

South Bay Cities Council of Governments

Homeless Services Task Force (Zoom Meeting)

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

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 Lance Giroux and Council Member Chris Pimentel (El Segundo); Council Member Alex Monteiro and Mayor Pro Tem Olivia Valentine (Hawthorne); Council Member Stacey Armato (Hermosa Beach); Council Member George Chen (Torrance); Gabriela Medina and Isabella Blue (Council Member Joe Buscaino, Los Angeles CD15); Lily Sofiani (Supervisor Holly Mitchell, District 2); Ivan Sulic and Jennifer LaMarque (Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4); Jeanette Christian (Senator Dianne Feinstein); Janet Turner (Representative Ted Lieu)

Others in attendance: China Gerstner and Jeff Newman (Caltrans District 7); Officer Marco Lemus (El Segundo PD); Jackie Arcos (Gardena); Yarenis Slater (Gardena PD); Kimberly Mack and Brenda Williams (Hawthorne); Lt. Landon Phillips (Hermosa Beach PD); Lori Jones (Inglewood); George Gabriel (Manhattan Beach); McKenzie Bright (Rancho Palos Verdes); Wayne Windman (Redondo Beach PD); Jeannie Naughton (Rolling Hills Estates); Aran Chaparyan, Viet Hoang, Zulma Gent, and John LaRock (Torrance); Courtney Reed, Jasmine Loera, and Haley Fuselier (PATH); Shari Weaver, Lisa Gray, and Breanna Jajairam (Harbor Interfaith Services); Jesse Ramirez (St. Margaret's Center/Hawthorne); Jacki Bacharach, Grace Farwell, Laurie Jacobs, and David Leger (SBCCOG)

November 2, 2020 meeting notes – Received and filed

Safe Parking

Jesse Ramirez, Homeless Services Coordinator, St. Margaret's Center in collaboration with Hawthorne Recreation & Community Services Department, Gabriela Medina, District Director, City of Los Angeles CD15

Jesse presented results from the South Bay Safe Parking Survey in which 44 people participated.

Link to [Safe Parking Survey](#)

Questions and Answers

Q: Gabriela Medina – How does Jesse plan to use the survey information? Will this be used to incentivize creating Safe Parking locations throughout the South Bay?

A: Jesse Ramirez – Hawthorne is still in discussion on how to use this information. This serves as a grounding step for Hawthorne and other cities in the South Bay and to let all know there is interest in this program.

Gabriela Medina - mentioned there is one active Safe Parking (SP) in CD15 and 2 more in the works but hoping to make these next locations 24-hour programs. She is meeting with other LA Council Districts to discuss RV dweller programs to assess their needs and have policies in place that will allow them to dwell on the streets while ensuring adjacent entities are not affected by debris, greywater, etc. She invited Jesse to join them to learn how these programs are set up. Currently all Safe Parking programs in CD15 are only for overnight. New SP location in Harbor Gateway will allow RVs and will partner with WLCAC which already manages the SP program in Watts. There is a large RV population due to recent legislation.

She will be creating an ad hoc committee to be sure there is no discrimination against those living in their vehicles. Septic and social services are needed at SP locations.

Council Member Horvath - asked Gabriela to provide the steps on how their SP locations were created for other cities to use as a template.

Grace Farwell - announced that Helen Chin will provide SP steps as used in Culver City at the next Homeless Services Task Force meeting. LAHSA will also be invited. Innovation funds are available as "seed" money for South Bay cities to start a SP program. There is \$100K available and must be used by the end of calendar year 2021.

Gabriela Medina - LAHSA budget for SP varies as it is based on number of vehicles and available services such as meals, tutoring for children, etc.

Jeff Newman – Caltrans can lease part of a property for SP and there is a lot at the 105 Fwy and Hawthorne that may be available for \$1 per month.

Council Member Monteiro - asked Gabriela about 24 hours vs overnight as that starts to look like an encampment.

Gabriela Medina - it would become almost like a mobile home park as a temporary permanent structure. Looking into a for-profit company, Oceans 11, who could support the infrastructure onsite such as septic tanks and make sure RVs meet health code requirements.

Council Member Monteiro – Instead of 24-hour SP, why not make them housing and/or shelters?

Gabriela Medina – CD15 has 3 A Bridge Home Shelters (total of 300 units) and 75 new tiny home project in the works. There are about 2,000 total units (900 temporary and about 1,200 permanent in CD15). People living in vehicles are still a significant number and not all are ready to transition out of their vehicle.

