

June 2020 Local Homeless Coordinating Board-Virtual Meeting

Materials listed:

<https://hsh.sfgov.org/committees/lhcb/monthly-meeting-archives/lhcb-monthly-meetings-2020/>

Roll Call

- Del Seymour
- Ralph Payton
- Eric Brown
- Andrea Evans
- Kim Mai Cutler
- Kelley Cutler
- Sophia Isom-excused
- Brenda Jewett and James Loyce- Present and joined over the phone line.

Adoption of March's LHCB Minutes-Approved

Agenda Item:

Aram Hauslaib Center for Common Concern: (*Presentation materials are available on the [LHCB website](#)*)

We have yet to get information about when the CoC competition is going to happen this year.

HUD has said on national calls that it once communities to concentrate on their COVID responses and the immediate issues surrounding the pandemic instead of the CoC NOFA Competition. Traditionally San Francisco is ahead in its NOFA preparation and is the case this year too.

Back in February, started with the funding committee meeting. It is the kickoff to re-examine our scoring tools for local projects in the CoC, the HUD CoC Competition.

After the meeting COVID struck and priorities changed and we had a virtual meeting to go over the tool again. Our belief is HUD will produce a similar NOFA. If there are changes, adjustments can be made and we can bring the revised tool before you.

A reminder that nationally there is 2.3 billion dollars at stake for the competition. Last years our CoC was awarded over 47.5 million dollars for local programs which was a 6 million increase. In part because of our youth demonstration project were added.

This year spent our efforts to streamline the scoring tool and heightened transparency. And reduce the burden on applicants.

Local Process Revisions – Summary

- Combined Review and Rank Policy and Appeals Policy documents
- Clarified language
- Reorganized chronologically
- Removed references to scoring and threshold criteria
- Corrected Priority Panel's position to recommend Priority Listing

Renewal Scoring Tool Revisions – Summary

- Reformed held harmless benefit
- Expanded CoC meeting attendance permitted
- Included Project Policies & Procedures in low-barrier compliance assessment
- Added seniors to community priority populations

- Revised self-reallocation bonus

New Scoring Tool Revisions – Summary

- Simplified language / clarified expectations
- Consolidated duplicative scoring factors
- Provided opportunity for scattered site housing location plans
- Mirrored Renewal Tool's addition of seniors to priority populations
- Mirrored Renewal Tool's expansion of meeting attendance
- Reorganized thematic sections – Compliance / Cultural Competency

Normally bring the tool before you in April but being delayed until June is not a big deal for the NOFA Process. We are seeking approval of the:

1. Proposed Local Competition Process Document
2. Proposed CoC Renewal Scoring Tool
3. Proposed CoC New Scoring Tool

Board Discussion

Ralph Payton- No questions from the Board

Public Comment: None

Board Vote:

Abigail Stewart Kahn: Presentation in honor of [Margot Antonetty](#).

Gigi Whitley: Deputy Director of Administration and Finance. Presentation of an update of the citywide budget. HSH has had to try to rebalance the budget and comply with the Mayor's new instructions. Due to COVID, the City has a very significant general fund- the discretionary fund deficit starting in the current fiscal year 2020 and projected through the next two fiscal years.

The pre-COVID two-year projection based on just growth in expenditures was \$420 million. The updated report now shows a two-and-a-half-year deficit for the general fund and grown to on 1.7 billion. The five-year budget forecast starting with a \$246 million shortfall and growing to \$753 million in 2021 and then 735.4 million in fiscal year 2022 for a total deficit of 1.7 billion.

This year, the projected city spending at the end of May is \$373 million and will be offset by available federal and state revenues. State and federal funding will largely be depleted at the end of the year. Starting in July, the spending needs for COVID are yet unknown. Also uncertainty around how long the federal emergency response and FEMA will continue to approve reimbursement. There are competing forces: the economic impact of COVID, which is reducing revenues and increased expenditures that HSH needs to protect the most vulnerable and respond to the public health pandemic.

The Mayor released a new budget instructions and departments had three weeks to try to comply. Departments are supposed to propose new general fund reductions. HSH has been asked to consider what operations can continue to be performed remotely, what services need to be provided in person, how it can be done safely, and what services can be moved online.

