

CITY OF OXNARD
COMMISSION ON HOMELESSNESS
MEETING MINUTES
December 7, 2020

On Monday, December 7, 2020, at 4:00 p.m. the Meeting of the Commission on Homelessness convened remotely via zoom. Peggy Rivera Chair called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

- a. Present: David Littell, Mayra Plasencia, Ruby Durias, Peggy Rivera, Yukio Okano, Rene-Camper Stewart

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Pat Brown – Is concerned about the homeless down at the coast getting up on the part where they want to sleep. An area which is extremely dangerous. They can get cancer and if they do their families are going to sue us, if they die or if they want us to cover their operations and costs. It's just not safe for homeless people to be camping out down there at Halaco. It's just not safe and we have to get it all cleaned up, but of course the people that left the mess don't want to clean it up. So, the City is going to have to put a lot of money to clean it up.

3. INFO/CONSENT

- a. Commissioner Okano made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 2, 2020 meeting, second by Commissioner Durias. All approved and the motion passed.

4. REPORTS FROM STAFF

- a. Report from Housing Director

City is implementing the State's Stay at Home order effective tomorrow. Staff will mostly be teleworking, but still working full time.

There was a conversation that occurred last week with a faith-based group that the chief of police organized some time ago. That was about organizing and going from this point forward what sometimes is referred to as the longest night event that happens on the winter solstice on December 21st and it's a vigil for homeless persons that died while homeless during the year. Jessica has joined that committee of that group and so has Commissioner Okano. They will be working on that virtual event. Everyone will be invited.

5. OLD BUSINESS

- a. SUBJECT: Project RoomKey Update

Project RoomKey transitioned from a site-specific contract that the County of Ventura Human Services Agency was operating together with the Health Care Agency to a voucher system. Those voucher systems are occurring citywide where the voucher is paying for the motel in which the occupant is living. That system is providing case management supportive services. We are continuing to refer to Project RoomKey. At this point we have 38 out of the 70 available rooms being used at the Vagabond Inn via that voucher system at the County of Ventura. In Oxnard, the Vagabond is the only place that vouchers are being used under project RoomKey, but they are significant additional units where vouchers being placed throughout the county. Project RoomKey as it existed at one time, being site specific is no

longer in place. The County is no longer in mass lease up of the Vagabond. It is being managed and operated by the private ownership of the Vagabond. The Project RoomKey residents are from the perspective of the private ownership hotel residents. The rate being paid for by the project RoomKey at the County. There is a little bit of capacity still it's not based by the availability of the rooms, but by the availability of the vouchers or funding. Refer to Jessica or Emilio to reach out for availability. Most vulnerable clients are the ones being referred to Project RoomKey.

b. SUBJECT: Project HomeKey Update

Next phase of Project RoomKey. Project HomeKey has the intent of acquiring a facility (the hotel) which is ultimately converted to a permanent supportive housing multifamily development where the interim function of that facility is the non-congregate shelter operation that was operated under project RoomKey. That was the NOFA that the state issued early summer. They were seeking an entity to apply to and receive CARES Act funding that would be used to acquire a facility, use it for the interim non-congregate shelter, provide onsite support services and case management and then convert it to a permanent supportive housing within a two-year period. That project we did in coordination with the County, a request for proposals was issued and we procured a partner to acquire the facility. That partnership is the entity that will eventually run the shelter and permanent supportive housing. The current status is that the partnership applied to the State's CARES Act funding and that was approved. The County also approved an additional CARES Act funding allocation. Transaction must close by December 31. We expect close to happen December 12. The City of Oxnard does not have a financial contribution to it.

c. SUBJECT: Homeless Solutions Center Update

Continues to go forward. Support services and offices. Built on top of that Navigation Center. Shelter will be operated by Mercy House. As of right now that project is pending a planning commission hearing. Specifically, to consider the shelter operation. The aspect to consider the transitional housing. Preparing to bring forth all approvals, including final consent of entitlements to City Council late February or early March. Then there will be an application to VCHTF and Tax Credit Application in.

d. SUBJECT: Halaco Encampment Response

Coordinated response with the City the County Mercy House. Backpack medicine every two weeks. Engagement with people who have been living there. Every Wednesday, services at a one stop, which includes mobile showers. Five site visits, each time a different number of engaged persons. Today there were less people around, don't know if weather is affecting the number of people that are staying there. It is getting colder. About 50-60 people out there estimated at this time. Some people were connected to Project RoomKey. Next steps, funds available through the CARES Act, plans for temporary housing assistance. Recognizing congregate shelter space is not ideal. Individual plans for people to best help them get off the site. Proposing to continue to do this for another six months to be able to have contracts in place.

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. SUBJECT: Cold Weather Shelter Discussion Led by Commissioner Rivera

Foul weather shelter during the winter. It's been very cold and it is not even winter yet. Asking for the Commission to make a request if they can allow emergency funding for a foul weather shelter. Request to use the old high school classrooms which would allow for social distancing.

Commissioner Ruby Durias made the motion to direct Emilio Ramirez to draft a letter on the Commission's behalf addressed to City Council requesting a foul weather shelter to be funded. Second by Commissioner David Littell. No one opposed and the motion passed.

7. ADJOURNMENT
5:40 PM