

LHCB Minutes December 2020

Del Seymour: I wanted to thank you for a clear and concise presentation. A reminder that this board has no jurisdiction over other departments but it still would like to advocate for you.

Valerie Tulier: Thank you. This presentation is a collaboration of the Latino Task Force street needs assessment committee. We're a small group of longtime mission district, community activists, and organizers and a collective of 30 small CBO's.

All our actions are community led and community driven. The committee members for the street needs assessment committee is made up of the Latino task force, supervisor Ronan's office, Dolores Street community service, and the Gubio Project.

Deanna De Ponce: I work at the COVID Command Center-my home department is OEWD. These committees were created to work with local government to assist communities in receiving valuable resources. The guiding principles of the work center on human dignity, equity, public health, and done in a cultural and linguistically responsive approach.

Our findings from the assessment: one is the lack of city provisions of sanitation services. Including the distribution and collection of garbage bags, which effect the health of both our housed and unhoused community.

This committee has been very active in referring people into SIP hotels during the COVID pandemic and were involved with the safe sleeping villages.

Another issue was hygiene and ensuring the wellbeing of our unhoused. The committee worked with getting and supplying PPE's and the 24-Hour PIT Stops. We want to make it a commitment for everyone in the city to have clean drinking water. Communication is important to inform the stakeholders within our community to inform them about resources.

Francisco Herrera: Our main concern was our unhoused neighbors and that they be treated with full dignity. The Task Force wants to ensure there is accountability. Want the city to fund an independent community liaison position. Want to revisit the punitive language of the sleeping guides and create alternatives that can guide people as they sleep in traumatic situations.

Del Seymour: Wanted to thank you and commend you and recognize that your organizations works more than just in the Mission and the Latinx Community. You are larger than that. Also want to acknowledge that I do not have jurisdiction over bag and tag and that is a function of HSOC. Your input is valuable and we have seen many of the same things. City government should listen and incorporate more of your input.

Andrea Evans: Thank you and I think your recommendations should make their way to DPW. I think the community liaison position is a wonderful idea. The Board should make a letter for you to leverage with your recommendations.

James Loyce: I agree with the recommendations and support a letter for the Taskforce.

Kim Mai Cutler: Have a question, in which department would you want the Community Liaison to sit?

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Valerie Tulier: Would like the position funded with the CBO's and would work closely with our unhoused neighbors.

Public Comment

Chavonne Long: Am a long-time resident of the Tenderloin and exciting to hear this news and guiding principles and values. I live in an SRO and having issues I need assistance with.

Del Seymour: Ms. Black from the department will be happy to assist you with that. Next agenda item.

Charles Minor: We have the Shelter Grievance Advisory Committee (SGAC). There are three seats that are available today. One family, one adult, and one arbitrator's position.

RK Johnson: Im a shelter advocate working with the Coalition since 2018. Been homeless and would be empowering to hold a position on the SGAC. There is a certain knowledge for people who have experienced homelessness and how they relate to others that should be represented on the SGAC. Am a woman of color who has worked as an activist in this community and want to represent the community as the SIP hotels winddown.

Del Seymour: I personally know RK and she is dynamite and a hard worker.

Ben Malkowsky: I am a shelter advocate at the eviction defense collaborative. Want to speak on the behalf of Megan. She has a level of professionalism and experience that would be unmatched.

Andrew Weiner: Have worked in the shelter grievance process since it's inception-25 years. Have been impressed how the process has changed over time to protect people. COVID has provided more challenges and I want to help the community and SGAC with those decisions. I was chair of the commission of the Oakland public ethics commission.

Jane Ginsburg: I have worked in arbitration with denial of service for the past four years. Practiced family law and dependency law. Found that many of these skills are transferable. There are issues like domestic violence procedures and issues with staff development that I would have a solid knowledge to work on in the SGAC.

Rachael Jones: I am an attorney as well and practiced for 20 years and worked in the shelter grievance process for 20 years. Have also worked as a transitional housing arbitrator. I wrote more in my letter to the Board but want to highlight my work with the federal court system. Also want to remind people that we all have different perspective of things that are happening and an arbitrator's job is to be honest with the facts.

