

Shelter Grievance Advisory Committee (SGAC)
Meeting Minutes
June 14, 2017, 2:00-4:00PM, 1650 Mission Street, San Francisco

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Members Present: Commissioner Scott Kahn – Chair, Kate Shuton ,Jean Green ,Jose Landaverde, Jeffrey Livingston

Members Absent: Kim Clark, Jenise Standfield, Lessy Benedith, Jennifer Friedenbach, Kristin Keller

Shelter Client Advocates Present: Will Daley, Nick Kimura

HSA Staff Present: Cindy Ward, Cordell Thompson, Jemari Foulis

Others Present: Dennis McGray, Diana Alvarez, Henry Lawrence, Larry Richards, Nancy Cross

INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME: HSA Commissioner Scott Kahn called the meeting to order.

MEETING AGENDA: Due to lack of quorum, the agenda was not approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – 3/22/17: Due to lack of quorum, the meeting minutes were not approved and will be placed on the next meeting agenda for approval.

SGAC BUSINESS

Status of Vacant Young Adult Provider Seat

Cindy informed the SGAC members that the Young Adult Provider Seat was still vacant, since Johnathan Lisan decided to leave his position at Larkin Street. As a result, Ali Schlageter has initiated an outreach to find his replacement from current Larkin Street staff. Cindy requested that SGAC members refer any known candidates for the position. In response, Will Daley offered to reach out to qualified candidates for the vacant Young Adult Provider Seat.

REVIEW OF SHELTER GRIEVANCE STATISTICS

15-Month Denial of Services, Internal Hearings and Arbitrations Report September 2017 to March 2017

Summary of DOS's by Shelter for October, January - March 2017

Reports were reviewed by the committee.

CLIENT ADVOCATE REPORTS

Hearing and Arbitration Monthly Comparison Report – January - March 2017

Hearing and Arbitration Analysis Report – January - March 2017

During his presentation, Will Daley stated the appeals for immediate DOS averaged around 46%. Of that number, 30% of clients did not appear for their arbitration hearings.

Will reviewed Nick Kimura's graphs and tables with the SGAC members.

Upon request, Nick Kimura is willing to include any statistical data to either providers or HSH in his future Client Advocate Reports.

Will gave his notice of resignation, effective the 28th of June. Citing his frustration with the new department (HSH), Will felt that he could no longer work as a Client Advocate. He requested the SGAC members read his op-ed in the upcoming Street Sheet, where he spells out his grievances.

Will quoted from Fania Davis in regards to restorative justice:

“Punitive justice asks only what rule or law was broken, who did it, and how they should be punished. It responds to the original harm with more harm. Restorative justice asks who was harmed and what are the needs and obligations of all affected.”

Will expressed his love for the job and wants to remain engaged in the process. Also, Will conveyed his appreciation for the work the HSA Commissioner Scott Kahn and the committee has done over the years.

Will has worked as a Client Advocate for the past 9 1/2 years. Additionally, he spoke on his desire to become a voting committee member.

The Chair asked why Will didn't address his concerns in a more public forum.

Cindy Ward and Jemari Foulis expressed their gratitude for Will's works.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion of Bylaws for SGAC

Jeff Livingston spoke on the need for bylaws for SGAC. The form / outline to be reviewed came from the Shelter Monitoring Committee. According to Jeff, it's designed to ask people how they want to govern themselves.

The SGAC committee members agreed to go through the draft.

Cindy Ward sought clarification if the Local Homeless Coordinating Board (LHC) would approve the bylaws.

Jeff Livingston proceeded to summarize the details for the draft of the bylaws:

Article I – Shelter Grievance Advisory Committee

It simply states the name of the governmental body.

Article II – Purpose

It defines the purpose of the SGAC.

Section 1 – Overall Mandate

It discusses the overall mandate of the SGAC.

Section 2 – Powers and Duties

It covers the powers and duties of the SGAC.

Section 3 – Reports

It relates to the SGAC's responsibilities in regards to producing reports.

Article III – Members

It relates to members of the SGAC.

Section 1 - Members and Staff

It states that “The Committee consists of Members who are appointed through the procedures provided in the SCP. Only Members may vote.”

Cindy Ward stated that Commissioner Scott Kahn was asked to volunteer to be the Chair, not appointed. The Chair asked what would be the result if he was to resign. According to Cindy, the Local Homeless Coordinating Board would appoint a new Chair.

