



Sonoma County Homeless Coalition Board

Homeless Coalition Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

1:00 – 5:00 PM, Pacific Time – Meeting held via Zoom

Zoom Recording:

<https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/rec/share/9GpZaknjQdTIAjLQ0uCHhWPdPENMMhuN3EeBJKr1V-6GoT3k7UotmmBGeSaaZAJy.Fq7gdmTRRNX1sKTA>

Passcode: gtimt.6g

Welcome and Roll Call Introductions (00:05:52– 00:13:10)

Jennielynn Holmes called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and went over the Zoom rules regarding public comment and Brown Act guidelines.

Jennielynn Holmes introduced Salvina Norris, Sonoma County Indian Health Project, a newly elected Homeless Coalition Board member filling a “Member At-Large” seat.

Alea Tantarelli proceeded with roll call and introductions from Homeless Coalition Board Members and Lead Agency staff.

Present: Dennis Pocekay, City of Petaluma | Jennielynn Holmes, Catholic Charities | Natalie Rogers, City of Santa Rosa | Chris Coursey, County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors | Margaret Sluyk, Reach For Home | Ana Rangel, proxy for Margaret Sluyk, latter part of meeting | Chris Cabral, Committee on the Shelterless (COTs) | Angelica Smith, Tribal Seat | Emily Luna, proxy for Kristi Lozinto, Member-at-Large | Rhonda Kaufman, proxy for Martha Cheever, Community Development Commission | Una Glass, City of Sebastopol | Jackie Elward, City of Rohnert Park | Ron Wellander, City of Sonoma | Dannielle Danforth, West County Community Services | Salvina Norris, Sonoma County Indian Health Project (SCHIP) | Aaron Mello, Leap Board

Absent: Benjamin Leroi, Santa Rosa Community Health Center | Kristi Lozinto, Member-at-Large | Martha Cheever, Community Development Commission / LEAP | Cheyenne McConnell, TAY Representative

A quorum was present.

1 - 4. Approval of Consent Calendar (00:13:15 – 00:19:49)

- Jennielynn Holmes, CoC Board Chair, presented the consent calendar items:
 1. 5/22/24 meeting agenda

2. 4/24/24 meeting minutes
3. Summary of Follow-ups from Previous Meetings
4. Reports for Standing Committee Updates

Item #3 “Summary of Follow-ups from Previous Meetings” was pulled from the Consent Calendar for further discussion.

- **Motion:** Una Glass moves to approve the Consent Calendar as presented, with the exception of item #3, pending further discussion. Mayor Natalie Rogers seconds.
- **Public Comment:** None.
- **Abstentions:** Salvina Norris
- **Objections:** None.

Motion passes with one abstention. The Consent Calendar is approved, with the exception of item #3, Summary of Follow-Ups from Previous Meetings.

Discussion of Item #3 is delayed pending the imminent arrival of Dept. of Health Services (DHS) Director, Tina Rivera.

5. Reports from Lead Agency Staff (00:19:52 – 1:37:20)

- **Filling the Open At-Large Seat:**
Andrew Akufo reported that, upon the early resignation of Don Schwartz from his Homeless Coalition (HC) Board At- Large Seat, the previous applicants for that seat were contacted to gauge their interest in serving the remainder of the term. The HC Board ultimately selected Salvina Norris to fill the vacated position. The seat is active for the duration of the calendar year, at which time a new election will be held.
- **Point-in-Time (PIT) Count:**
Michael Gause reported that the preliminary PIT count numbers are expected to be available in the next couple of weeks. The full report and jurisdictional count numbers will be released later in the summer, likely in July or August.
- **Update on Website & Dashboard:**
Michael Gause explained that the data dashboard is a top priority and a demo is anticipated for July 2024. A basic redesign of the website is also targeted for completion this summer. A Public Forum webinar about encampment response is planned for June.
- **Equity Workgroup Progress:**
Araceli Rivera reported that upon completion of a review of applications for open seats, the Racial Equity Workgroup selected eight (8) new members, bringing their total

membership to fourteen (14). Applications were open to provider agencies as well as to those with lived experience. The Racial Equity Workgroup hopes to become agendaized as a standing report item to provide updates to the HC Board in the future.

- Michael Gause took a moment to provide a timeline of the planned Homelessness Prevention Pilot. Thanks to the efforts of City of Santa Rosa staff and Kelli Kuykendall, City of Petaluma staff and Karen Shimizu, as well as All Home staff and Mary Kate Johnson, the RFP for a lead operator should be released in the next few weeks. Additionally, the pilot program is anticipated to be presented to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors for approval within the next month.
- **DEMA (Disaster Emergency Medical Assistance) Clients Update:**
Michael Gause explained that subsequent to DEMA ceasing operations at the shelter sites, the Homelessness Services Division's Homeless Encampment Access & Resource (HEART) Heart Team has been staffing both Mickey Zane Place and the Emergency Shelter Site (ESS). FS Global is also actively providing support at both sites. Santa Rosa Community Health (SRCH) has stepped up to fill a gap in medical services at the sites.

Director Rivera joined the meeting and accommodated discussion within the group to address questions regarding the prospective Request for Proposals (RFP) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will eventually be awarded to a new medical shelter site provider, and also spoke to the inherent differences in processes for medical and emergency shelter sites, and those of permanent supportive housing sites. The procurement process for the anticipated RFP originates with and is administered by Sonoma County Public Infrastructure, Purchasing Division, rather than through the Department of Health Services.