Del Seymour: Nicholas McCoy has not joined the call so I will read his letter.

James Loyce: I want to thank everyone for their work for the community and all wonderful candidates and would be honored to have you serve.

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Erik Brown: Would like to suggest that those who were not appointed could gain experience through a subcommittee to gain more experience.

Andrew Weiner: I am not necessarily interested in a subcommittee. My focus is what I can bring to the SGAC and not another subcommittee.

Del Seymour: Agree with Andrew and we will move forward with the process without the amendment to have non-elected people join subcommittees.

Brian Edwards: Always important not to pass up the chance to make transformational change to a system. I support Jane in her bid for the SGAC seat.

Ben M. Would like to support the recommendation of Jane Ginsburg as well. I have worked with her on transitional housing cases as well as family shelters and her background will be perfect for the SGAC.

Martha B. Think Janes knowledge of regulations both state and federal and human rights would be very valuable. And wonderful if she was appointed.

Charles Minor: Nick McCoy was able to enter the meeting and is on the line.

Nick McCoy: Want to speak some about my experience in joining the SGAC. Have lived on the streets and understand the homeless population of the city. The responsibilities of the city and staff and other members is to negotiate these nuances and help people transition to a better life.

Board Voting:

Five board members for Janes Ginsburg

Andrew Weiner has two votes.

Again this was not a vote against anyone. Would like to welcome Jane Ginsburg and RK Johnson onto the SGAC.

Kim Mai Cutler: Wanted to announce that I am resigning from the Board and thank you for the wonderful experiences that I have gained from being on this Board. Am a new mom and moving to the East Bay and being in this position center here in SF would be better suited for someone else.

Andrea Evans: Thank you for your patience and voice on the board. It has been very valuable to have your voice in our conversation.

Abigail Stewart Kahn: Thank you and wanted to add my gratitude for your service to the LHCB and good luck on your transition and growing family. I appreciate your service to the community.

Abigail Stewart Kahn: Interim Director of the Department. I want to thank the chairs of the LHCB and am forgoing my normal presentation to provide an overview of the PIT Count and an update of the rehousing proposal. Want to provide an update of the PIT as it relates to the recent surge in COVID.

Want to ensure a safe and accurate count. HSH is actively consulting with HUD and consultants at ASR to understand our options.

HSH is considering asking for an exemption from HUD and will look to schedule a meeting with this body for its recommendations.

HSH continues to work with its community partners and we are thankful to our community heroes as we try to keep the impact of COVID in our community low.

The Department has made a commitment of the rehousing approach to add stability and not to exit people onto the streets. Have always known that SIP hotels are temporary and expensive. HSH has made a commitment to the rehousing approach. Coordinated Entry is the key because it allows us to understand who is most vulnerable, who has barriers to housing, and who without long-term intervention would not be able potentially to achieve stability.

HSH has engaged with HUD technical assistance and assisted with an approach to rehousing. We are learning together as this is uncharted water.

Have had focused groups with people living in hotels and they shared their anxiety with the process. We were able to adjust communications and understand their situations better. Learned we need to improve our communication.

Worked with the community and received a great deal of feedback and revised our plan. Throughout the whole process have had to re-evaluate.

Before the pandemic people would have received housing referral status- which would include people with COVID vulnerabilities. For these people we are recommending PSH, TAY PSH, and Senior PSH be made available. Now recommending two new categories of pandemic prioritization using public health data. People who are COVID vulnerable, who are over 60, who are not housing referral status, but are COVID vulnerable- recommending a senior scattered site, permanent supportive housing approach. This would be like the permanent supportive housing flex pool.

Pandemic Prioritization for people less than 60 who we believe will be able to increase their income. Recommending a medium to long term subsidy with an evaluation after one year.

Problem Solving with a form of diversion plus and a significant increase to the amount of rental subsidy. Incredible balance that we are trying to create.

There are two types of PSH available-existing and pandemic prioritization. - people who are not housing referral status, but who are over 60 in hotels. They would receive an ongoing, permanent supportive housing subsidy, adult housing subsidies and rapid rehousing subsidies are medium term and problem solving and diversion.

These next slides show the housing plan and what still require funding. Will only request Prop C money for urgent needs. Want to honor the community process around Prop C funding.

