

MEETING MINUTES
SOUTHERN NEVADA REGIONAL PLANNING COALITION
COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
January 9, 2014

In attendance:

Kathi Thomas-Gibson, Chair, City of North Las Vegas
Julie Calloway, City of Boulder City
Stephen Harsin, City of Las Vegas
Barbara Geach, City of Henderson
Paula Zier, Clark County School District
Bobby Gordon, alternate, Clark County
Annie Wilson, alternate, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance

Absent:

Dr. Carolyn Hughes, Veterans Administration
Jocelyn Bluitt-Fisher, MGM Resorts International
Jodie Gerson, Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services

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 2:01 p.m., on Thursday, January 9, 2014, at North Las Vegas City Hall, Room 521, 2250 Las Vegas Blvd. North, North Las Vegas, Nevada 89030. The agenda for the January 9, 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.*

A representative from Transparent Mental Health introduced himself and the new agency, which provides out-patient mental health services to the community, including the homeless. The agency website is www.transparentmh.com.

Agenda Item 3. Approval of the Agenda for January 9, 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 December 12, 2013 meeting; for possible action.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes from the December 12, 2013 meeting. The motion carried and the Minutes were approved.

Agenda Item 5. Approval of changes in board membership; for possible action.

Catherine Huang Hara, Regional Initiatives Office, introduced the new board members: Kathi Thomas-Gibson, City of North Las Vegas and new Board Chair; Julie Calloway, representing the City of Boulder City and new Vice-Chair; and Jocelyn Bluitt-Fisher of MGM Resorts International, who was unable to

attend the meeting. The new alternates are Tamara Harris for Nevada Homeless Alliance and Leone Lettsome for City of North Las Vegas. A motion was made and seconded to accept the new board membership. The motion carried without opposition and the new board membership was approved. Stephen Harsin, past Chair, then passed the Chair responsibilities over to Kathi Thomas-Gibson. Ms. Thomas-Gibson thanked Mr. Harsin for his past leadership.

Agenda Item 6. Receive an update from the Regional Initiatives Office; for possible action.

Tyrone Thompson, Regional Initiatives Coordinator, presented the update. January 29, 2014, at 1:00 a.m., the 2014 urban Homeless Census count will begin. HUD requires a bona fide count of the homeless who are on the street, in transitional shelter, and in supportive housing programs, in order to obtain a good assessment of the various populations that are homeless and use the correct resources for the proper areas. The census is usually conducted in odd-numbered years; however, Veterans Administration set aside funding to conduct a census in 2014 and invited communities to apply for the funds. The VA targeted veteran homelessness to end by the end of 2015, in line with the goal of Opening Doors, the federal strategic plan to end homelessness. The Regional Initiatives Office applied for the VA funding, on behalf of Southern Nevada, and was one of 16 communities that were approved. There will be 5 deployment stations for the January 29th census – Catholic Charities, the core deployment station, which has the densest homeless population; Walnut Recreation Center for the north; Cambridge Community Center for the southeast; and Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services for the west. Confirmation of the exact deployment station in Henderson is pending; the exact deployment site should be finalized no later than the week of January 13, 2014. At 1:00 a.m. on January 29th, volunteers will report to their assigned deployment station and get their tracking area assignment to make a visual count of the homeless, either by car or by walking the assigned area. A new innovation to the census process will be to conduct surveys of the homeless, as well as take a visual count, in two specific areas. To accomplish this, volunteers will work 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. These census counts will begin at midnight, rather than 1 or 2:00 a.m. Bus passes will be given to the homeless individuals who assist with the surveys in these areas, to thank them for their services. On the evening of January 28th, a shelter count will be conducted. All transitional housing programs and emergency shelter programs will need to provide a count of the number of homeless who stayed at the shelters the night of January 28th and left the morning of January 29th. Volunteers should be prepared to devote approximately 5 hours of their time to the census, from 1:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. Special teams of outreach workers will also go into the tunnels around 5:00 a.m. of January 29th, to count the homeless in those areas. A count of the youth in Southern Nevada will also be part of the census. Steps are being taken to determine an appropriate time to hold a “survey party” with the community’s homeless youth gathered together at a particular location and holding an event, such as a brunch or a late lunch. During that event surveys can be conducted. Teams of census volunteers will also walk certain areas known to be frequented by homeless youth, to obtain a youth count. This may also present an opportunity for the survey groups to bring in faith-based organizations to distribute certain clothing, such as socks, etc., and other necessities to the youth who are encountered during the census. On January 30, 2014, the rural areas census count will take place in the Mesquite, Laughlin and other rural areas. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department will provide air support to canvas the entire perimeter of the targeted areas. Metro has a special heat sensor that can determine if there are people living in the rural mountainous areas. The following week (beginning February 3, 2014), additional street and shelter surveys will be conducted, which will enable us to get a better idea of the population in our community that is most vulnerable, as well as the number of homeless veterans we have in our community. Hopefully, this will result in more resources for Southern Nevada’s homeless services efforts.

