

**CITY OF OXNARD COMMISSION ON HOMELESSNESS
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF AUGUST 5, 2019**

On Monday, August 5, 2019, at 4:30 p.m. the Special Meeting of the Commission on Homelessness convened in the Oxnard City Council Chambers, 305 West Third Street, Oxnard, CA 93030. Peggy Rivera, Interim Chair called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m. Duane Koziel, City Clerk administered the oath of office to the incoming member of the Commission, Jose Negrete.

1. ROLL CALL AND CALL TO ORDER

Roll was called, the following Commissioners were in attendance: Jose Negrete, Mayra Plascencia, Peggy Rivera, Rene Camper-Stewart, Ruby Durias, and Yukio Okano. A quorum was deemed present.

City of Oxnard staff members present were Mark Alvarado, Homeless Assistance Program Coordinator; Emilio Ramirez, Housing Director; Duane Koziel, City Clerk's Office Assistant and Angelica Navarro, Administrative Secretary III.

2. COMMISSION BUSINESS

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

Each commissioner gave a brief introduction of themselves and talked about why they joined the commission.

ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE DATE AND TIME

Commissioners expressed their desire to hold monthly meetings to make sure the body is consistently engaged and stays on task.

All commissioners voted in favor and adopted a meeting schedule for the remainder of 2019 and designated the regular time of the meeting to be the first Monday of every month from 4 – 5:30 p.m., except in September which is a holiday. The meeting will be held the following Monday from 4-5:30 p.m.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Rivera opened the floor for Public Comment. No public comments were made at this time.

4. INFORMATION/CONSENT ITEMS

SUBJECT: Approval of Minutes of the Special Meeting of June 19, 2019.

Commissioner Okano offered the following corrections:

- Page 2, 5 a. second paragraph, fourth line, delete the word me;
- Page 3, 5 c. third line add (s) after year; and
- Page 3, 5 c. seventh line correct date from June 14 to June 19.

Emilio informed the Commission that even though the date is incorrect, at the time of the report that is the date given to the Commission.

Commissioner Durias said her first name was misspelled twice on page one and should only have one e at the end instead of two.

Commissioner Durias moved to approve the minutes as amended, and Commissioner Plascencia seconded the motion. All approved and the motion carried.

REPORTS FROM CITY STAFF

SUBJECT: Presentation from Housing Director

- a. CITY OPERATION OF TEMPORARY EMERGENCY SHELTER FROM JANUARY TO JUNE 2019
Full transition of the shelter by the private service provider occurred on July 18.

b. SEARCH FOR PERMANENT SHELTER SITE

Temporary site could have been the permanent site, but it will not be. Staff is actively searching and working with County's Real Property unit to identify a suitable site. Once a property is secured, we will enter into a long-term agreement with Mercy House. If a space is not identified with available amenities we will need to extend the temporary nature of the armory. We have mapped Oxnard for ML and light industrial sites available for sale or lease. We do not have a viable site yet.

c. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH THE COUNTY OF VENTURA

We have entered into an MOU for a broad array of services. Solid partnership with the overnight shelter with the Cost Commitment. The OHA has provided for the homeless preference in the HCV program. It is now open for applications. We are empowering service providers who are engaged with the homeless and providing them with training Tuesday, August 6, 2019.

d. DOWNTOWN PILOT PROGRAM

A collection of providers met about a month and a half ago in an effort to provide focus to Plaza park and surrounding areas. The purpose is to serve the encampment without relocating it. The effort is being led by Mark Alvarado. An assessment was done in the area and is being followed up with street outreach, which has been initiated.

There were four public speakers on this item:

1. Angela Whitecomb, told the commission she is a business owner and frequently walks downtown to work and is displeased with the current state of Plaza Park. She stated that she's been chased out of the park and is saddened by that, but refuses to give up on her habit of walking through it. She told the Commission that people don't want to be around the area and that causes hardship on the business around downtown, which in turn affect the City itself. She is tired of hearing that it takes time and money, time and money. She has seen little to no positive changes.
2. Gabriel Teran, informed the Commission that Karl and Mark went out and addressed the neighborhood council and appreciates their contributions. He also said that there was minimal impact caused by the temporary emergency shelter and has been made aware there may be a need for an extension. He understands there's a humanitarian approach needed to the nationwide issue of homelessness. He would like to continue to be updated on future updates that may have impact in his neighborhood as well as neighboring ones.
3. Lucy Cartagena, left the meeting with out giving her public comment.
4. Abel Magaña, Downtown Property Owner's Association Director expressed to the Commission that he has seen improvement. Small changes have been made and is hopeful that we are on the right track. He credits the changes to a VCStar article that brought attention to ordinances that weren't being enforced. Said someone with a shopping cart was sited as well as other citations for drug offenses. Parks and downtowners were cleaning the park this morning to keep it clean, safe and inviting for everyone.

e. HOMELESS SERVICES DIVISION ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Presentation from invited guest

a. CURRENT OPERATION OF TEMPORARY EMERGENCY SHELTER

Rachel West, Mercy House Manager, said they follow Housing First. They had an early opening. There are four housing navigators with housing plans. They provide NA and AA meetings, transportation services, which alleviates the traffic between the shelter and CAVC. They have buddy nation, 15 pets, laundry on site. Bins with locks in and out doors. ADA approved showers. Amber and Oceana are the site leads.

b. PORTOCOLS FOR VOLUNTEERING AT TEMPORARY EMERGENCY SHELTER

Volunteers must register at mercyhouse.net and click on "Giving/Volunteers". Must fill out their online applications. They are processed within 2-3 days. A thirteen-year-old may volunteer if accompanied by an adult. Sex offenders are unable to volunteer nor persons with outstanding warrants.

There was one public speakers on this item:

Gabriel Teran, thanked Rachel for her report and told the Commission that he's tried to get the City to create a voluntarism program like Ventura has. The idea is that anyone wishing to volunteer sign up into a data base and if a need for volunteers was to come up, there would be a pool of volunteers ready to fill in as necessary.

5. NEW BUSINESS

SUBJECT: "Changing the Conversation" Initiative

In the last meeting Emilio tasked the Commissioners to come up with ideas. It is a cheerleading effort to promote ongoing attempts to address homelessness as opposed to being negative. He gave the following examples: A nonprofit named Miracle Messages with the tagline "Everybody is someone's somebody". Their purpose is to connect people who've lost touch. Five hundred people have been reunited through this organization. Another is the California Youth Program, a sixteen-year-old teenager from Las Vegas, featured in a project who desires to be a cook and as a result received scholarship to put him through culinary school.

Emilio offered a retreat in the future to brainstorm and explore ideas.

6. ANNOUNCEMENTS OF UPCOMING EVENTS

Commissioner Okano provided flyers of two events he wanted to make everyone aware of (Copies available in the Secretary's binder):

Workshop on Ventura's First Permanent Shelter
3451 Foothill Rd, Ventura, CA 93003
Thursday, September 12, 2019
5:30 – 8:00 p.m.

Innovative Housing and Community Design
Location TBD
Wednesday, August 14, 2019
8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting stood adjourned at 6:09 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Angelica Navarro