Our work is to prioritize services for vulnerable populations and in a manner that preserves and promotes equity and accountability looking at dismantling the effects of systematic racism in our homelessness response system. Using an equity lens and ensuring that it's at the forefront of our mission as we go through a budget revisioning process is key.

HSH reduction proposal is equivalent to 10% of our general fund support (\$17 million for HSH) with a proposed additional 5% contingency (\$8.9 million). For FY 21-22 a proposed 15% and a total HSH target to propose: \$42.9 million over two years.

Additional budget instructions released right after COVID. No new discretionary hiring except for direct COVID response and essential workforce staffing. For the remainder of (FY 2019-20) asked to pause, new programs that hadn't started, that were funded in the budget until the mayor's office had an opportunity to rebalance. Board can recall HSH received a lot of new one-time money, almost a hundred million dollars, and anything that hadn't started we were asked to put on hold for now.

There are many challenges to expand services for COVID and to reduce expenditures at the same time. Our approach is to first prioritize services and programs that maintain housing for example permanent supportive housing, rental, subsidies prevention, and problem solving. Now is not the time to scale back on those initiatives.

This is the time to advocate to the Mayor that these programs continue to be funded and enhanced. To prioritize equity and service delivery to underserved communities, is a budget priority, and where possible leverage new or existing federal state and philanthropic funding.

San Francisco needs to improve on spending down its federal, Continuum of Care funding. HSH needs to take a harder look at how we can fully allocate our state resources. Have both are staffing and programs proposing staffing reductions. May require our existing staff to time study and bill to a variety of sources.

This is a new budget timeline. We are really starting a new budget cycle. So June 12th, our budget proposals are due to the Mayor. On July 8th, the budget and finance will call a hearing department budgets. From June, through the end of July, the Mayor's Office will be working to prepare it's revised to our budget. August 12th, the Board's budget and finance committee will start its departmental hearings and take public comment. And go through the end of August, early September with the final Board hearing on September 29th.

Del Seymour: I'm very confused and not happy with it. This is not the Department where funding should be cut from. Does the Mayor understand that there has been a tripling of homelessness in San Francisco? I know this is the worst-case scenario that you've given us as far as the money for the next few years. We need to continue to have an aggressive response and relationship with FEMA and the State. What is going on with our conversations with Washington DC? How can we leverage FEMA spending?

Gigi Whitley: The City has both State and Federal lobbyists and we are in a unique position being in the Speaker's District which benefits our citizens. And the Governor has been aggressive in his support for the City. We have been key in informing the state on policies like 600-million-dollar Project Turnkey to

acquire some shelter in place hotels for PSH. Believe we all can advocate and recognize that now more than ever housing is healthcare.

COVID has affected HSH in ways that we could not predict. But from a process point of view, all departments were made to propose cuts whether the mayor will accept them or even enhance it has yet to be seen.

Ralph Payton: Want to echo what Del said, the county is in crisis and as unique as SF is what is going on in LA is also devastating. This is a time not to decrease but to increase funding to the Department.

Andrea Evans: I wholeheartedly agree. Thank you Gigi for the presentation. I'm just wondering if you can share a little bit about where you've identified those cuts coming from.

Gigi Whitley: As a department we are still working on this. In terms of broad strokes, there was a significant investment in the department for a variety of interventions, especially a shelter expansion, including shelters that were planned for navigation centers. The efficacy of some of those short-term navigation centers or projects need to be reconsidered. There may be some general funds savings from closing sustained shelters. We have an opportunity with FEMA and state funding and a possible bond for some capital acquisitions and to acquire master lease hotels or other kinds of property.

Finally will need to do some aggressive leveraging. Looking at philanthropic and state dollars including whole person care dollars that have not been spent down and where we can take projects off general fund and better spend our restricted resources. Also slowing down things that have not been started and can be deferred.

Del Seymour: Am concerned that COVID will be used as an excuse to dismantle the entire department. I don't want to go back to a place 30 years ago where we had no new shelter construction for 30 years. COVID can not be an excuse to scale back our homeless response.

