



WESTSIDE CITIES

• BEVERLY HILLS
• CULVER CITY
• LOS ANGELES
• SANTA MONICA
• WEST HOLLYWOOD
• COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Homeless Issues Committee Meeting
April 17, 2008 12:30 PM
Santa Monica Main Library
Staff Meeting Room, 2nd Floor
601 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, CA

Meeting Notes

I. Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 12:40 by Co-Chairs Bloom and Gross. Co-Chair Bloom initiated round-the-room self-introductions.

II. Follow-up Announcements: Governing Board meeting of March 20, 2008

Jody Hall Esser advised that the Draft 2008-09 Legislative Platform would be scheduled for adoption at the May 15, 2008 Board meeting and included reference to Homeless Issues that could be used in the Committees proposed Homeless Advocacy packet.

III. Presentation by LAHSA RE Homeless Count and Super NOFA Distribution

LAHSA representative Jeff Silverbush made a brief presentation on the most recent Homeless Count. He referred those interested to the Executive Summary on the LAHSA website and explained that the count revealed that 83% of the region's homeless are "unsheltered". Considerable discussion ensued regarding the accuracy of the count; frustrations with the "SPA" district counting approach; the fact that the count is based on extrapolations; and the issue of identifying and using/not using "hot spots" and the difficulty in counting in rural areas. Mr. Silverbush explained the cost and advantages of individual jurisdictions pursuing "deeper/better" specific counts of their homeless population. It was noted that SPA 5 which includes most of the WSCCOG members does not include West Hollywood – that West Hollywood pursued their own in-depth homeless count in 2007.

Mr. Silverbush noted that planning for the 2009 count is getting underway. Flora Gil Krisiloff added that Supervisor Yaroslavsky is very interested and concerned in improving methodology for the 2009 count as a precursor to the County's agreement to fund a significant portion of the effort.

Co-Chair Bloom asked how the COG can get better information than the SPA 5 approach for the COG's purposes and advocacy. He requested Mr. Silverbush come back to the Committee at the June 19 Committee meeting to provide some guidance and ideas in this regard.

Mr. Silverbush provided basic introductory information regarding the Super NOFA funding purpose and process. Several questions were raised regarding concerns with /flaws in the Super NOFA funding distribution formula. Mr. Silverbush noted that he was not sufficiently familiar with the formula to answer questions. He was asked and agreed to identify other individual(s) at LAHSA that could attend the June Committee meeting to continue this discussion.

Co-Chair Bloom inquired about the audit process for service providers receiving HUD funds through LAHSA. Stacy Rowe commented on Santa Monica's experience with file and field audits. Ms. Rowe also commented that HUD/LAHSA want the programs to succeed but also that there is a clear expectation that audit findings in year 1 be addressed by year 2 or 3.

Mr. Silverbush also commented that LAHSA has required training sessions for all funded service providers.

IV. Continued Discussion Next Steps RE Specific Request(s) for Federal Assistance Needed to Address Homeless Issues to be Presented to Senator Boxer

The Executive Director was requested to make contact with Mr. Edward Cabrera with the US Interagency Council on Homelessness, for additional information/resources that might be of use to the Committee and its efforts.

V. Continued Discussion Homeless Issues Advocacy Packet: Packet Contents

Mrs. Hall Esser commented on the proposed components of the advocacy packet and noted that a reasonably complete draft should be available for the June Committee meeting.

The Executive Director was requested to seek copies of Homeless Issues related work programs from other COGs in the region.

VI. Update: Cold Weather Shelters on the Westside

Armando Abrego provided a briefing on the recent meeting hosted by the Westside Hunger Coalition and reported on their pre-planning efforts for next year's cold weather shelter program operation. Issues regarding the need for additional shelter locations and/or pick-up points; program dispersion throughout the County; cost of operation of Armory facilities; opportunities for Faith Based Organizations to become more involved in this area of service; operation of the program in facilities that afford more reasonable hours of operation (not requiring complete daily set-up and breakdown); locations with adequate facilities for men and women; and more dignified/respectful facilities for the homeless were discussed. It was also noted that the Cold Weather Shelters are so off-putting, homeless stay on the street to avoid them.

The Westside Hunger Coalition's "Project Homeless Connect" was also discussed.

VII. Update: West Los Angeles VA Proposal for Homeless Vets Therapeutic Housing.

Flora Gil Krisiloff reported on the HUD/VA Shelter Voucher program and noted that concerns regarding the "portability" of vouchers are being confirmed.

VIII. Public Comment RE Items Not On the Agenda :

Kristy Finzer reported on continued operation and service levels by the Exodus Recovery program. She responded to questions about program location and association with Brotman Medical Center an issue being the pending sale of the hospital.

IX. Announcements

Co-Chair Bloom thanked Co-Chair Carol Gross for her efforts on behalf of the homeless in Culver City and beyond, her service to the Committee and wished her well in all her future endeavors. Ms. Gross responded thanking all for their service and her opportunity to serve.

X. Adjourment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 PM. Co-Chair Bloom noted that the next Committee meeting will be on June 19, 2008, in Santa Monica.

In Attendance:

Co-Chairs

Santa Monica Mayor Pro-Tempore Richard Bloom
Culver City Vice Mayor, Carol Gross

Beverly Hills:

Staff: Julie Kahn

Culver City

Staff: Shelly Wolfberg, Armando Abrego

County of Los Angeles

Staff: Flora Gil Krisiloff

City of Santa Monica

Council Member Kevin McKeown. Staff: Stacy Rowe

City of West Hollywood

Staff: Daphne Dennis

WSCCOG

Jody Hall Esser

Other:

Mark Silverbush (LAHSA); Rhonda Meijter (Conrad Hilton Fdn.); Kristy Finzer (Exodus Recovery)