Volunteers are greatly needed. Those who wish to volunteer can call (702) 455-5832. Census training for the volunteers will take place on January 23, 2014 in two sessions: at 8:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., at the Clark County Government Center Chambers, 500 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, Nevada. Each session is expected to be approximately 1-1 ½ hours long.

A Coordinated Intake and Assessment meeting was held on January 8, 2014, in response to a federal mandate that all Continuum of Care organizations throughout the nation implement a coordinated intake in their community by July 2014. It was decided that a working group would be required, which will be composed of one representative from each of the homeless service providers, to be selected by the agency directors. The working groups will use the practices utilized in the past, including the 100K-type of initiative, with Boot Camp as the starting point. The goal is to begin on February 5, 2014 and fully implement the coordinated intake in the community at the end of 100 days. A Request for Formal Bids (from CoC planning dollars) will be issued in the near future. A facilitator will be needed to coordinate and stay on top of the pulse of this endeavor on a daily basis, working with the service providers to insure all are meeting their obligations.

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 co-hosting agencies are being requested to conduct a tour of their facility for the attendees at the close of the workshop session, from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. The tour will be optional for both the co-hosting service provider and the attendees. The first workshop, Medical Services/Affordable Care Act, will take place at the Cambridge Recreation Center. Within walking distance to the Recreation Center is the Cambridge Family Health Center.

The Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority is inviting the community to a public housing forum, to be held on Friday, February 7, 2014, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., in the SNRHA Commission Chambers located at 340 N. 11th Street, Las Vegas, NV 89101. The purpose is to let people know who can apply for their programs, inform them of the Housing Choice voucher (Section 8), vouchers for Veterans (VASH), public housing and affordable housing, preferences for admission (e.g., Connection to Home program), criminal screening and wait list fluctuations. Call Dawn Leo at (702) 922-6965 to RSVP or for more information.

Annie Wilson, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, asked the location of the deployment station for those who will conduct the census and surveys on the Las Vegas Strip. The location of the deployment station has yet to be finalized with the first responders however, as soon as it is, agencies will be notified. This information will not be made public.

Agenda Item 7. Approval of recommendations for funding for the local 2013 Continuum of Care competition and authorize the Continuum of Care Coordinator to make necessary modifications for final application submission to U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD); for possible action.

Michele Fuller-Hallaeur, Continuum of Care Coordinator, gave a PowerPoint presentation, entitled “2013/2014 HUD Continuum of Care Consolidated Application Recommendations.” The score given to the submitted CoC Consolidated Application by HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) will affect funding for both 2013 and 2014 allocations; however, an individual submission for the project application will still be necessary. Today’s presentation covered the 2013 project applications and the application ranking process applied by the CoC Evaluation Working Group (EWG). Local applications were distributed during the summer of 2013, and were due, via ZoomGrants, by 9/5/13. The competition was reopened on 9/11/13 and those who had previously submitted their applications by the initial 9/5/13 deadline were given an extended period, to 9/20/13, to amend their applications, if they determined the need to do so. HUD released the Notice of Funding Availability

(NOFA) on 11/22/13. Pursuant to that information and the guidelines therein, the EWG ranked the scored local applications on 12/9/13. On 12/11/13, HUD released further guidance, via a webinar. Key components of the webinar guidelines necessitated the reconvening of the EWG to reevaluate its initial ranking of the local applications. The EWG met on 12/19/13 to rank the applications afresh, using the key components and suggestions of the webinar, as well as a Project Performance Scorecard for every application under review. (The PowerPoint handout listed the components and information that were utilized in the development of the Project Performance Scorecard). The CoC Consolidated Application, with the new rankings, is due to HUD by February 3, 2014.

