

**COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY BOARD  
WASHOE COUNTY, NEVADA**

MONDAY

9:00 A.M.

SEPTEMBER 9, 2019

PRESENT:

**Neoma Jardon, Acting Chair**  
**Marsha Berkbigler, Member**  
**Kristopher Dahir, Member**  
**Oscar Delgado, Member\***  
**Ed Lawson, Member**  
**Vaughn Hartung, Alternate Member**

**Jan Galassini, Chief Deputy County Clerk**

ABSENT:

**Bob Lucey, Chair**

The Community Homelessness Advisory Board convened at 9:01 a.m. in the Washoe County Commission Chambers of the Washoe County Administration Complex, 1001 East Ninth Street, Reno, Nevada. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerk called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

Vice Chair Jardon assumed the gavel as Acting Chair in Chair Lucey's absence.

**19-077C**      **AGENDA ITEM 3** Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

**19-078C**      **AGENDA ITEM 4** Approval of minutes of the August 5, 2019 meeting.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Member Dahir, seconded by Member Berkbigler, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote with Chair Lucey and Member Delgado absent, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4 be approved.

**19-079C**      **AGENDA ITEM 5** Update, discussion, and possible direction regarding the Washoe County NNAMHS project. Amber Howell, Director, Washoe County Human Services Agency.

Human Services Agency Director Amber Howell stated work started at the Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services (NNAMHS) campus. She conducted a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed slides with the following titles: Washoe County

Vulnerable Populations; Making Our Way; Scope & Funding; Campus Design; GMP Plans; Campus Map; GMP Construction & Estimated Timeline; Plan Diagrams (2 slides); Plan Renderings; Staffing Plan; and The Team.

Member Dahir stated Ms. Howell provided a great presentation. He wondered whether a warming tent would be needed during the winter to protect people from the cold. Ms. Howell replied yes. She stated they knew in April that the campus would not be complete before winter so they established a plan for protection ahead of time.

Member Hartung asked when Ms. Howell anticipated the Senior Daybreak Program would be fully functional. Ms. Howell stated the Daybreak Program would expand the program for citizens with Alzheimer's disease and dementia currently being served at the Ninth Street location. At the current time, only 22 residents could be served per day but the new location would allow up to 80 residents to be served. She said a number of things were happening with the Veteran's Division and they were interested in doing a day program there also. She stated they wanted to ensure they were serving the gaps in service and were not duplicating efforts.

Member Hartung said he was very interested in seeing the Senior Daybreak Program succeed. He asked whether the County would still be working with Nevada Senior Services. Ms. Howell stated a consultation was done with them and they provided recommendations. Staff would need to decide, based on direction from the Comptroller, whether a request for proposal would be sent out or if other options would be used depending on funding.

Member Hartung stated the Nevada Senior Services program in southern Nevada was grant funded and used no tax dollars, which he hoped could be done in northern Nevada. He indicated Nevada Senior Services President Jeffrey Klein thought northern Nevada could serve as many as 100 people per day in the new Daybreak Program. Member Hartung said the services needed for people with Alzheimer's disease and dementia increased significantly every year. He said he looked forward to this program being fully functional.

Vice Chair Jardon wondered about the completion date since construction was behind schedule. Ms. Howell explained May 15, 2020 was the completion date for the campus and she hoped people would be able to transition into the new locations as buildings were completed.

Vice Chair Jardon asked when the first building could be occupied. Ms. Howell stated buildings 8C, 603, and 604 would open by March 20, 2020, and it would be determined at that point whether populations could move in. She said family services would need to be operational before the daycare center opened or it could create hardship. She stated the timing to occupy buildings would depend on the services offered and coordination between services that worked together.

Vice Chair Jardon asked for clarity about the overnight capacity at the new campus. Ms. Howell stated the family units were capable of serving 30 families, and the women's unit would double the Record Street location's capacity to serve 100 women. She stated they were able to increase the maternity capacity by a couple of beds. The daycare unit could serve 70 to 80 children, which was up from 40 children at the current location. She said shelter residents used the daycare but people who were struggling or were reunified with their children also used the facility.

Vice Chair Jardon said she was interested about the migration from Record Street because there would be more openings for the male population.

Member Dahir asked about the intake area being close to the daycare center and wondered whether that would cause any issues. Ms. Howell explained they would share a building but they did not have shared access.

Member Hartung asked what the current Daybreak space would be used for once they moved to the new location. Ms. Howell stated it would free up space for caregiver support, classes, social activities, and provide additional space for more seniors. She noted more than 300 seniors came to the current building for meals.

