

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

Homeless Services Task Force (Zoom Meeting)

Wednesday, May 06, 2020

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Meeting Notes *(submitted by Laurie Jacobs)*

Welcome & Introductions

Elected officials/representatives in attendance: Council Member Christian Horvath (Redondo Beach); Council Member Alex Monteiro (Hawthorne); Council Member Stacey Armato (Hermosa Beach); Gabriela Medina (Council Member Joe Buscaino, CD15); Dhakshike Wickrema and Nicole Powell (Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas); Ivan Sulic (Supervisor Janice Hahn); Jeanette Christian (U.S. Senator Diane Feinstein); Janet Turner (Representative Ted Lieu); Cody Bridges (Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi)

Others in attendance: Keith Bennett (Carson); Marco Lemus (El Segundo PD); Jackie Coppas-Arcos (Gardena); Kimberly Mack, Von Norris (Hawthorne); Joel Romero, Jose Saldana (Hawthorne PD); Lori Jones (Inglewood); Michael Reyes (Lawndale); Daniella Knighton (Lomita); John LaRock (Redondo Beach); Wayne Windman (Redondo Beach PD); Jeannie Naughton (Rolling Hills Estates); Connor Shortland, Viet Hoang (Torrance); Ashlee Oh, Rowena Magana (LACHI); Saira Cooper, Jose Delgado (LAHSA); Courtney Reed, Haley Fuselier (PATH); Breanna Jajairam, Karli Dreizler, Shari Weaver (Harbor Interfaith Services); Nancy Wilcox (SBCEH); Jesse Ramirez (St. Margaret's Center/Hawthorne); Kiran Magiawala (Hawthorne resident); Teri Neustaedter (League of Women Voters Beach Cities); Jacki Bacharach, Grace Farwell, Laurie Jacobs, David Leger (SBCCOG)

Redondo Beach Council Member Christian Horvath opened the meeting.

March 4, 2020 meeting notes – Received and filed

LA County Homeless Initiative and LAHSA Project Roomkey Update – Ashlee Oh, Homeless Initiative, CEO, LA County and Jose Delgado, LASHA together gave a presentation on Project Roomkey (PRK) Enabling People Experiencing Homelessness to Stay Safe at Home (included both a video and PowerPoint)

Highlights of presentation along with questions and answers:

- Per Ashlee, part of PRK staffing includes roving & healthcare services providing clinical services via tele-health as well as pairing with substance abuse technicians and mental health providers to amplify health care on site
- The individuals are already our homeless neighbors in SPA8
- PRK is a collaborative effort by State, County & LAHSA to secure hotel/motel housing during the COVID-19 pandemic
- All PRK candidates are pre-tested for COVID-19 to ensure not positive or symptomatic prior to being considered for PRK
- Eligible are 65+ or have a chronic underlying health condition
- PRK provides 24-hour security on site
- PRK are not walk up sites – must have referrals

- LAHSA oversees each hotel site with operations led by a Service Provider, logistics from LAFD and staffed by County Disaster Service Workers
- Currently 3,100 rooms under agreement with occupancy 1,800+
- Served 3 meals a day and temperature is taken at each meal
- Not a lockdown although occupants are encouraged to stay local, follow guidelines & only leave for necessary medical or other services. Tested every time they leave or re-enter.

Note: Most questions revolved around the operation process and exit strategies

- Initially PRK set up with 90-day contracts which allows time to consider contingency plans should the “stay at home” order be extended.
- Goal is to house as many as possible during this time and use this as opportunity to secure more permanent housing.
- County & State have been working directly with hotels, but cities can submit other potential hotel sites as long as sites meet the size and other requirements. Optimum size is 100+ rooms but could consider smaller hotels based on local needs. Looking for best “bang for the buck”.
- Jose advised he will provide an FAQ on identifying potential hotels, Grace will distribute once received.
 - Project Roomkey – [City Officials Fact Sheet](#)
 - Project Roomkey – [Hotel and Motel Owners Fact Sheet](#)
 - Project Roomkey – [General Fact Sheet](#)
- Currently the “Needs” exceed capacity so all are working as quickly as possible to secure more hotel contracts as well as get hotel occupants moved to PSH.
- All participants must be connected to a Service Provider.
- Janet Turner stated an occupant at Sunrise Hotel in San Pedro had complaints that facility was filthy, had leaks throughout and mold. Ivan Sulic advised he will investigate.
- Christian also asked Jose for an FAQ to address community concerns and fears on PRK
- Link to [Project Roomkey Video](#)
- Link to [Project Roomkey presentation](#)