Equity data is very important to the Board and HSH. The preliminary data analysis there are concerns about transgender individuals being underrepresented in the SIP population and will continue to work on this.

Equity data is very important to the department- currently data is not for all phases.

Del Seymour: Want to discuss with the Board next month extending the meetings to 2.5 hours. Have many questions but would like Board members to go first.

Brenda Jewett: Can you speak to people who have on the reservation list to get housing for over a year? Will they be displaced cause of the SIP protocols?

Abigail Stewart Kahn: This is a balancing act that I spoke of. The SIP sites are temporary and the city has made a commitment to rehousing them. People who are housing referral status who are elsewhere in the system will end up waiting for housing. The slower we go to move people from SIP housing the more harm there is to other people in the system. The challenge is the, is the focus on timeline and intensity of the speed. So there will be additional resources being brought online

James Loyce: Want to make a comment that there must be support for people with substance abuse and mental health problems for people in SIP's.

Abigail Stewart Kahn: One of the silver linings of COVID has been much better collaboration between HSH, the Department of Behavioral Health, and Public Health. And I know they have their own prop c funding committee to approve any amended or expanded spending.

Andrea Evans: The department has been gearing up for the Coordinated Entry assessments since August and what know about the process? Especially knowing that there will be a bigger push later this year.

Abigail Stewart Kahn: The team at coordinated entry has been working hard with limited resources. In the summer we were concentrated on expanding the SIP hotels. Later focused shifted to rehousing and assessments, using partners like Hot Team and Homeward Bound to community partners to increase the number of assessments.

Have seen an increase in a matter of months from 35 to 80%. And have a staff plan to get that done. It is aggressive but we need to improve. This is a massive expansion and if resources are made available, we are looking for providers and partners who do scattered site models to collaborate on the efforts.

Public Comment:

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Sarah Short: I am with CHP. And appreciate that the plan is being changed. Still major concerns with what happens to the folks who are already on the streets when all the resources are placed on SIP hotel residents? There needs to better balance from the department and will need to see the data and numbers from the department. So much is contingent on funding and what kind of client exits will exist. There are still not clear what funding sources will be used funding the plan.

Mary Kate Bacalao: Want to echo Sarah's comments. The collaboration between providers has been wonderful. Been wonderful to see people with lived experience being listened to and valued. Still major issues with funding and funding sources and uncertainty with FEMA. Also the Prop C money concerns me from a family and youth perspective. There are uncertainties how families will be accessed through coordinated entry. There is a lack of resources for families with immediate needs and is distressing to know their needs are not being met.

Martha B: Would like more information about how the Prop C committees are working.

Brian Edwards: I appreciate that the department has pulled back and focused on community input. The new problem is the department does not do community well and a wall between internal process of the department and community process.

As hotels empty there is uncertainty and the plan will change and the funding needs will change. To Sarah's point, we are talking about housing exits and some of the original funding is being replaced with Prop C funding and means that the number of exits will not dramatically increase. We the advocates need to stay on top of the entire process.

James Loyce: I would like to hear more about what is happening with Prop C and the funding.

Andrea Evans: They are meeting monthly discussing the immediate needs which is the SIP housing plan. My understanding is they are looking at the comprehensive strategic plan for funding moving forward.

Del Seymour: Would like to know about the Mayor's final budget plan and the department's response.

Martha B: I want to know the status of the Shelter Monitoring Committee and when it will be reinstated? Last time there was a shelter in place order shelters shut down for 23 hours and there was an understated scandal about it and a form of forced imprisonment.

Del Seymour: HSH and HSA oversee the shelters which are run by providers as we know. And am not aware of the 23-hour lock down. Since this was all so new there was no guidance on any of this. They have been guided by the CDC and local departments who have taken the forefront on the matter.

Brian Edwards: The Board should feel free to write a letter of support regardless of HSOC and powers that it was. The Taskforce recommendations are relevant to the community. Want to point out that the Shelter Monitoring Committee has not met in months.

Flo Kelley: I read in the SF Public Press related to the SFPD about crime and homelessness. That misleading members of the community and encouraged to use Amazon Ring products and join community meetings to address homelessness.