

# **South Bay Cities Council of Governments**

## **Homeless Services Task Force (Zoom Meeting)**

**Wednesday, March 3, 2021 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm**

**Meeting Notes** *(submitted by Laurie Jacobs)*

### **Welcome and Introductions**

#### **Elected officials/representatives in attendance:**

Council Member Christian Horvath (Redondo Beach); Council Member Alex Monteiro (Hawthorne); Council Member Dionne Faulk (Inglewood); Council Member George Chen (Torrance); Lily Sofiani (Supervisor Holly Mitchell, District 2); Jennifer LaMarque (Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4); Jeanette Christian (Senator Dianne Feinstein); Janet Turner (Representative Ted Lieu); Cody Bridges (Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi)

#### **Others in attendance:**

Keith Bennett, Raymond Cheung (Carson); Helen Chin (Culver City); Jackie Arcos (Gardena); Raul Alcaron (Gardena PD); Kimberly Mack, Von Norris (Hawthorne); Jesse Ramirez (St. Margaret's Center/Hawthorne); Lt. Landon Phillips (Hermosa Beach PD); Roberto Chavez (Inglewood); Cinder Eller-Kimbell (Inglewood PD); McKenzie Bright (Rancho Palos Verdes); Jeannie Naughton (Rolling Hills Estates); Aram Chaparyan, Viet Hoang, Zulma Gent, John LaRock (Torrance); Valerie Hernandez (Harbor Interfaith Services/Torrance); Jeff Newman (Caltrans District 7); Therese Neustaedter (League of Women Voters Beach Cities); Brianna Jones, Caitlin Rose, Jose Delgado (LAHSA); Jasmine Loera, Haley Fuselier (PATH); Laurie Ramey (Mental Health America Los Angeles); Shari Weaver, Breanna Jaijairam (Harbor Interfaith Services); Grace Farwell, Laurie Jacobs, David Leger (SBCCOG)

**January 6, 2021 meeting notes** – Received and filed

#### **Safe Parking Program in Culver City: Successes and Challenges**

Helen Chin, Assistant to the City Manager on Homelessness, City of Culver City

Link: [Why Safe Park](#)

Ms. Chin presented on the Culver City Safe Park program that is under development. While this program has not yet been launched, she shared information on the development process to assist other cities looking to launch a similar program. Ms. Chin covered how safe parking could fit into other city programs addressing homelessness, providing a thoughtful plan meeting the needs of the un-housed living in their vehicles along with addressing the next steps for potential participants.

Q: Council Member George Chen – Would you say that Safe Park is really above the roots as shown on the second to last slide? We need to dissect beneath the surface. All the short-term solutions are above the surface, so we really need to focus on the root causes.

A: Helen Chin – Safe Park is framed as a temporary solution, just a pit stop, so it is important to not set the wrong expectations. Safe parking programs need to include an exit plan, so participants don't just end up staying in their cars. It is an expensive program at about \$250,000 per year to include all the needed wrap around services and case management.

Janet Turner – Shared a recent experience to provide a different perspective on this issue. Janet recently referred someone experiencing homelessness to Safe Park who in turn helped this woman get a job, and then was referred to Silvenest seeking shared housing.

Q: Council Member Alex Monteiro – How is Culver City dealing with the Safe Park security? And how did the community react to the concept of this program in their community?

A: Helen Chin – Safe Park has not yet started. They will be contracting with an outside security company and intentionally chose a site away from any residential buildings knowing there may be a community reaction.

Q: Viet Hoang – What are you finding in regard to support services and case management?

A: Helen Chin – Contract with St. Joseph's Center outreach who are Culver City's lead agency.

Q: Grace Farwell – What does the \$250,000 cost include and what is the funding source?

A: Helen Chin – Culver City may need to make a Council request from the General Fund, and/or consider other requests. The security costs are what are driving the overall budget as well as the costs to include restrooms, lighting, showers, meals, etc. These overall costs will vary, depending on the number of cars allowed.

Q: Laurie Jacobs – Would participants need to enroll and is this open to individuals, couples, and families? And how will people know about the Safe Park program?

A: Helen Chin – People would need to apply in advance so background checks can be completed, identity verified, and verify vehicle is operational. Individuals and couples can participate but families will be referred to Family Services. The local outreach teams and mental health services already know who the people are in the community who may need this program so Culver City will outreach directly through these organizations.