Member Berkbigler asked about the process for food preparation at the industrial kitchen on the NNHAMS campus. Ms. Howell stated the industrial kitchen currently served the Lakes Crossing Center. She said they had not approached the State about the kitchen possibly serving the population on campus. She noted the same providers would be used from Record Street. She said Catholic Charities and other organizations provided food and transportation was set up to bring food in. She stated a campus dining hall was being discussed to add a place for people to eat. She said each building had a kitchen and residents could use their supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits to purchase food and prepare meals in the family and maternity buildings, which were currently available to residents at the Record Street facility.

Member Berkbigler asked whether this would be a drug-free campus. Ms. Howell stated they were still trying to work on that in the family units, but the Crossroads and children's areas were drug-free.

Vice Chair Jardon said this was exciting even with the delay in construction. She expressed appreciation for the work Ms. Howell had done for this project. She stated it would be a game changer for the community once it was completed. She wondered whether the name of the campus would be changed to something easier. Ms. Howell stated the entire campus was called NNHAMS and staff was not able to change the name. She said a master planning committee from the State hired architects to determine what to do with the campus in the long term. The committee was interested in renaming the entire campus and was working on options. Since the areas were established, she wanted to choose a name that could be used for the 600 building series. She thought there could be a competition to select a new name and noted having a good name was very important.

**\*9:07 a.m.**    **Member Delgado arrived.**

There was no public comment or action taken on this item.

**19-080C**    **AGENDA ITEM 6** Update, discussion, and possible direction regarding Governor's Bowl Park (1498 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Reno) as a potential future location for homeless services.

Assistant County Manager Kate Thomas stated this item was requested by the City of Reno. She knew there had been discussion about a potential location for an alternate site for the Community Assistance Center. She noted this was placed on the agenda so the Board could have a discussion.

Vice Chair Jardon explained the Governor's Bowl was located near was Interstate 80 eastbound and Interstate 580 southbound with a baseball field on the right. This location would be impacted by the Spaghetti Bowl redesign and she wanted to see whether the State of Nevada would be interested in a partnership with the local jurisdictions to acquire the property for future homeless services. She stated she was unsure what type of services could be located there, but they were always looking for appropriate locations for the expansion of homeless services. She asserted the single most difficult task for homeless services was finding appropriate locations. She thought this location could be a benefit to the region if an agreement could be reached. The item was styled to determine whether the Board was interested in sending a letter of interest in the property should it become available.

Member Dahir wondered whether this would provide permanency because other businesses could build around the location. Vice Chair Jardon stated the baseball field was a good size and the parking lot was decent, but she thought the site would not be significantly large. She said finding any location for homeless services was always a challenge. She stated the location would be beneficial if there was a way to obtain it. She understood the Spaghetti Bowl project would impact part of the site but not a large part. She stated there was a baseball league that played on the field which would need to find a new place to play. Member Dahir thought it was an interesting idea to consider.

Member Lawson wondered whether there were firm ideas for the property. Vice Chair Jardon stated this was the beginning of the consideration of this property so nothing was decided yet. She noted she did not want the opportunity for the property to pass without declaring interest in it for homeless services.

Member Berkbigler asked whether the baseball field would definitely leave that location. Vice Chair Jardon said her understanding was only part of the baseball field would be impacted but she did not know how much. Member Berkbigler expressed concern about putting homeless services where kids might be playing baseball. Vice Chair Jardon stated the baseball field would have to be relocated.

Member Delgado thought it was an advantage for local governments to consider opportunities such as this with the growth in the area. He acknowledged this was in the early stages and the process would include consideration for the best fit for services and the geographical location. He said the property could accommodate multiple services at one location.

Vice Chair Jardon thought direction was needed to draft a letter of interest for the site and send it to the appropriate parties at the State. She wanted the motion to be general because they did not know exactly what the intent for the property was.

Ms. Thomas stated the item was agendaized to take action.

Member Hartung thought the Board should meet with the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) to see exactly how much of the baseball field would be impacted prior to a letter of interest being sent. He said he did not want to take away an area that was used for public use. He wanted NDOT to discuss its plans with the Board prior to making a decision. Vice Chair Jardon stated time was of the essence. She noted the field would not be cut in half but it would be impacted. She suggested the letter of interest could be sent followed by a meeting with NDOT for a presentation of intent for the property. She thought the jurisdictions could work together to find another location for the baseball league. Member Hartung said it would be useful to know NDOT's intended use for the property.