Council Member Monteiro – question about Caltrans leasing property

Jeff Newman - provided contact information, so Council Member Monteiro can follow up

Gabriela Medina – suggested the Pallet Shelter or other temporary housing on Caltrans property is best option such as A Bridge Home in San Pedro. Pallet Shelter would be most cost effective.

Laurie Jacobs – asked question about SP at parking lots, and asked if 24-hour SP, how will the parking lot be used during the day as a parking lot?

Gabriela Medina – Suggested we encourage private property owners to turn over their empty/underutilized parking lots. The city has liability components.

Regarding college campuses, that is where the next pallet shelter is being built across the street from Harbor College. More than half of the 75 units will be designated for transitional age youth in CD15.

Lily Sofiani – asked questions about how much private parking lots make during the daytime and should they be offered the same amount to create the 24-hour SP

Gabriela Medina – Many private lots are not used at all so they are not making any money but as soon as approached by City of LA, they will hike up the prices thinking LA has deep pockets.

Update on Veteran's Housing in Hawthorne

Brenda Williams, Community Services Department, City of Hawthorne (for Von Norris)

City Council agreed to enter into an exclusive negotiation agreement for the development of an 18-unit veteran housing. Currently this ENA is in the hands of Skid Row Trust for them to review and execute.

Mayor Pro Tem Valentine mentioned parking is a big issue in that the development needs to ensure there is adequate parking. Council Member Monteiro added the presentation by Skid Row Trust at the Hawthorne City Council meeting was beautiful with lots of outdoor space, but more parking is needed.

Janet Turner – are they saying it will take about 2 years or longer to get this up and running?
Council Member Monteiro – Yes, probably 2 years but first need to address the parking issue. Even with added parking, the project needs to remain at 18 units.

Update on Redondo Beach Pallet Shelter

Christian Horvath, Council Member, City of Redondo Beach

Shari Weaver, Director of Coordinated Entry System, Harbor Interfaith

Council Member Horvath highlighted how this was developed within 3 months and took a lot of teamwork.

Shari Weaver – 15-unit pallet shelter on a Dept of Public Works site near the South Bay Galleria with a goal to open by the end of December 2020 with at least one resident housed. All 15 residents were successfully moved in by December 30th. Members of the faith community showed up on the first day to make up the beds in all the units and brought laundry detergent and quarters. Dept of Public Works ensured all was in place to open up on time.

Staffing includes one on-site Program Manager, Lisa Gray plus a case manager and a 24-hour resident aide. Services include around the clock security, mobile shower unit, bathroom, and hand-washing station. Units have air conditioning, heating, and all are single housed. Meals are catered by Beacon House. They are looking for additional on-site services such as health care. Two short stay residents already moved into housing.

Council Member Monteiro – asked for cost estimate to run the facility.

Shari Weaver – does not have a monthly cost and it is a 6-month project. She will get back to him. A site visit can be arranged.

Janet Turner – City of LA spending \$131,000 per pallet shelter, interested in costs to show others this can be done.

Council Member Horvath – Redondo Beach costs were much less as City of LA had much higher start-up costs which was about \$400,000 total. The bulk of the costs come from the services. Each shelter was between \$6-8,000 per unit; therefore, buying 16 shelters was approximately \$150,000.

City Staff Training Module

Laurie Jacobs, SBCCOG

Grace Farwell provided background on the use of innovation funds directed to developing education and training. The idea is to provide city staff a good basis and background on homeless issues and solutions. Presentations will be customized for each city.

Systemic and personal challenges were reviewed as root causes.

Some of the most common myths were shared along with dispelling facts.

Council Member Horvath – asked how customized slides are being developed

Laurie Jacobs – has started customizing the presentation for each city and will confirm information accuracy with city contacts before publishing.

Gabriela Medina – concerns about people not understanding how the Boise ruling affects their inability to enforce as she has heard various responses. Can housing first model be explained in relationship to enforcement?

Laurie Jacobs – we are just providing resources, not getting into city law enforcement.

Grace Farwell – good idea to add a fact vs myth as to the role of law enforcement

Council Member Horvath – we may want to consider inviting Judge Carter to a future meeting

Jeff Newman and China Gerstner – appreciate this training as this will help Caltrans build partner relationships with the cities

PATH Services Update

Courtney Reed, Associate Regional Director, Greater LA Programs

Jasmine Loera, Program Manager

Link to [PATH UPDATE](#)

Courtney shared they are doing more intensive street case management. Some processes are taking longer due to COVID. PATH is now helping with the Redondo Beach Homeless Court program.

Council Member Horvath – asked that we expedite getting vaccinations for outreach workers.