### **LAHSA Update – State and Federal Legislative Bills; Program Model and Services as it relates to Safe Parking and Tiny Homes**

Link: [LAHSA Program Fact Sheets](#)

Jose Delgado, Director, Government Affairs

Caitlin Rose, System Components Manager, Interim Housing

Brittany Jones, Associate Director at Community Relations (Brittany is our new contact)

Link to Safe Parking and Tiny Homes Fact Sheet: [LAHSA Safe Parking and Tiny Homes Fact Sheet](#)

[Here is the link for Pacific Urbanism's website.](#)

They refer to Pallet/Tiny Homes [Homeless Off-Street Sanctuary](#)

Caitlin Rose – presentation on LAHSA Safe Parking that included a program overview, program eligibility, and services offered. Safe Parking is designed to assist those living in their cars providing access to restrooms, to be able to sleep overnight in their cars hassle free, not worrying about parking tickets, or getting harassed by law enforcement and community members. The optimum number of cars per site is 25. There is a lot attendant and case manager at each location. Sites are mainly for individual adults and youth 18 – 24. Families are directed to other programs and hotels as quickly as possible. Some sites include RVs. All sites only operate in the evening and participants must leave in the mornings. Programs are funded by a variety of sources. Cost rate per night is calculated at \$30 per space per night.

Q: Von Norris – Asked if Caitlin had shared Safe Parking current and future sites?

A: Caitlin Rose – There are currently 24 sites and a few more set to open. Information from the LAHSA website: <https://www.lahsa.org/news?article=592-safe-parking> or you may contact her directly: [crose@lahsa.org](mailto:crose@lahsa.org)

Q: Grace Farwell – What type of funding might be available for Safe Parking programs? And will the fact that some sites are not filling up affect funding opportunities for future sites?

A: Jose Delgado – The County's Measure H funding process will include a first draft from the Homelessness Initiative team in early April, and then open for public comment. This would be an opportunity for today's meeting participants to advocate for funding. Long term funding is a separate conversation. The topic of sites not filling up is affected by specific site requirements.

Presentation on Tiny Home Village Interim Housing. Caitlin Rose presented a program overview, program eligibility, services offered, and population served. Currently there is one site open with a plan to open about 20 sites throughout this year with the average site having 50 – 75 shelters, serving 100 – 150 people. Tiny Home Contracts are funded based on a \$55 per-room, per-night rate.

Q: Grace Farwell – Are there any funds available for cities outside of the City of LA for these programs?

A: Jose Delgado – All of this funding is coming through the LA City Cares Act, none of which is for cities outside of LA. The South Bay cities should watch for the Measure H budget draft to seek funding opportunities.

### **State and Federal Legislation**

Jose Delgado provided an update on Key Homelessness Funding.

Link: [Legislative Funding Updates](#)

On the Federal level, the stimulus package that is pending in the Senate now, is likely to include \$5 billion in homeless assistance.

AB 71 seeks to create \$2.4 billion in annual, ongoing funding for a comprehensive solution for counties, cities, and CoCs to address homelessness. The bill would allocate \$400 million in annual funding for affordable and supportive housing development in cities with populations of fewer than 300,000 people. Remaining funding would be divided on a formula basis.

Governor Newsom has proposed an additional \$250 million in early action funding for Project Homekey. The legislature is expected to make decisions by the end of March.

SB 234, was introduced, which would create \$100 million in funding to address youth homelessness.

AB 328 was introduced to re-direct funding from state corrections institutions that are scaling down operations and towards local counties and CoCs to provide housing and services to people with histories of incarceration.

### **Innovation Funds: Launch of Client Aid Program**

Haley Fuselier, Senior Director, Greater LA Programs, PATH and Grace Farwell, SBCCOG

Link: [Client Aid Referral Form](#)

The Client Aid program includes approximately \$123,000 that can be used for different types of activities which will be available on a first come, first serve basis through the end of May. We are asking each city to assign one contact person to funnel the requests to Grace Farwell who will in turn work with PATH. Funds are available now as a reimbursement program. A session will be scheduled within the next couple of weeks to review the eligibility and process.

The money can be used for the following:

- Rental assistance and prevention up to \$2,000 for back pay of rent
- Moving expenses to get participants in more affordable housing
- Motel stays prior to employment, housing, or medical appointments for a maximum of 3 nights
- Pay for mental health or treatment facility fee
- Transport an individual to a facility
- Law enforcement emergency fund

Haley Fuselier explained funds could also be used for law enforcement emergencies for individuals over 65, pregnant females, or parents with school-age children. Process is to meet with PATH to arrange for a hotel voucher for a maximum of 3 nights. The referral form asks for

basic information which will be reviewed in the FAQ session. This program is mainly for city staff but can also be available for service providers.

Q: Viet Hoang – How does the rental assistance interplay with the CARES Act related to housing assistance for those that are in arrears so that this money could be tied into that lottery?

A: Grace Farwell – If someone utilizes other housing assistance programs, then they are not eligible for the SBCCOG program. If they are eligible for the SBCCOG program, the cap is \$2,000 per person.

Q: Viet Hoang – Do the service providers have access to this program or must it go through city staff?

A: Haley Fuselier – Service providers can access this funding, especially to subsidize other programs that have been reduced.

Q: Raul Alcaron – Would law enforcement officers be able to directly access this aid while in the field, especially when needed late on a Friday?

A: Haley Fuselier – Yes. A system will be set up to allow police to work directly with the hotel without prior approval process.

Q: Christian Horvath – Is there a one-page fact sheet on this program?