Erik Brown: Reality is in the next 60 days we are uncertain what it will look like. There is more money being poured in the city for COVID relief than we can imagine. Our budget needs to be reevaluated and its impact on homelessness in San Francisco. That looking around the world and not knowing what will happen next. That there based on national events will most likely be another spike and who is to say how the federal government will respond fiscally? It is best to be conservative as we can and save lives.

Kelley Cutler: I'm hoping that when they're looking at the police budget, they look to redirect some of it towards homelessness. And no longer have first responders being law enforcement.

Amy Farah Weiss: Want to build off what Del and Kelley said. There are questions that I left in the queue that I would like panelist to consider. The Mayor had placed ending homelessness as her priority at inauguration. Am waiting for her to show us with her actions rather than telling us with words. Mother Brown and the community have done a very cost-efficient way to manage a safe and organized space village and is called a safe sleeping site. It was very well run.

Urban Alchemy was paid to keep the toilets open. And my organization brought over a shower and worked with Lava Mae and Mother Browns. Why is it that the city is shutting down well, run efficient community efforts? I agree with Kelley, how is that money being spent? Why is money being used to pay for law enforcement to respond to homeless clients. The City needs to redirect that funding.

Public Comment:

Martha Bridegam:

I wanted underline what Del and the last two speakers said. If the Mayor says homelessness is a priority, it is about actions and not words. Demand for homeless services is about to increase and will have more people entering homelessness when it is all said and done.

Del Seymour: Andrea a letter of commenting on the Mayor's budget process and drafts it and gets it to we'll bring it to the next meeting, the public can comment on the letter and we'll send it

Abigail Stewart Kahn: Director's Report- I really wanted to thank each of the board member for your incredible service and commitment. I know many of you were attending twice weekly calls with our provider partners as a way to stay up to date and have gotten on our mailing list. If there are people in the public who would like to access other additional resources beyond what I share today, please let us know.

HSH is striving for honesty and transparency and I welcome your feedback. The COVID has caused created a situation where HSH continued to work with providers but also providers information to the department has been invaluable.

COVID has caused our shelter system to go through a transformation. Intakes were paused due to COVID and physical distancing practices were put into place. Fear is having a vulnerable population inside, and in a dense living situation. Able to use the SIP hotels to rapidly move those people. Important that we are not planning to close shelters. They are vital to the shelter response system but must be done so and be mindful of COVID. Also able to move people from the streets to SIP sites. 14 active sip sites, 13 hotels, and one RV village, and including a new hotel with special space for LGBTQ plus and women, experiencing homelessness. Providers have been amazing in the process.

When looking at the housing portfolio will be critical to look at how we think about housing after the money starts to lessen. Will be working with Gigi and here team about using all funding streams for that to happen.

When looking at the data must consider the impact of COVID and how some programs have like Homeward Bound have been affected and have had a drop off. The housing ladder has been essentially been paused as well. Shelter slide very vividly shows how COVID has affected the shelter system and the data reflects the drop off. The Department of Public Health is leading the discussion about what shelters will look like and how COVID is affecting things like shelter density. Through COVID learned to better space Navigation Centers and to have a medical clinic on site and the affirm the value of service rich facilities.

Coordinated Entry partners are continuing to work hard, as they continue to assess people. Our next step is for people in SIP hotels or sage sleep site and making sure they all have assessments. Want to make sure that they have a clear pathway to rapid rehousing and permanent housing options.

As Gigi mentioned, hiring has been paused for most City Departments across the city. We continue to advocate for increase hiring since our work is related to COVID. We are particularly interested in hiring position related to diversity and inclusion.

Del Seymour: As a Department remember to stress and highlight who is being housed and whose lives have been changed. We don't head enough about that. Remembering Margo's spirit that she saved people's lives by housing them.

Kelley Cutler: What was the vacancy for PSH?

Abigail Stewart Kahn: Last I check vacancies were down. There are two categories of vacancies. Those units that are offline and really need attention and I think we could focus on with you as the board. They need fixing up. Other group is ones we are working with partners to quickly turnover. HUD has changed so regulations to assist us and decrease client move in time.

Kelley Culter: What is the role of HSOC? Before COVID struck, there was data showing that the methodology was not effective and actions harmful. It is challenging to now get information about HSOC. Have a question about when the next HSOC meeting will be as well as the increased duties of HSOC.