Update of PATH Services – Courtney Reed, Associate Director South Bay, PATH

- During COVID-19, PATH not doing screenings; still providing supportive services.
- Acting as “disaster workers”, outreach first focused on providing homeless with information on COVID-19 symptoms, and safe distancing by handing out flyers.
- Second focus was on handing out supplies such as masks, gloves, hygiene items such as hand sanitizer; provided information on where to get food with businesses closing.
- Outreach teams are still hitting all their cities however LA-HOP stopped answering calls about a week ago unless relates to COVID-19. Overall requests are down.
- Goals: Most goals have already been met in both SD2 and SD4 with the exception of CES Assessments and Permanent Housing.
- Mental health providing care via tele-health.
- Detox and residential programs still in place but much slower intake due to COVID-19 required tests.
- Nurses with DMH and DHS will be coming out soon for testing in the streets.
- Benefits must be done via phone as DDS office closed.
- Interim housing slow going due to social distancing requirements so looking for alternative shelter such as recreation and quarantine sites.
- Link to [Presentation](#)

Update of CES Activities – Shari Weaver, Director of the Coordinated Entry System and Breanna Jaijairam, Regional Coordinator for Adults, SPA 8, Harbor Interfaith Services (HIS)

- HIS is trying to do business as usual but must adhere to social distancing, masks, gloves, etc. which slows the processes down.
- Teams are providing education about COVID-19, shelter opportunities and been successful in sheltering 45 homeless individuals in PRK or shelters throughout SPA 8.
- Helping with referrals to legal aid as needed such as with eviction prevention.
- HIS is service provider at the Lomita PRK site with 50 individuals enrolled with majority 65+; working on appropriate exit plans.
- Doing work via phone and online to show potential housing apartments.
- Working online with the Housing Authority so Section 8 housing still working; have to be more creative and think outside the box in finding housing.

- **CES Goal Attainment (Individuals) 7/1/19 - 4/30/2020**
 - a. Number of households assessed – **401**
 - b. Number of households housed in RRH – **54**
 - c. RRH Retention Rate – **92%**
 - d. Number of chronically homeless single adults placed via HN – **57**
 - e. Number of households who have retained housing in Prevention – **40**
- **CES Goal Attainment (TAY) 7/1/19 - 4/30/2020**
 - a. Number of households assessed – **100**
 - b. Number of households housed in RRH – **35**
 - c. RRH Retention Rate – **100%**
 - d. Number of households who have retained housing through Prevention – **8**
- **CES Goal Attainment (Families) 7/1/19 - 4/30/2020**
 - a. Number of households assessed – **383**
 - b. Number of households housed in RRH – **202**
 - c. RRH Retention Rate – **95%**
 - d. Number of households who have retained housing through Prevention – **65**
- Fiscal year ends at the end of June; on track to meet all goals
- HIS Interim Housing site in San Pedro opened March 2nd, it is a 14,000 square foot facility; targeting homeless encampments at nearby post office
 - Currently full with 40 single adults; 21 men, 19 women, 6 pet friendly dogs
 - 1 placed in PSH, 1 housing voucher, 4 matches to vouchers, 2 youth age 19
 - Helped 87% of residents apply for stimulus checks, many received so far
 - Partnered with Harbor Community Clinic located downstairs to provide health services such as TB tests, health screening, referrals to behavioral services and mental health services. In future will provide dental & eye care
 - Many challenges tied to DMV and Social Security office being closed

SD2 and SD4 Update: Dhakshike Wickrema and Nicole Powell (Supervisor Ridley-Thomas) and Ivan Sulic (Supervisor Hahn)

- Supervisors Hahn and Ridley-Thomas led a motion on April 14th in follow up to the January 21, 2020 motion on Comprehensive Crisis Response Strategy to now look at long term post pandemic housing for the homeless 65+.
- Link to [Motion](#)
- Report back in writing within 45 days with a strategy to provide long-term housing options for individuals experiencing homelessness who are aged 65 years or older and were provided emergency housing based on the COVID-19 emergency public health declaration;