Shari Weaver – confirmed outreach has been approved as Phase 1 eligibility for vaccinations

Coordinated Entry Systems Update

Breanna Jaijairam, SPA 8 Regional Coordinator for Adults, Harbor Interfaith Services (HIS)

Link to [CES SPA 8 report](#).

Still operating the San Pedro Interim site with beds reduced from 40 to 32 and A Bridge Home site with beds reduced from 100 to 75 due to COVID protocols. Despite COVID challenges, they have been making housing placements to keep the programs running. Regarding prevention, they continue to work with families and individuals using available funding. Eviction moratoriums change often so staying on top of current status to keep people well informed and know their rights as the program changes.

In December, HIS co-hosted a homelessness roundtable with the Beach Cities to explain relationships and partnerships, and answer questions.

Legislative Updates

Jeanette Christian, Representative US Senator Dianne Feinstein

Bad news from the capital today, Jeanette reports the Senator and the staff all are safe. The Senator will be introducing two new bills related to housing and homelessness.

Affordable Housing Redevelopment Act would authorize neighborhood stabilization programs with \$1.5 billion in competitive grants to help state and local government to purchase blighted, vacant, and abandoned surplus properties to convert into affordable housing which will drop on January 21st.

Mayor Pro Tem Valentine – How does this bill define affordable housing as many developers have different definitions?

Jeanette Christian – The new units would serve households and the income would not exceed 120% of the area medium income and 25% of the housing would serve households whose income does not exceed 50% of the area medium income. It is a competitive grant by HUD and HUD definitions are used.

Janet Turner, Representative Congressman Ted Lieu

Janet announced new legislation introduced by Representative Lieu. Bill HR8674, called the Prevent Homelessness Act, is designed to help stop people from becoming homeless. The bill creates a \$500 million stabilization fund to help struggling Americans who may be just one month away from losing their home, or one utility bill away from having their lights shut off. It is primarily for low-income families to meet housing related obligations, such as rent, utilities, possibly legal services, short term payments, and it also does include counseling.

Recent COVID Relief Bill that passed included emergency rent assistance to provide state and local entity funds to be allocated within 30 days. Eligible are renters who have a household income of not more than 80% of that area medium income, have one or more household members who can demonstrate a risk of experiencing homelessness, or has an instability, or has one or more household members who qualify for unemployment benefits, or experience financial hardship due to the pandemic. Assistance will be to prioritize to households whose income does not exceed 50% of the area medium income.

Mayor Pro Tem Valentine – asked how one could find the area medium income.

Janet Turner – will get the details for our next meeting

SBCCOG Updates: Launch of Home Share South Bay and other SBCCOG activities

Grace Farwell and Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG

Grace Farwell – introduced Lily Sofiani – from Supervisor Holly Mitchell’s office. She will have legislative updates at the next meeting.

Home Share South Bay program updates: we are making a concerted effort to find homeowners willing to share their home. We have 20 housemates and 4 homeowners who have signed up covering 8 of our cities. We have focused our efforts with all of our cities to get the word out through their websites, newsletters, and other outreach. In addition, we are presenting at city council meetings and community meetings. Angela Williams, SBCCOG Intern, is heading up our faith-based organization outreach. We are also working on the Safe Parking and Client Aid programs.

Jacki Bacharach – Announced that Phil Ansel is retiring so would like to get a speaker to get an update on the Homeless Initiative. We are looking into the SPAs and their authority.

Council Member Horvath – Announcement of Virtual General Assembly on March 18th – HOLD THE DATE. The event is free. Jacki Bacharach announced we are looking for sponsors.

Invites will be going out soon. The theme is “Intersections: Finding Tomorrow’s Solutions for Today’s Issues” which is about all these different areas we focus on with policies as elected officials, people who work at the staff level, private entities, all intersect. Decisions are not made in a bubble. It should be an interesting day.

Grace Farwell gave Jennifer LaMarque’s report as she was unavailable.

The Board of Supervisors (BOS) set aside \$110M in coronavirus funds to enhance the rent relief program and extended the eviction moratorium through February of this year. BOS also passed a motion regarding the faith community involvement in preventing and combating homelessness. BOS plan to hire a consultant to survey all faith organizations to look at programs and services the faith organizations are already offering and how the county can align its programs with what they are doing. BOS will receive recommendations regarding the creation of a faith based homeless coalition to work with our partners and to help the most vulnerable. The first Project Home Key that opened in Long Beach is going well.

Next Steps and Follow-up Actions

None at this time

Adjournment – next meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2021

2021 meetings: May 5th; July 7th; September 1st; November 3rd