Abigail Stewart Kahn: I am not a spokesman for HSOC but maybe good to have HSOC start to report back to the Board again. HSOC has begun to open itself up more to the community and Del is involved with that and can help connect the LHCB and HSOC. I was not part of previous HSOC decisions reminder HSOC is part of Department of Emergency Management and not HSH. HSH's role is outreach and engagement with people who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Since COVID has changed things and HSOC is now part of the Emergency Operations Center and driving programs like sleep villages. The LHCB should have an active voice in the HSOC community process.

Del Seymour: Just a reminder there was a HSOC quarterly meeting that we had to cancel because of COVID so the next quarterly meeting is scheduled for August 19th and will invite him to speak about the August meeting.

Kelley Cutler: Because of COVID we have been crushed already. Have been distributing tents to give minimal protection to people. We have been asking repeatedly what is the tent policy? And again am asking why law enforcement is on the front line for these engagements. Why does SFPD and DPW continue to lead these engagements on the streets?

Andrea Evans: What is the plan for the Tenderloin? I know that the Mayor has announced it but would like to understand it better. Who is in charge? Does the plan fall under HSOC?

Abigail Stewart Kahn: I think that those are excellent questions. Has not been the best communication between Emergency Management on the neighborhood plan. Think this group would be smart to connect with efforts being made there. There is a hearing on the plan this week in the public safety and neighborhood services committee.

Kim Mai Cutler: With shelter capacity being reduced cause of COVID what are the plans to deal with the decreased capacity in the coming year?

Abigail Stewart Kahn: That is exactly the policy question we are dealing with right now and during a call with community representatives that Del is apart of. HSH believes housing is healthcare and don't want to see resources pulled. Understand that shelter is an important part of the homelessness response

system but reality has changed post COVID. Currently able to move people safely into these hotels. Need to think about the City's resources and converting those resources into housing, can do this under the Mayor's Leadership and need as much housing as we can afford. To clarify, the advance planning group includes Del and Supervisor Walton. It includes department heads and two community members.

Del Seymour: Madam Director. I know you got to leave, so thank you very much for being here today.

Public Comment:

I hope Abigail hears this later that the department of homelessness and supportive housing up until this point, hasn't been honest. Previous Jeff told me as a community provider why don't you do safe space, organized space somewhere else? Know he is central to implementing the village program but has not included the community in the process. I want to work with the City, Department, and ask the Mayor what is her plan to end street homelessness in 2020?

Martha Bridegam: As I do more public research am finding out that many of the answers to the questions that this Board and others seek answers to is lie with HSOC. As part of the national conversation should consider the functions that have been allocated to HSOC under the heading of enforcement and emergency management.

Martha and Amy, those concerns about HSOC should be brought to the Board of Supervisors as they are the ones who monitor the budget for the EOC. And the LHCB does not have the authority or flexibility to address the transitioning of funding.

Kelley Cutler: Will we continue to hold monthly virtual meetings?

Del Seymour: Yes that is correct, we have been given the authorization to hold regular virtual meetings. Thank you for that. That's something we'll work on for our next meeting.

Amy Farah Weiss: Let's make a triage response approach. We don't have enough space for people to end street homelessness. And now with COVID the City has become to employ a triage approach. Now we have the change to build enough villages, hotel acquisitions and proxy funds, and the UC Hastings lawsuit as a way to truly get a settlement cause the City has been negligent.

We all have experienced the negligence but are ready to move on and want to get back on track. I want Kelley who has an expertise in street homelessness on the Mayor's Board. Saint Francis has been working on a proposal to build bridges and want to share it with you.

Del Seymour: To be clear, the Mayor choose who was on the Board. I spent 18 years on the streets and lived in every shelter in the City. I know a little bit about the streets spent 18 years on those streets. I've lived in every one of the city's shelters for a long time. I probably lived and got kicked out of every SRO. I lived in a dumpster. I lived in tents. I've been to jail 14 times for selling drugs in general one. So I know a little bit about the street. So I bring lots of experience to the table.

Amy Farah Weiss: But Del you were with HSOC from the beginning and in the inside and knew what they were doing.

Del Seymour: Thank you for your thoughts Amy, I appreciate you. Again we have this meeting in honor of Margo.