- Report back in writing within 90 days with an interim report, followed by a multi-year implementation framework as part of Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Supplemental Budget deliberations, with cost estimates for the pilot program targeting all individuals experiencing homelessness who are aged 65 or older.
- Next week another motion will be submitted requesting long term strategies for existing homeless under 65; tapping into existing resources and identify new resources
- New shower program was launched on March 23rd at the St. Margaret Center in Lenox which also included wrap around services; this is one of several mobile shower Hospitality Hub programs working with faith-based organizations providing meals, clothes, etc.
- Currently 5 hand washing stations plus another coming soon in the 2nd district with twice a week maintenance
- Link to article by Mark Ridley-Thomas on [Keeping Vulnerable Homeless Seniors Housed Post-Pandemic](#)

Legislative Update – Janet Turner (Representative Lieu) and Jeanette Christian (Senator Feinstein)

- Janet Turner reminded us that Representative Lieu is a member of the Congressional Homelessness Caucus so takes the issue of homelessness very seriously
- The “Cares Act” addresses homelessness in a few ways
 - Provides emergency homeless assistance grants
 - Provides rental assistance to those in need
 - Provides funding to state & local government agencies to fund a broad array of community needs
 - Helps homeless veterans by giving the VA more authority to enhance health and housing initiatives for homeless veterans, including tele-health, case management as well as homeless support services for veterans
 - Rep Lieu helped get an amendment passed to modify the W. LA National Guard Armory to become a new homeless shelter for Veterans
 - Rep Lieu worked together with Senator Feinstein to introduce bill HR1978 providing \$715 million in grants to cities each year.
 - 18 other bills were introduced by Rep. Lieu in regard to homelessness
- Jeanette Christian – Senate returned last Monday
 - Both Republicans and Democrats are working on the next stimulus package
 - \$4 billion approved emergency services grant, allocations will be coming in different ways through ESG
 - LA Counties and Cities should be getting about \$1 billion
 - Formulas for funding still being worked out by HUD
 - Senator Feinstein sent a letter supporting fair distribution homeless assistance funding in LA County
 - Asking for \$75 million for housing assistance funds – create a new homeless finances agency with more flexibility on how to helps homeless and prevent homelessness

Update of SBCCOG Homeless Services Coordination - Grace Farwell and Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG

HYGIENE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

- Approximately \$400,000 became available for state emergency funding to be used specifically for hygiene needs for the homeless during the COVID-19 pandemic

- \$46,318 was allocated to SBCCOG based on the 2019 Homeless Count which represents 11.6% of the total count
- Grace reached out to all cities to determine their interest level in participating with the plan; amounts allocated to each city will also be based on the 2019 Homeless Count numbers. If some cities choose not to participate, then the unused allocations will be distributed to the participating cities
- This is a reimbursement program so cities will need to submit invoices to SBCCOG and we will submit invoices to the County for payment – this is basically a pass through program
- Some of the items that can be included in this funding are:
 - Portable hand washing stations to supplement the stations already placed by the County (On March 23rd, 19 hand washing stations were deployed by the County and LASHA throughout SPA8)
 - Port-a- potties
 - Portable showers
 - Supplies such as toilet paper, paper towels, hand sanitizer that meets the CDC 60% alcohol requirement
 - Staffing costs to staff public restrooms at facilities such as parks that are currently closed due to COVID-19
 - Incentives for private businesses in allowing homeless to use their facilities
 - UPDATED NEW ALLOWANCE: now can provide Hygiene kits to include such items as soap, wash cloths, no rinse bathing sheets, hand sanitizer, etc.
- Hawthorne has already placed 5 hand washing stations that include twice a weekly maintenance and flyers were attached to the stations with information on how to access housing and food services during the stay at home order
- Torrance has already rented 5 hand washing stations with 3 more pending
- If any other cities want to access these funds, they need to let Grace know by Friday, May 8th
- Jacki advised she has been participating in many Zoom meetings with different department heads to share lessons learned and discussing what is learned at these meetings

Next Steps and Follow-up Actions

- SBCCOG will continue working on the Innovation Funds looking at region wide programs such as home-sharing.

Adjournment – next meeting is scheduled for July 1, 2020