Member Dahir agreed with Member Hartung but thought it was important to draft a letter of interest.

Member Lawson opined sending a letter of interest and researching the prospect was not a bad idea. He said there was no harm even if it did not proceed.

Member Delgado wondered whether the motion should be broadened to include homeless services and human services at the location.

There was no response to the call for public comment.

On motion by Member Dahir, seconded by Member Lawson, which motion duly carried on a 6-0 vote with Chair Lucey absent, it was ordered that support be provided to staff to draw up a letter showing support and expand proposed uses to include human services.

**19-081C**      **AGENDA ITEM 7** Update, discussion, and possible direction on a monthly status report for the Eddy House.

Diaz Dixon, Chief Executive Director of the Eddy House, stated it was his first day in his new position and he did not know about a monthly status report. He said many things would happen at the Eddy House over the next few months and staff was working very hard with fundraising efforts to move into their new facility. He said he

would contact the County to catch up on current happenings. Vice Chair Jardon congratulated Mr. Dixon on his new position. She stated she looked forward to an update the following month.

There was no public comment or action taken on this item..

**19-082C**      **AGENDA ITEM 8** Board members announcements, reports and updates to include requests for future board agenda items.

Member Berkbigler said she requested a meal site analysis but it did not make it on the agenda. She said the Board received a document for review which included all meal site issues.

Vice Chair Jardon said nutrition was an important topic in the community. She expressed appreciation to the Truckee Meadow Water Authority (TMWA) for the use of their property for a nutrition site; a meeting would occur later that day with some of the volunteers. She spoke about concerns of a legal document she received and thought it lacked context. She hoped issues were resolved because it was a site with the potential to serve a needed population.

Member Dahir wanted details about homeless housing for the winter to be brought back to the Board. He thought it would be beneficial to see if there were other options besides a big tent to protect people from the weather. He commented they would take necessary precautions to protect and care for people, but wanted staff to check with churches as possible options for additional shelter.

Vice Chair Jardon expressed concern about the weather getting cold soon. She noted the City of Reno had an overflow shelter and the Record Street facility had a large tent, but she was unsure whether that would protect the growing population. She said the faith-based community would be instrumental in assisting citizens during the winter months.

Member Berkbigler questioned whether Human Services Agency Director Amber Howell could answer questions about the processes. Vice Chair Jardon stated the Board was not agendized to discuss this but said anyone could make public comment about the topic if they wanted. Assistant County Manager Kate Thomas stated the analysis was part of the packet so it was on public record. She confirmed discussion of the information could take place.

Ms. Howell said staff had discussed separating the nutrition services from the Record Street shelter. Prior to doing that, she thought it would be helpful to determine where residents were coming from, how they were getting there, and what types of services they needed. She said she and Sheriff Balaam facilitated meetings with service providers of residences in the area and noted the meetings were successful. She explained they learned a significant amount which helped them understand how to serve the

population. She conducted a PowerPoint presentation with data about travel methods to meal site locations and information about what area people came from.

Ms. Howell indicated the survey determined where meal sites should be located to make it easier for people to get their nutritional needs met. She said they agreed it would be nice to have multiple locations in Sparks and Reno, but the data indicated the higher-populated area was the best location for the site. She stated a meeting scheduled for later in the day would feature a discussion about steps moving forward. She mentioned there was an opportunity to partner with the Northern Nevada Food Bank because people at the shelter and low-income people struggling with food security had a need for additional nutrition towards the end of the month. She said they found a good location in Sparks. She hoped they would have the space to be able to provide the additional basic items people needed. She said they learned that individuals residing at Record Street received a meal, but they needed to ensure everyone received one meal, not more.

Vice Chair Jardon thanked Ms. Howell for the presentation and said the reason behind this was to have dispersed sites. There were so many people at the Record Street site for meals that it was causing issues. She said people were lined up onto 4th Street, which concerned many local businesses. She wanted everyone to be safe and not have to wait in line for more than an hour to get a meal. She said securing a third site would be even better for people. She stated one thing included in the legal document was a request for volunteers to clean the Sani-huts. She stated the City of Reno paid for the Sani-huts and trash dumpsters, but Sani-hut employees should clean the units.

Ms. Howell stated Washoe County did not see the contract before it went out. Vice Chair Jardon said she suspected that was the case.

