

**Shelter Grievance Advisory Committee (SGAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**December 13, 2022, 2:00-4:00PM**  
**Microsoft Team Video Conference**

**Members Present:** Meghan "RK" Johnson – Chair, Katherine Morales, Patrina Harrison, Henry Brown, Ben Baczkowski, Jennifer Friedenbach, Terezie Bohrer, Jane Ginsburg, Jose Landaverde, Stephen Irwin, Cris Plunkett

**Members Absent:** Kate Shuton, Lessy Benedith, Megan Pelan

**Shelter Client Advocates Present:** Tyler Rougeau, Anisha Tammana

**HSH Staff Present:** Cordell Thompson, Christopher Kramer

**Others Present:** Michelle Diaz, Salvador Barr, Alisha Coleman, Deneen Jones, Stacie Smith

**Introductions and Welcome:** Members and guests introduced themselves.

**Meeting Agenda:** The agenda was reviewed and approved.

**Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes – 9/13/22:** Meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.

**SGAC Business**

**Review of Shelter Grievance Statistics**

**15 Month Denial of Services, Internal Hearings and Arbitrations Report 8/21 – 1/23**

Lisa Rachowicz was not able to present the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) Shelter Report.

**Client Advocate Reports**

**Hearing and Arbitration Monthly Comparison Report for July – September 2022**

Tyler Rougeau went over the Client Advocate Report.

Jennifer Friedenbach wondered if the lack of denial of service (DOS) or hearings in a shelter in a month's time would trigger any alarm bells / investigations.

Tyler explained that a lack of DOS did not necessarily indicate an issue in any particular shelter. However, if a shelter with a history of issuing DOS stopped suddenly, it would prompt the Shelter Client Advocates to do outreach and investigate any problematic trends.

Ben Baczkowski said that there was a lot of missing data from the HSH Shelter Report. He believed that the City should put more effort to provide sufficient data in its report, so the SGAC can see a clearer picture of the DOS's.

Terry Bohrer mentioned that the HSH Shelter Report has been incomplete for the last 2 years. Terry made a motion that a letter be sent to the HSH Director regarding shelter data.

The motion was passed.

## **Old Business**

### **Current Video Policy and Discussing Changes**

Chair Meghan Johnson suggested that the SGAC pass on this topic, since Lessy Benedith was not present to discuss the issue. She suggested revisiting the video policy discussion in a future meeting.

## **New Business**

### **Recommendation for removal of Continuous Disruptive Behavior from shelter rules**

Ben believed that the Continuous Disruptive Behavior Rule is vague and hard to interpret. He had concerns that the shelters are misapplying this rule to clients. Furthermore, Ben believed that the rule is not applied consistently by arbitrators. He hoped that the Continuous Disruptive Behavior Rule could be removed from the shelter and replaced by rules that address specific behaviors.

Deneen Jones, Director of A Woman's Place, voiced her support for the rule. She recounted numerous stories of her staff being mistreated by shelter clients. Shelter staff were confronted with hate speech and threats of the police being called on them. Deneen stated that she would be okay with the rule being revoked, but she requested that it be replaced by a rule that could assist her staff with unruly clients.

Jane Ginsburg asked what the best option would be to deal with a client using hate speech.

Ben suggested verbal assault would be a better alternative than the Continuous Disruptive Behavior Rule.

Jennifer felt that the Continuous Disruptive Behavior Rule had been abused by shelters to punish shelter clients.

Chair Johnson has seen many times where the Continuous Disruptive Behavior Rule has been misused. She recommended that specific rules be set in place to replace the Continuous Disruptive Behavior Rule.

Patrina Harrison felt the use of hate speech was akin to incitement to violence. She requested that the policy be amended to show the demographics and personal information of the clients using hate speech.

Jose Landaverde did not believe that the Continuous Disruptive Behavior Rule should be removed. He stated that HSH has been doing a good job educating providers on how to apply this rule. Jose said that this rule works very well with clients that are out of control for more than 20 minutes.

Alisha Coleman, Hospitality House Shelter Program Manager, suggested that the SGAC should include the providers when creating the policies and procedures. Plus, she believed that the current rules are out of date and don't apply well to current shelter residence experiencing mental health issues and drug abuse. Alisha expressed her concern that the mental / behavioral health agencies in San Francisco are not providing adequate support for the shelter systems.

Chair Johnson recognized there are problems with the process. She mentioned the possibility of having a social worker attend the arbitrations. Also, the Chair mentioned that the Shelter Client Advocates would return to do outreach in the shelters in January.

Jennifer mentioned that Prop C designated funds to shelters for behavioral health services. She said that she would follow-up to see which shelters received the funds and which ones did not. Also, Jennifer suggested meeting with providers to see what additional services are needed within the shelter system.

Ben made a motion for HSH to convene a meeting with the provider partners to discuss the modifying or eliminating of the Continuous Disruptive Behavior Rule from shelter rules.

The motion passed.

**Discussion item regarding Arbitrators acting outside scope of authority and/or ignoring due process requirements of Shelter Grievance Ordinance**

This topic will be discussed in the next meeting.

**Recommendation that HSH add guideline to the Policies and Procedures document requiring that denials of service be overturned at arbitration if DOS paperwork is not sent to HSH and Arbitrator 24 hours in advance of a scheduled arbitration.**

Ben explained that some of the providers are not submitting documentation related to the arbitration in a timely manner to the arbitrator secretary. He recommended that the DOS be overturned if the paperwork is not provided within 24 hours of the scheduled arbitration.

Cordell Thompson reminded Ben that there is a 12:30 pm deadline on Wednesdays to request an arbitration on Thursday at 9 am.

Ben made a motion to recommend that HSH add a guideline to overturn arbitrations if the DOS paperwork was not provided 12 hours prior to an arbitration.

The motion passed.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Next Meeting**

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

2:00-4:00PM

Video Conference

**Meeting Adjourned**