HUD's priorities for funding are as follows: (1) those who have been homeless the longest; (2) permanent supportive housing; (3) rapid rehousing; (4) planning (by CoC); and data (HMIS system). In addition, HUD strongly encourages the reallocation of funds to decrease transitional housing and increase permanent housing, with the exception of transitional housing for youth and other special circumstances. The EWG's goal is to present the strongest CoC Consolidated Application for our community that will reflect the goal of Opening Doors, the federal plan to prevent and end homelessness: to end chronic and Veteran homelessness by 2015, family and youth homelessness by 2020, and chart the course to end all homelessness by 2020. The Opening Doors strategy was taken into account in the development of the Scorecard. HUD encourages funding for new permanent housing projects. However, this year, the only way to develop and fund new projects in the community is to take money away from other projects; there is no extra money. HUD also clarified that this year permanent housing is for the chronically homeless, rapid rehousing is for families, and any other projects, using reallocated monies, will be rejected. HUD determines the ranking order of the projects; despite the order determined by the local CoC; nevertheless the local CoC has to first rank the projects in either Tier 1 or Tier 2 status. The projects up for renewal this year totaled \$11,134,672; this is the Renewal Demand Amount and was the maximum amount we could apply for. However, the amount of funding for Tier 1 had to be reduced to \$10,577,938.40, which reflects a 5% reduction of the Renewal Demand Amount, as required by HUD. The remaining 5%, or \$556,733.60, was to be applied to Tier 2 projects. Because HUD does not have enough money to fund all renewals nationwide, the highest scoring CoC Consolidated Applications, nationwide, will be the first to have their Tier 1 and then Tier 2 projects funded. Therefore, it is critical that the Southern Nevada CoC Consolidated Application has high scores. The CoC is also eligible to apply for up to \$139,183 for CoC Planning costs. However, taking the maximum amount would necessarily result in a reduced amount for another program. The conscious decision was made that the CoC would apply for only \$96,302 of this amount (the same amount applied for last year) to maximize as many funds as possible for community projects and providers. There is a possibility that 2012 projects that have not yet entered contracts with HUD will be removed from the CoC Consolidated Application, without penalty to the CoC. Should this occur, those projects can reapply next year.

A motion was made and seconded for approval of the ranking recommendations, as presented in the PowerPoint presentation, as well as authorization to the CoC Coordinator to make any necessary modifications to the Consolidated Application, in order to submit it to HUD by the due date of February 3, 2014. Bobby Gordon, Clark County Social Service, abstained from voting because her agency has applications in the process. Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance, and Annie Wilson (Las Vegas Metro Police Department) abstained from voting because they participated in the ranking process. The motion carried without opposition and the recommended ranking was approved.

Agenda Item 8. Receive an update from WestCare on the Community Triage Center; for possible action.

Barbara Geach, City of Henderson, exited the meeting. Erin Kinard, WestCare Area Director, provided a PowerPoint presentation, entitled "The Community Triage Center." WestCare has a fully executed

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was issued to all funding entities by 12/31/13. They are also under contract to purchase the NALA Bldg. on Maryland Parkway. The exact usage of the facility has not yet been determined; however, the building will provide more beds for the community. The consistent endeavor of WestCare is data collection and reporting and alignment of WestCare with HMIS, so that data entered into WestCare's data system will also be entered into HMIS. Collaboration with community providers has increased significantly, which has been a benefit to WestCare clients once they have completed WestCare's programs. Ms. Kinard presented a report and data on the number of clients served at Community Triage Center (CTC); the top zip codes at admission; socio-economic factors of those served; non-hospital referral sources; hospital referrals; discharge reasons; discharge placements (with discharges to private residences and to the streets being the top two); primary drug of choice of those served; mental health assessments; and primary mental health diagnoses and other mental health data. All of the data presented compared the numbers in 2013 to those of the first quarter of 2014.

Kathi Thomas-Gibson, City of North Las Vegas, noted that the Affordable Care Act will give many previously uninsured clients an insurance pay source. She asked if WestCare has any plans to refer their clients to other mental health providers who will accept the insurances of the newly-insured clients. Ms. Kinard replied that CTC has 3 funded case managers who are currently networking with mental health providers in the community, in an effort to develop such referral resources.

Annie Wilson, Las Vegas Metro Police, asked if those discharged from the jails are being first sent to the CTC. Ms. Kinard responded that the referral source determines where the client will be sent. If the client is actually being referred by one of the officers connected with the jail (regarded as a true jail referral), the client will be sent to the CTC. If the referral comes from a judge's order or a parole officer, the client will be directed to one of the community mental health providers.

Agenda Item 9. Receive an update on the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) from Bitfocus; for possible action.

Taura Royce, Bitfocus, offered an update via a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Bitfocus: Homeless Management Information System Committee on Homelessness Update." The PowerPoint provided a report on: the Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) Participation; Clarity HMIS Developments; Clarity Human Services; and HMIS Technical Support.

