

COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY BOARD

MONDAY, JULY 20, 2020, 9:00am

PRESENT:

Neoma Jardon, Member (via Zoom)
Oscar Delgado, Member (via Zoom)
Kristopher Dahir, Member (via Zoom)
Ed Lawson, Member (via Zoom)

ABSENT:

Bob Lucey, Member
Marsha Berkbigler, Member

The Community Homelessness Advisory Board convened at 9:06 a.m. via Zoom webinar online. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerk called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

AGENDA ITEM 3: Public Comment.

City Clerk Turney noted that during the time in which this board remains under the City of Reno's chair ship, public comment may be received for this board by way of sending an email to CityClerk@reno.gov, submitting online public comment through our online public comment form or by leaving a voicemail at 775-393-4499. All of this information is included on the top of each posted agenda. For additional security provisions, we will not be taking live public comment through these meetings. However, any public comment received will be sent to the board members for review and inclusion in the record prior to the time of adjournment. Voicemails that are received will be transcribed and sent to this body and will be included in the record.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

AGENDA ITEM 4: Approval of the July 20, 2020 meeting agenda.

On motion by Member Delgado, seconded by Member Lawson, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4 be approved.

AGENDA ITEM 5: Presentation, discussion, and possible action on a short-term emergency homeless sheltering – Arlo Stockham, Acting Assistant City Manager, City of Reno.

Mr. Stockham provided a presentation focusing on emergency homeless sheltering and, in particular, a very short term plan. The Reno-Sparks Convention Visitor's Authority (RSCVA) has asked us to vacate the Reno Events Center (REC) by August 3. Due to socially distancing requirements, we have had homeless individuals sheltering there essentially since the onset of COVID.

Our homeless facilities were already taxed and essentially at or over capacity. We had the Record Street Community Assistance Center (CAC), Washington Street overflow ocean shelter, and then temporary overflow in the form of a winter tent at the CAC. We also have facilities under construction, which will certainly help, but they're not completed as of today. The clean and safe operations were also suspended due to health and safety concerns; they are now resumed, however, that led to an increase of concerns coming in about the impacts of homelessness. The bottom line is we need a larger site. We need a larger facility and we have an opportunity to use CARES funding.

The Our Place family shelter opened in June with 140 person capacity. The Our Place women's shelter is scheduled to open August 15.

The RSCVA asked that we vacate the REC by August 3 so they can prepare for some events scheduled. So the real focus of our near term work is on a no barrier shelter to carry forward for this interim period, but continued efforts for a long term sheltering site as well.

Staff believes between the CAC and the temporary site on Fourth Street, which will be discussed in more detail later, a total of 175 men can be sheltered. Truckee Meadows Water Authority owns a site that is currently being used for meal distribution, and they have very graciously they have agreed to allow interim additional interim uses of their property.

We have a site plan and we're able to accommodate about 18,750 square feet of shelter in a temporary shelter that will accommodate 165 people overnight. We are planning to tap into water and sewer and that's the bulk of the work needed, along with a little bit of fencing. In addition, we're planning to relocate the meals facility to the west to an adjoining property that will be fenced off to provide some security for their facilities there. And lastly, we plan to open up the Governor's Bowl as a park and allow daytime Park uses and also install some shade canopies they

There will be two temporary shelters totaling the 18,750 square feet remaining on the parcel. It's a fully fence parcel is some open common areas along for street in front of the tents and along the west side of the fence that would be suitable for restrooms, showers, and other gathering spaces.

The picnic tables for the meals are currently located where these shelters will go. Those are going to be relocated with another shade structure on top of them to an adjacent corner parcel.

We have roughly two weeks to get this assembled and get everyone moved. Develop a site plan and see what's feasible in this location as well as all the people. Mr. Stockham concluded his presentation.

Chair Jardon expressed her appreciation to Mr. Stockham, his staff, and TMWA for their rapid response and work to remedy an unfortunate situation.

Member Dahir had questions related to the river and camping.

Mr. Stockham indicated having capacity is one of the key criteria for enforcement within parks.

Brian Sooudi Deputy City Attorney for the City of Reno explained there are some complications because of COVID for enforcement. There are laws that don't apply such as camping and we are not like Boise as they had citywide camping ordinance preventing camping activities. Reno doesn't have that we have limited jurisdiction laws, so camping doesn't apply in parks. There's limited camping ability along the river and outside of that, it's very hard to regulate. On top of that the CDC has put some guidelines down to limit the ability to move homeless people due to the COVID outbreak.

He continued stating that we have to abide by those guidelines and if we find any health code violations, they must be addressed. Right now, the Health Department is not enforcing those health code violations because of the COVID outbreak. So it's a challenging time to try to balance the legality of everything.