Jeff Livingston sought clarification on the appointment of SGAC members. He wondered if once appointed if a member stays appointed indefinitely. Also, Jeff suggested that HSH provide a primary department staff person to be a contact to the SGAC.

Section 2 – Duties and Attendance

It reflects how things have always been conducted.

Will Daley asked about slots. He believes that the committee is marginalized. Furthermore, Will holds the opinion that many of the members of the Local Homeless Coordinating Board are not well informed on the policy.

The Chair asked Will if the shelter grievance process should be governed by the HSA Commission. Cindy didn't see why HSA should take over the shelter grievance process, since HSA does not oversee the shelter system.

Will believes that HSH Director Jeff Kositsky doesn't understand this committee.

Nick Kimura asked who controls the contracts for HSH. In response, Cindy stated that there is no commission set up to oversee the department.

Section 3 - Representation

It reflects how SGAC members may represent themselves.

Article IV – Officers

Jeff Livingston believes that the Chair should be the sole officer. There's a mechanism to provide a temporary officer if needed.

Due to time constraints, the SGAC agreed to continue reviewing the bylaws during the next meeting.

SGAC / New Department

Cindy Ward spoke to the Local Homeless Coordinating Board on 6/5/17 and provided an explanation of the Shelter Grievance Policy. Jeff Livingston believed that the LHCb didn't understand the shelter grievance policy.

In August, Cindy will give Charles Minor, staff to the LHCb some background about the policy and present to the LHCb members again.

NEW BUSINESS

Update on the Grievance Policy in the Navigation Centers

Update on the Curfew Policy in regards to Hospitalization

Regarding using the shelter grievance policy in the Navigation Centers, Cindy Ward announced that HSH had met internally to discuss this issue. HSH will implement the shelter grievance policy in the navigation centers. Cindy stated that HSH wanted to maintain the integrity of the navigation center model including flexibility, harm reduction, and low barrier and not turn them into shelters.

Dennis McGray said he would love to have the navigation centers be governed by the policy.

In conclusion, Cindy said that HSH staff will discuss the rollout of the policy at the July LHCb meeting.

Cindy Ward didn't have any updates on the curfew policy.

Will Daley had concerns about single adult system clients losing their bed after being hospitalized. In addition, he asked if Jeff Kositsky knew about the growing negative sentiments regarding single adult system clients losing their beds. Will expressed that his departure is based on the lack of movement in updating the curfew policy toward client hospitalization.

Along with his concerns about the curfew policy, Will relayed his thoughts about Jeff Kositsky's lack of response to a letter sent to him regarding updating the curfew policy. There was discussion among the committee members if the letter had indeed been sent and received by Jeff Kositsky. Jeff Livingston suggested that letter be re-sent. The Chair believed that he signed the letter, but clarified that it might have not been delivered. Later, Kate Shuton was able to find an email from Ed De Masi that confirmed Commissioner Scott Kahn had signed the letter. In fact, the letter was sent to former Director Joyce Crum, not Jeff Kositsky in June 2016. Cindy will resend the letter to HSH management.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nancy Cross spoke about her experiences in the shelter system. She stated that she had been a "victim" of the Shelter Grievance Policy. It is her belief that clients turn down the arbitrations, because the system is not fair. Additionally, Ms. Cross believes the system is rigged against the clients. During her presentation, Ms. Cross cited The People of the State of California, acting by and through San Francisco City Attorney Dennis J. Herrera, Plaintiff, vs. The National Arbitration Forum, Inc., Et Al.

Ms. Cross asked the SGAC if they were going to amend the policy. In the end, she stated that the policy was unlawful.

Will Daley said he believed that the system was not perfect. However, he felt the system benefited the clients for the most part.

Adding to the conversation, Cindy Ward reassured Ms. Cross the arbitration process didn't prevent clients from pursuing legal action against the shelters.

Larry Richardson expressed concerns regarding the curfew policy in relation to disabled clients. Continuing, he felt shelter staff issued DOS's in order to retaliate against clients they didn't like. Mr. Richardson had issue with the shelter not informing him of his mother's death. He believes that shelters are run by "petty dictators". He claims to have witnessed Ms. Cross being beaten in the past. Mr. Richardson requested complaints be held before a truly neutral party.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, September 27, 2017

2:00-4:00 PM

1650 Mission Street

4th Floor, Mission Room

MEETING ADJOURNED

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Cordell Thompson

June 14, 2017