies the Community Engagement working group.

Eliminating barriers that are causing youth to not be able to get services available.

The team also looked at the coordinated intake piece. Representation for our team includes Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth and Southern Nevada Children's First. We looked at initiatives going on that effect youth. Kelly Woods, who was in charge of the youth census, shared information with us. Christina Vela from Clark County is working on a Department of Family Services grant that is targeting preventing homelessness for children that are in the child welfare system. The next meeting will be March 19th at the Government Center in the Organization Development Center. Finalization of the Community Engagement information is anticipated being shared as well as updating the consolidated or coordinated intake process. Target the collaborations to implement in shelters. Title I CCSD Pre-K services are being implemented at The Shade Tree, and a second location is being looked into.

Before moving onto the next agenda item, Kathi Thomas-Gibson welcomed Jocelyn Bluitt Fisher of MGM Resorts as the newest committee member.

Agenda Item 11. 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.

Annie Wilson, Las Vegas Metro Police Department, commented on her excitement about The Giving Program. This morning, Metro went to G Street and McWilliams and counted 105 men and 3 women. Catholic workers were out feeding about 6 a.m.

Dr. Dodge now has peer support at the VA that works on outreach efforts to help folks navigate and to assist veterans who are having trouble even when services are provided for them. Ms. Gerson also commented that her agency is presently working on a Peer-to-Peer initiative. Since SNAMHS presently has about six peer-to-peer navigators, and Foundation for Recovery also has a wealth of them, she and Dr. Dodge have been talking to get an initiative for the entire community and to put together a project.

Tim Burch, Clark County, noted that the Housing First conference is March 11th – 14th, in Chicago. Some of the themes of the conference are 24-hour crisis access, therapeutic court models, clinical outreach to the streets, Housing First and supportive services. He mentioned some of the agencies sending representatives from our area, but invited anyone going to speak with him in order to develop a plan to cover as many workshops as possible as well as nightly debriefing.

Ms. Zier, updated the number of homeless children identified in the Clark County School District from Pre-K through 12 grade as 7,700 as compared to 6,900 last year.

Ms. Gerson stated that Donna Jordan, an alternate for her agency, will be attending the next meeting.

Jocelyn Bluitt-Fisher, MGM Resorts International, thanked everyone for the warm welcome and her anticipation to work on the committee.

Ms. Fuller-Hallauer mentioned that the National Alliance to End Homelessness Conference is being held in New Orleans February 17-20. She will present at two of the workshops. One, regarding the VA/CoC collaboration, and the other regarding our Youth Point-in-Time.

Ms. Thomas-Gibson thanked everyone for their updates.

Agenda Item 12. 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.*

Phillip Hollon, the Salvation Army, thanked everyone on the homeless census committee for a job well done, as well as the volunteers. He also stated that because of the information shared with regards to homeless children in the Clark County School District, he was able to contact First California Mortgage Company which adopted 30 children at Walter P. Long Elementary School who had been on the waiting list to be approved for the Back Pack Food program. This means that 30 children for the next 15 weeks will be able to receive meals from Three Square.

Dr. Morris-Hibbler reported that Councilman Ricky Barlow was appointed by Senator Reid to the National Council to End Hunger.

Ed Uhling, stated he feels the homeless issues begins in the Government Center Building, due to the building regulations of Clark County being so strict.

Meeting adjourned at 2:03 pm.