Member Dahir asked whether they were able to collect data with these programs. He thought everything had to move forward for people to have a place of health. He wondered whether this would bring them to a better place. Ms. Howell said it was a piece of a complex puzzle. Many individuals who received nutritional services were not necessarily in the shelter, so understanding food insecurity in certain zip codes was very helpful as they reached out to the State to address the issues. She agreed it was exciting during the hours of food service but it was stressful to those who needed food; she hoped this would lessen the stress. She indicated the nutrition providers had relationships with the individuals and knew their needs.

Member Dahir thought it was great to work hand-in-hand with the providers. He said some people were not currently homeless but were at risk because of issues like food security. He stated part of the data collected was crucial because knowing people's needs and ensuring they knew how to obtain available services was more important than just collecting names.

Member Hartung brought up a rumor that TMWA had placed conditions on the property they provided for the nutrition program, but he stated the rumor was untrue.

Vice Chair Jardon said there was an expectation that everyone should work together to clean up after themselves to ensure order for the next crew.

Member Lawson wanted the Eddy House, Catholic Services, and NNAMHS to provide monthly data to the Board. He thought gathering combined information was the only way to make informed decisions that would make a difference for the community. He said there was a real opportunity to make a difference with teens and veterans experiencing homelessness.

Vice Chair Jardon stated a visioning meeting was scheduled on September 19th at the McKinley Arts & Culture Center at 9:00 a.m. She said representatives from OrgCode Consulting, Inc. would make a presentation with findings gathered over the past year. They were looking forward to having the community come out and participate. She explained the first part of the day would be styled as a workshop with one formal presentation from OrgCode, then possible action items in the afternoon.

There was no public comment on this item.

**19-083C**      **AGENDA ITEM 9** Public Comment.

Mr. Jay Kolbet-Clausell said he completed his first two weeks at the Parr Detention Facility. He stated he had been part of the Reno Initiative for Shelter and Equality (Rise) for ten years and helped provide services including meals on Saturdays and emergency housing programs. He asserted it had been difficult and said he looked forward to the time when everyone worked together more. He expressed gratitude to the more than 700 volunteers who helped serve meals annually. He stated the contract for the program was not extremely effective as some agencies did not contribute as promised, and he thought the contract lacked more than just legal language. He indicated the shelter campus was a safe place for volunteers and no incidents had caused harm to any volunteer at the location. He stated it was dangerous for people who came there for services and he wanted this to be a no frostbite winter. He noted library staff came to the shelter during the lineup for mealtime and signed up 37 people for library cards. He said some people discovered they did not owe library fees as they thought.

Ms. Catherine MacIntosh said she was a master's level intern at Rise. She reminded the public that homeless individuals were people too. She wanted to know what the City of Reno and Washoe County planned to do to protect neighbors and friends without houses during the winter. She wanted the City of Reno to stop disassembling camps during the winter months and allow people to live without uprooting them. It would be too difficult for many people to find other housing in a timely manner, which could push them to an unsafe place.



Ms. Jennifer Cassady said she was a meal service provider for Rise and indicated she did not sign the contract with them and stopped volunteering there. The document was stigmatizing and she said people were not dangerous just because they did not have an address. She said the requirement to clean the restrooms was outrageous. She stated there was more she would discuss at the meeting tonight but wanted to say the legal language in the contract was not what stopped them from volunteering. She thought her most significant concern about the distributed document was that officials did not see it and she was concerned about the lack of communication. She expressed interest in the Governor's Bowl as a potential site for human services and looked forward to status updates. She asked staff to consider consulting with the people who actually used the services to gain true feedback. She wanted people to be allowed to stay in encampments and not be uprooted and required to find other means of housing. She thought uprooting homeless communities was a health concern.

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In her closing comments, Vice Chair Jardon said she knew the legal document came out and people voiced legitimate concerns. She thought the context of the contract was the issue and was cause for concern. In following social media, the people in the audience were present because they cared about this population and wanted to make a positive change in the community. She saw people that spent their lives fighting homelessness and it upset her. She stated everyone was in this together and the problem could not be solved alone. She commented it was important for all entities to keep positive lines of communication open because progress would stop as soon as people started to resist. She noted tremendous progress had been made over the last few years and she wanted it to continue.

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**10:01 a.m.** There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned without objection.

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**BOB LUCEY**, Chair  
Community Homelessness Advisory Board

ATTEST:

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**NANCY PARENT**, County Clerk

*Minutes Prepared by:  
Doni Gassaway, Deputy County Clerk*