Chair Jardon stated she believed a regional effort should be on a future agenda as pushing the issue from one jurisdiction to the next isn't serving the region or this vulnerable population.

Member Delgado asked questions regarding temporary versus short term and would like updates at future meetings as to what the transition will look like into the fall and winter. Additionally, he noticed there were no any cost associated with the presentation and assumed there will be shared costs.

Mr. Stockham stated the current cost of the REC is extremely costly to operate, approximately \$10,000 a day or so, just in operational costs. Staff is looking at renting tents and expects costs to be \$120,000 per month for rental with a four month rental. So this is well over a half million dollars plus the operational costs

Chair Jardon noted many people state the Cities should just rent a warehouse for that price, but many Commercial property owners are reluctant to rent to this population. Also, it must be located where the supportive services are within a reasonable distance for those to access.

Member Lawson and Dahir both had questions on the costs and would like an ongoing review of that.

Member Dahir asked questions on the meal services. Mr. Stockham stated was done and Catholic Charities is prepared split their services and deliver meals to the Fourth Street site and also deliver meals to the CAC.

Chair Jardon called for public comment. City Clerk Turney noted two public comments were received for this item after the time in which your meeting has been called to order those have been submitted to each of the council members will

be included in the record. A voicemail from Kimber Bargucci with RISE was received with concerns about providing meals and locations for temporary location.

Jay Colbet-Klausell submitted written comments concerned with costs on the tents and the encampment criticisms.

Member Dahir moved accept the report, with a second from Member Lawson. The motion carried 4-0.

AGENDA ITEM 6: Presentation and discussion related to safe camp initiatives - Monica Cochran and Hettie Read, Housing and Neighborhood Development, City of Reno

Hettie Read began her presentation discussing the Point in Time count on January 30, 2020. There were 459 persons counted as unsheltered, 258 in transitional housing and 514 in emergency shelter. There was a reclassification from last year from emergency shelter to unsheltered. The CDC considered those in emergency shelter last year and years prior, that a warming room does not meet the HUD definition of emergency shelter. So we classified reclassified those persons as unsheltered this year and that accounted for about 60 of that 459. Even with that as a consideration, there was about a 70% increase in our unsheltered population. The transitional housing numbers decreased as a large provider declined to provide their information and they also no longer consider their program to be transitional housing.

Monica Cochran discussed local efforts, including City of Reno's clean and safe team, which was established in January of 2020. 193 camps have been cleaned up of all sizes and disposed of 3483 yards of waste. Various outreach efforts are in place to encampments prior to any noticing in any cleanup.

The Built For Zero outreach initiative that has an outreach committee that is meeting biweekly and options in various jurisdictions across the country are discussed.

Hettie Read gave a presentation on various outdoor emergency shelters found in other cities like Modesto, Seattle, and review Hope Springs, in the City of Reno. She identified that there is little information available on direct and indirect costs, and that which is available varies quite a bit.

Chair Jardon would like information on what qualifies as shelter. As Modesto has tents and there's a difference between a tent shelter and a tiny home shelter. There is nuance with the definition as it relates to the Boise case. She requested clarity on that at a future meeting.

Member Lawson stated there is a need to pick one population and fix that population before moving on to another. He asked questions regarding what types of housing are needed and that the business community would like to help but needs to see productive members of the community as an outcome of their efforts. He would like to see more focus on the Veteran community.

Mr. Stockham agreed that transitional housing needs to be addressed but that today's discussion is more crisis management mode in the middle of COVID.

County Manager Eric Brown spoke stating there is a need to seize the opportunity in front of us, including finishing the BFZ initiative. He believes we as a region need to have a better assessment as to all of the populations needing services and what those look like.

Member Delgado asked questions relate to the success of various models.

Chair Jardon called for public comment. City Clerk Turney stated online public comment was received from Charlie Micah requesting that this would be an action item.

AGENDA ITEM 7: Board members announcements, reports, and updates to include request for future board items.

Chair Jardon requested clarification on the prior item before moving forward. Is the food service and delivery exclusive to Catholic charities or is RISE still a component of the food delivery as they've been in the past?

Ms. Cochran stated it currently is volunteers, and RISE manages the calendar for the different volunteers that come each night.

Chair Jardon thanked Ms. Cochran for the clarification and called to the board for any future items beyond those discussed at this meeting.

Member Lawson requested a tour of Our Place and wanted clarity on RISE's involvement.

Chair Jardon indicated she would like a future item to discuss this board's ability to create regional influence and funding mechanisms. There may be a need to discuss a bill draft request from the State Legislature to allow for more legitimacy on efforts and State support.

AGENDA ITEM 8: Public Comment

Chair Jardon called for public comment, in which there was none.

AGENDA ITEM 9: Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30am.