Bitfocus recently submitted its 2013 AHAR data for Southern Nevada to HUD. The AHAR report is a national report provided by HUD and given to the U.S. Congress. At the national level, it is regarded as the most important resource for understanding homelessness in America. HUD established 24 categories of data that must be submitted annually by communities, covering the period October through September, in order for HUD to prepare its composite AHAR report to Congress. The data for each category submitted by the community must be submitted to HUD in 24 separate reports. Bitfocus submitted 24 separate reports for each of the 24 categories and the data was 100% approved by HUD in each of the 24 categories. The data from Southern Nevada was included in HUD's national report. This was a huge success when compared to HUD's review of the 2012 submission. When HUD reviews the 24 categories, it looks for three things in particular: **(1) Bed Coverage** – if less than 50% of the beds in each category are entered into HMIS, the result is immediate rejection by HUD for that category. In the past, this has been the biggest barrier for Southern Nevada. **(2) Utilization** of HMIS within the categories. If bed coverage is met, HUD then looks at utilization data. If utilization is below 65%, it appears as if not all of the clients are being entered into HMIS. If utilization is above 105%, it appears that clients are being entered into HMIS but never removed from HMIS. In either case, the percentages raise red flags with HUD, and usually result in rejection of the category. **(3) Demographics Data** – there are many demographics questions that are asked in the report. If it appears that the responses fall below a certain percentage, it results in immediate rejection. No standard threshold percentage has been

established by HUD, but in the past HUD has rejected responses that fall below 3% of its expectation. The standard is very high for this criterion. Data entered by our service providers in Southern Nevada is extremely important and the use of the Clarity HMIS system has greatly improved the entry and storage of data needed for annual reports such as the AHAR. Communities whose data are included in the national AHAR report are given points in the grants HUD awards to that community.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed with UMC to begin using the Clarity HMIS system. It will be used to determine eligibility for clients coming into ER and connecting with case managers at participating agencies. Training for UMC staff will take place on January 16, 2014.

A number of Clarity HMIS Developments have occurred, including: the availability of ESG CAPER and PATH APR from the system; planning usage of the CABHI grant to allow CABHI recipients to pull data from the Clarity HMIS system; selection as the pilot system to integrate real-time Veteran Status determination; system upgrades to improve coordinated intake and assessment; creation of the 100K Homes Report.

HMIS Technical Support is available via telephone, email, website, remote and classroom training, and manuals. The portal is www.help.clarityhs.com.

Agenda Item 10. Receive a presentation from the Nevada Homeless Alliance on the 2013 Fall Project Homeless Connect and recognize community partners; for possible action.

Stacy Sutton Pollard, Nevada Homeless Alliance, offered a PowerPoint presentation entitled “Project Homeless Connect Fall 2013 Summary.” Ms. Sutton Pollard thanked the agency partners who participated and presented certificates to the section leaders of PHC for their dedication and service leading up to and during PHC. The success of PHC was highlighted via photos and data collected. In brief, 2,992 clients were served, of which 300 were families; over 130 community agencies and departments participated; and 520 community volunteers and 400 agency volunteers offered their services. The annual event is not only for the homeless but those who are struggling, at risk of homelessness and who need to be made aware of the availability of various community resources. Preregistration of a number of clients and the implementation of the Clarity Passport resulted in preregistered client entry time of 39 seconds per client.

The next service provider meeting will take place on January 15, 2014.

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 thanked HELP of Southern Nevada and Transparent Mental Health for their assistance and cooperation with the Metro police who are working in the downtown area. With their help, Metro was able to assist 14 people this morning.

Paula Zier, Clark County School District, announced that the next meeting of the Youth Working Group will be on January 22, 2014, at 10:30 a.m., at the Clark County Government Center.

Kathi Thomas-Gibson, City of North Las Vegas, thanked Stephen Harsin for his work and efforts as past Chair of the SNRPC.

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 take. Comments will be limited to three minutes.*

Phillip Hollon, Salvation Army, announced that Major Bob and Major Rhonda Moyd will now serve at the Salvation Army office in Boise, Idaho. Major Kelly Potsler will be the new coordinator for Clark

County, effective January 15, 2014. On December 21, 2013, 7,000 children received Christmas toys at Cashman Center, and families received \$20 Walmart gift certificates. Mr. Hollon also thanked those businesses, community agencies and volunteers who offered their services throughout the year.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.