

**City of Oxnard
Commission on Homelessness
Minutes of the Regular Meeting of
May 20, 2015**

On Wednesday, May 20, 2015, at 8:36 a.m. the Special Meeting of the Commission on Homelessness convened in the Oxnard Public Library, Meeting room "B", 251 South "A" Street, Oxnard, CA 93030. The following Commissioners were in attendance: Chair Peggy Rivera; Vice-Chair Felipe Flores; and Commissioners Susan Brinkmeyer, Francine Castañon, Francisco Jaena, Lucy Martinez, and Darlene Miller Gonzalez. City of Oxnard staff members present were Peter Brown, Office of the City Manager; Deputy City Manager Grace Hoffman; and Carrie Sabatini, Interim Housing Director. Karl Lawson, Interim Homeless Services Program Manager, Oxnard Housing Department, acted as Executive Secretary. Luis Guereca and Julio Alcala from the Public Information division made a videotape recording of the Commission meeting.

1. ROLL CALL

Roll was called and a quorum was deemed present.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was received during the planning retreat portion of this meeting.

3. INFORMATION/CONSENT ITEMS

SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF COMMISSION MEETINGS OF APRIL 6, 2015

Commissioner Brinkmeyer moved approval of the minutes as presented in the agenda packet. The motion was seconded by Chair Rivera. The motion passed unanimously. Following adoption of the motion, Chair Rivera requested a moment of silence in memory of former Commissioner Garcia of the Parks and Recreation Commission, who had passed away one week earlier.

4. REPORTS FROM CITY STAFF

SUBJECT: SAFE AND CLEAN INITIATIVE

Mr. Brown provided a report to the Commission on the background and philosophy of the Safe and Clean initiative and responded to questions from members of the Commission. With respect to the clean-up of the encampment on West Fifth street, Mr. Brown indicated that the timing had been pushed to later into the summer.

5. COMMISSION ON HOMELESS PLANNING RETREAT

Chair Rivera introduced the Planning Retreat portion of the meeting, and Mr. Lawson assumed the role of facilitator. Prior to entering beginning the substance of the retreat, Mr. Lawson proposed, and the Commissioners provided input into, the following Ground Rules to be observed during the retreat: cell phones off during meeting; speak with respect; work as a team; don't talk over each other; and stay on topic. Mr. Brown created a "parking lot" to record ideas and topics that the Commission could return to later. Staff distributed Attachment No. 1 (schematic depiction of the meeting agenda); Attachment No. 2 (an excerpt from the Oxnard City Code); and Attachment No. 3 (Matrix from the COH's goal-setting meeting of March 19, 2015).

The retreat began with a review of the charter of the Commission, Chapter 2-12 of the Oxnard City Code, which sets forth the Powers and Duties of the COH, as adopted by City Council:

2-12 Powers and Duties: The powers and duties of the Commission on Homelessness shall be as follows:

- (A) Advise the City Council on all matters pertaining to homelessness in the City;
- (B) Serve as a liaison between the City Council and the community in matters related to homelessness issues;
- (C) Review and evaluate programs, requests for homeless funds, and homeless services in the city;
- (D) Recommend programs, strategies, and funding for preventing and reducing the incidence of homelessness in the City; and
- (E) Prepare and submit an annual report of activities to the City Council and make such other reports and recommendations to the City Council from time to time as the Commission on Homelessness or City Council may determine necessary to address homeless issues.

Drawing from the wording adopted by City Council direction, staff recommended that all activities of the Commission must fall under one of the following five types of actions:

Advise
Serve as liaison
Review and Evaluate
Recommend
Report

Staff also reviewed the oath of office; discussed rules of quorum for the commission and for sub-committees; and discussed the meeting that had been called by Mayor Flynn for that same evening (May 20, 2015), to which all CAG Chairs and Vice-Chairs were invited. Chair Rivera indicated that she and Vice-Chair Flores had been invited to attend.

The Commissioners turned their attention to Attachment No. 3. A discussion ensued during which the Commissioners identified other items that the COH could address, which included the following: development of a Strategic Plan; include homeless prevention as an activity; set short-term and long-term goals; specify issues of Veterans, mental health; drugs, LGBT, and

prisoner re-entry and Proposition 47; identify grants that the City could seek to provide additional support to service providers; public health; understand that many disabled children today will become wards of the state later in life; look to successful programs in other cities; become involved with City planning department on affordable housing projects early in the planning process.