- **Public Comment:** Hunter Scott, Adrienne Lauby, Amy Appleton, Matthew Verscheure
- Continued discussion focused on the mutual desire to find avenues to facilitate enhanced communication and partnership between the Lead Agency and service providers. Comment was also received to suggest that increased focus, advocacy, and bridge-building be devoted to the needs of the Black community.

3. Summary of Follow-ups from Previous Meetings (01:37:26 – 02:03:05)

Conversation returned to the "Summary of Follow-Ups from Previous Meetings" that had been pulled from the Consent Calendar earlier in the meeting.

Questions arose regarding the status of a MOU that had been initiated in a previous year between the Continuum of Care (since renamed as the "Homeless Coalition") and a separate County department, the Community Development Commission (CDC), prior to the incorporation of CDC staff into a new Homelessness Services Division (HSD) within the Department of Health Services (DHS).

Since the relevant staff are now under the auspices of the Civil Service Commission, the prospective MOU will be subject to County Counsel review to ensure that its parameters are appropriate for DHS and Civil Service positions. Director Rivera will consult with County Counsel to establish a timeline for review of the prospective MOU.

- **Public Comment:** Teddie Pierce
- Chair Jennielynn Holmes requests the continuation of the MOU update as a standing item on the HC Board agenda.

6. Service Provider Roundtable Update & Presentation from Sonoma County Library (02:03:33 – 02:29:23)

- Ana Rangel, Director of Operations, Reach for Home, acting as proxy for Margaret Sluyk during this portion of the meeting, confirmed that concerns from the SPR regarding aspects of the anticipated RFP for shelter medical services oversight, as presented by Margaret Sluyk during the discussion of item #5 (DEMA Clients Update) had been sufficiently covered.
- Sarah Vantrease, Public Services Manager for the Sonoma County Library, showed slides depicting the vast array of resources available to the community through the Sonoma County library system during 2023, including statistics highlighting the usage of library services. Last year (2023), 1,260,270 people walked through the doors of Sonoma County libraries, and the website received an additional 2,916,633 visits! Library encounters are now in excess of pre-pandemic numbers.

The library has adopted a trauma-informed approach to services over the last few years in an effort to be more responsive to community needs and to increase opportunities for community engagement.

A sales tax measure enacted several years ago has enabled library hours to be expanded. There are now twelve full-service library locations around the County that are open seven days a week. Some features offered by the libraries include small meeting places that can be used for study pods or zoom calls; sound studios with audio-visual (AV), podcasting and video editing equipment; professional quality camera and AV equipment that can be checked out; and large rooms that can be used as training facilities or for meetings. Additionally, there are an abundance of training resources available on the library website.

The only requirement for obtaining a library card is a photo ID of some sort, even if it has expired. If lacking a photo ID, an individual can still receive an electronic card, which allows them to use anything on the library website. There are also programs geared toward any age about health, art, and music, and free legal consultations are offered via a partnership with the Bar Association. Literacy, tutoring and High School GED

preparation programs are also provided. WiFi hotspots, Chromebooks, and other technology are available for lending. The Sonoma County Library system is continually evolving to increase engagement and ease of accessibility within the community, and to provide a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all residents.

- **Public Comment:** Gregory Fearon, Ludmilla Bade

Note: Due to time considerations, item #7, Word from the LEAP Board, and item #9, SAY Lessons Learned, will be heard in reverse order.

8. 10-minute break: Due to time constraints, the Board agreed to forego the break.

9. Social Advocates for Youth (SAY) Lessons Learned (02:30:25 – 3:10:46)

- Oscar Chavez, President & CEO, and Amy Holter, Vice President of Community Impact, from Community Foundation Sonoma County joined the meeting to provide some insight into the challenges experienced by SAY which ultimately resulted in their closure. Board members and speakers discussed areas of concern.

Public Comment: Gregory Fearon, Bob Lance, Anne Goebel, Adrienne Laube

7. Word from the LEAP Board (03:10:50 – 00:04:22, 2nd recording)

- Aaron Mello, LEAP Board Chair, spoke to the “golden hour,” the moment in time that an individual with a substance abuse disorder has a moment of clarity and realizes that they have to change and expresses a sincere desire to quit. This is a critical juncture for timely intervention and support to occur before the opportunity slips away.

Aaron also emphasized that once a homeless individual completes a rehab program it is essential that they do not return to their previous environment on the street. Transitional housing provides a structured environment that helps them ease back into society, relearn important skills, attend 12-step meetings, undergo drug testing, and pursuing work or educational opportunities. Transitional housing fills an important role in the interim between rehab and permanent supportive housing.

HC Board Chair Jennielynn Holmes suggests adding to the agenda for the June 2024 meeting an item for more targeted conversation regarding the detox center and other vital services to see where some gaps in those critical services can be addressed.

- **Public Comment:** Amy Appleton, Gregory Fearon

10. Review Agenda for the June Coalition Board Meeting (00:04:31 –00:08:01)

- Jennielynn Holmes shared the draft agenda for the June 2024 meeting.

Michael Gause added that he hopes to share a brief summary of the preliminary Point-in-Time results. Also anticipated is that All Home may join to provide a gaps analysis on the long-term funding plan.

Ron Wellander recommends adding the MOU as an ongoing agenda item. Jennielynn Holmes suggests changing it from a consent item to a reportable item.

- **Public Comment:** None

11. Board Member Questions and Comments (00:08:05 – 00:09:54)

- Jennielynn Holmes announced that the recruitment for a new Homelessness Services Division Director is open. Michael Gause added that the closing date will be Monday, May 27, 2024.

- **Public Comment:** None

12. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda: (00:09:58 – 00:10:19)

- None

Next meeting: June 26, 2024, 1:00 PM

Adjournment: 4:26 PM