A: Grace Farwell – We will create this to go with the follow up email.

### **PATH Services Update**

Jasmine Loera, Program Manager for Street Based Team in SPA 8, PATH

Link: [PATH Presentation](#)

Street Based Intensive Care Management Team currently consists of 4 people operating as teams of 2. Jasmine Loera reviewed the outcome data for SD2 and SD4 covering goals for responses to mental health, primary care, substance dependency, increases income, and permanent housing. This data is included in the PATH presentation link document. She also shared some housing success stories and a desire to see more cities consider implementation of Pallet Shelters as a transitional housing solution.

### **Coordinated Entry Systems Update**

**Breanna Jajairam, SPA 8 Regional Coordinator for Adults, Harbor Interfaith Services**

**Shari Weaver, SPA8 Director Coordinated Entry System (Families, Adults & Youth)**

Link: [Harbor Interfaith Services Report](#)

Breanna Jajairam shared that currently Harbor Interfaith Services are at capacity for recovery re-housing. Prevention focus includes helping to provide legal resources to ensure folks are connected to any needed legal services. They are now officially partnered with the City of Torrance with full time housing navigator, Valerie Hernandez. Breanna mentioned the two new Safe Parking programs recently introduced in SPA 8, one in Harbor Gateway and one in San Pedro, each with 25 parking spots available.

Shari Weaver praised the Redondo Beach Pallet Shelter program that is full with 15 units and a lengthy waiting list. She agrees with previous comments that we need to see more Pallet Shelter type programs. Four residents have been placed in permanent housing since opening last December. Individual units have helped control the spread of COVID. Vaccine opportunities at all the sites managed by HIS have become available for people experiencing homelessness that meet the vaccine criteria.

### **LAHSA RHAC Update (unable to attend)**

Lt. Wayne Windman, Redondo Beach PD and SBCCOG Representative to RHAC

### **Legislative Updates**

**Janet Turner, Representative Congressman Ted Lieu**

American Rescue Bill section 4102 will provide \$5 billion towards new Section 8 housing vouchers primarily for people experiencing homelessness.

Shari Weaver praised this much needed bill with HUD funding but stated one thing that needs to be reevaluated is funding for our veterans that will include veterans who may not have been honorably discharged.

**Jeanette Christian, Representative US Senator Dianne Feinstein**

We are waiting for the next relief bill to be passed in the Senate. Vote is scheduled for tomorrow, March 4<sup>th</sup>.

New executive order allows FEMA to reimburse 100% for the state and local public assistance programs which was previously at 75%. LA County is exploring how to access these funds upfront.

Next meeting Ms. Christian will offer information on the Affordable Housing Redevelopment Act neighborhood re-stabilization program, \$1.5 billion in grants to state and local governments to purchase blighted or vacant buildings to be used for homeless shelters.

**Cody Bridges, Assembly Member Al Muratsuchi**

AB1372 The Right to Temporary Shelter bill was introduced a few weeks ago. This requires cities and counties to come up with a plan for temporary shelter for every homeless person in their jurisdiction.

**Jennifer LaMarque, Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4**

Supervisor Hahn is a huge supporter of the Redondo Beach Homeless Court program and would like to see this model expand in District 4. The Supervisor will help facilitate this for any interested cities. Some cities have started to show interest.

**Lily Sofiani, Supervisor Holly Mitchell, District 2** Had to leave the meeting prior to providing a report.

**Council Member Horvath – Announcement of Virtual General Assembly on March 18<sup>th</sup>**

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 creating a complicated space to navigate. The morning speakers are doing a “Ted Like Talk” each covering different areas such as economic development, homelessness, public safety, public health, transportation mobility, housing affordability, and technology. The afternoon session will be three panels; the first will be comprised of the morning speakers, the second panel will be about the intersections between the public and the private sectors, and the third panel will talk about the intersections between state and local government. Free full day event.

**SBCCOG Updates - Grace Farwell,, SBCCOG**

The American City and County Magazine recognizes organizations with a Crown Communities Award for municipal and county governments that have implemented innovative and impactful projects during the past 18 months. The South Bay Cities Council of Governments was an award recipient for the South Bay Fiber Network.

The education and training module introduction to homelessness was presented at our last meeting and was presented to the Torrance Homeless Response team. Feedback from both presentations has been helpful in finalizing the module. Custom modules are now completed and will be sent to each city. Our goal is ultimately to have cities provide the training to their staff but if any city prefers, SBCCOG will help provide the training and may also be able to bring in service providers to assist with the training.

Grace Farwell asked the cities to notify us when a homelessness issue is on a city council meeting agenda so we can attend and support city staff.

**Next Steps and Follow-up Actions**

None at this time

**Adjournment – next meeting is scheduled for May 5, 2021**

2021 meetings: January 6<sup>th</sup>, May 5<sup>th</sup>; July 7<sup>th</sup>; September 1<sup>st</sup>; November 3<sup>rd</sup>