Returning to the matrix from the March 19 meeting, under "Resources Needed," the commissioners identified several additional ones, including the following: space; need for an inventory of land available for development of affordable housing; a plan for how to reach out to developers to encourage building needed housing for very-low and extremely-low income persons; coordination with the City Planning staff on the Housing Element; providing input and advice to the City and taking positions before Council on particular housing developments; provide input to City on compliance with laws, such as with Senate Bill 2.

Public Comment: Chair Rivera opened the floor at three points during the discussion to receive comment from members of the public. Mr. Dan Pinedo from Oxnard Public Access Television expressed his appreciation to the Commission for conducting this educational session in public. Ms. Karol Schulkin from the County of Ventura Human Services Agency suggested that the COH consider adding the following items to the list: collaboration with other public bodies and commissions; participation in the Continuum of Care Alliance; and increased utilization of media for outreach. Parks and Recreation Commissioner _____ commended the COH on the meeting, and spoke about the need to ensure that any caseworkers going out in the field need to take measures to ensure safety. Ms. Ascension Romero urged the Commission to include services for Transition-Aged Youth. Ms. Eileen Tracy spoke of her research into sober-living facilities in Oxnard, and urged the Commission to take the lead on ways to assist non-compliant facilities to become compliant. Mr. Doug Stanton addressed the Safe and Clean initiative, and urged the City to distinguish between the distinct types of situations that various homeless individuals find themselves in, and between those who are seeking to leave the homeless lifestyle and those who are not. Mr. Stanton further recommended that the Commission analyze the question of what are the roles of the government, of faith-based organizations, and of non-profits. Whether affordable housing is the same as a focus on homelessness. Mr. Miguel Marquez of the Independent Living Resource Center spoke of his experience doing street outreach, and emphasized that the Commission needs to focus on communication, with those on the streets; discuss the ten-year plan; and organize its work into small achievable steps (with objectives for a 2-year plan, a 5-year plan, etc.). Ms. Schulkin addressed the Commission again and announced an upcoming Notice of Funding Availability for the COC, due in late July, for permanent supportive housing; and urged various groups to partner to apply for funding to address the unmet need for single-room occupancy units and studio units for those on low fixed incomes.

The Commission discussed possible ways to structure sub-committees to address the various areas of interest. Mr. Lawson and Mr. Brown reported that the establishment of ad hoc subcommittees with no more than three members provided optimum flexibility.

Commissioner Martinez proposed an Affordable Housing subcommittee. Commissioner Jaena proposed a subcommittee to focus on available grants and funding opportunities.

Following a break the Commission resumed its discussion. Ms. Schulkin suggested that the various issues could be organized under an umbrella of three subcommittees: Planning/Shelter; Resources/Grants; and Services Providers. The Commission conducted a detailed discussion on possible ways to structure subcommittees. Vice-Chair Flores stressed that the Commission needed to incorporate ways to measure outcomes of its work, with achievable goals, in order to be able to assess performance using identified metrics.

After a lengthy discussion, Commissioner Janea moved the establishment of three ad-hoc subcommittees:

Housing and Sheltering
Community Outreach and Communications
Coordinated Services

The motion was seconded by Chair Rivera. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Rivera led a discussion on follow-up actions. The Commission agreed unanimously to move the previously-scheduled meeting of June 1 to June 8th at 4:00 p.m. Staff recommended that the subcommittees be appointed at the June 8th meeting, and report back to the full COH at the July meeting.

Deputy City Manager Grace Hoffman thanked the Commission and congratulated the Commissioners on a productive planning session. She also expressed her appreciation to the members of the public who attended and participated, and to all City staff, including Mr. Guereca and Mr. Alcala.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Mr. Tim Hockett from Community Action of Ventura County announced the CAVC workshop of Thursday, June 4, and invited all to attend.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Castanon moved, and Chair Rivera seconded, a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting stood adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

(Draft Minutes prepared by Karl Lawson)

Attachments: 1. Agenda for Facilitated Meeting (schematic)
2. Excerpt from Oxnard City Code, Chapter 2-125 through 2-129
3. Commission Matrix from Goal-Setting Meeting of March 19, 2015