

COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY BOARD

MONDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2020, 9:00am

PRESENT:

Neoma Jardon, Member (via Zoom)

Oscar Delgado, Member (via Zoom)

Ed Lawson, Member (via Zoom)

Kristopher Dahir, Member (via Zoom)

Marsha Berkbigler, Member (via Zoom)

ABSENT:

Bob Lucey, Member

The Community Homelessness Advisory Board convened at 9:03 a.m. via Zoom webinar online. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerk called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

AGENDA ITEM 3. Public Comment.

There was no response to the call for public comment. City Clerk Turney stated no general public comment was received prior to 4:00 pm on Friday, the business day before the meeting. It was noted we did receive multiple comments after 4:00 pm that will be lodged under general closing public comment.

AGENDA ITEM 4. Approval of the October 5, 2020 meeting agenda

On motion by Member Dahir, seconded by Member Lawson, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4 be approved.

AGENDA ITEM 5. Approval of minutes of the September 14, 2020 meeting.

A motion by member Lawson, seconded by member Delgado, which motion duly carried on a 5-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5 be approved.

AGENDA ITEM 6. Board update on the September 22, 2020 special Reno City Council meeting - Arlo Stockham, City of Reno

An update was given by Arlo Stockham regarding the September 22, 2020 special Reno City Council meeting. Mr. Stockham stated the Reno City Council reviewed the information CHAB has currently been working on involving sheltering and cost sharing arrangements. A presentation was given from Dana Searcy with Washoe County revolving around the Built for Zero initiative, as well as the clean and safe program. The Reno City Council approved the resolution of support for the Governor's Bowl as the new homeless center site.

Mr. Stockham indicated the Reno City Council is very interested in enhancing their coordination between the three agencies, as well as non-profit organizations in the region. Council would like to focus on river clean-up efforts and also the provision of social services to those affected by homelessness. Council voiced priority to establish a “super shelter site” referring to a larger, full campus homeless shelter.

Additionally it was discussed in terms of funding for the coming year the Reno City Council is prepared to be the lead agency for the men's shelter but would like to work towards a transition for the County to have a larger leadership role focusing on the No Barrier shelter and other ongoing challenges.

Member Jardon addressed the growing homeless population and stated that the Reno City Council is focused on working with the private sector and outside organizations to find solutions.

Member Berkbigler expressed her concerns regarding the homeless encampments on Fourth Street between Keystone and McCarran growing tremendously.

Arlo Stockham stated it was one of several challenged areas along with the downtown corridor. There are ongoing and additional actions scheduled but additional help from the Sheriff's and Washoe County Social Service providers would be appreciated. The City of Reno's resources are overwhelmed with all the encampments.

Discussion ensued regarding the need for more resources to address the encampments appearing.

Member Dahir agreed on the need for the County to lead with all the agencies working together. Additionally Member Dahir stated the encampments near the river are troublesome and spoke to the need to create a unit between the agencies with the support of the Sheriff's Department. Member Dahir asked for a list of nonprofits the City is currently working with and suggested outreach to other outside organizations for help.

Member Lawson advised Arlo Stockham to contact Sparks City Manager Neil Krutz, who has had great success with their Hope team, a small team of officers, who provide outreach rather than enforcement. Additionally Member Lawson agreed on collaborating with the Sheriff's Department for support.

Chair Jardon expressed concerns of moving into colder months of potential accidents or fires happening within the homeless encampments. She stressed the need for collaboration between the three agencies.

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

AGENDA ITEM 7. Board update and discussion on shelter sites and related funding - Arlo Stockham, City of Reno

An update was given by Arlo Stockham on shelter options. He stated the Governor's Bowl land acquisition is moving forward and is in the appraisal process. The land boundary has been established and is a little over five acres. The City of Reno is commissioning the appraisal to expedite the process rather than waiting for the State appraisal process. The target completion date is early December in order to start the construction of the longer term shelter. Given the timeline Mr. Stockham suggested the current arrangement for the interim shelter be extended through January 2021.

The Fourth Street tents have heat and will be operational this week due to some safety installations being worked through.

The City of Reno does not have any further space available for overflow. The Fourth Street shelter and the Community Assistance Center (CAC) are not yet at full capacity but are anticipated to become full within the colder months. The City of Reno does not have any further land for the purpose of overflow. The City of Reno discussed with Kate Thomas, Washoe County, and Neil Krutz, City of Sparks, different opportunities for an overflow shelter. The request is for the County to help the overflow issue by using the Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services campus or the old DMV site for the next few months.

Chair Jardon asked how many beds were lost with the heaters being installed. Mr. Stockham stated he did not have an exact number but it was close to ten beds.

Member Berkbigler stated their family facility is full at the moment and that Amber Howell, Washoe County is looking into another building as an overflow shelter. Mr. Stockham indicated that he had been in contact with the Washoe County Manager's office last week to discuss options. He stated the overflow needs for men are much larger compared to those for families. The best estimate is 200 - 250 people will be without shelter this winter and exceed the current shelter capacities. This warrants an additional temporary tent-like structure or leasing retail space for the overflow needs. The City of Reno does not have any resources available.

Chair Jardon asked how many square feet an additional overflow structure would cover. Mr. Stockham for social distancing, each person needs just over 100 sq foot, which equates to a 20,000 sq ft shelter. Chair Jardon explained the Reno event center has upcoming volleyball tournaments for the next five months and would not be an option for an overflow shelter. Additionally, the Washington Street property is also not an option as it is in contract for sale. Chair Jardon expressed interest in the DMV site as it is centrally located for the interim until the Governor's Bowl site is complete.

Member Lawson asked if anyone has talked to the State of Nevada about entering into an agreement to lease the DMV property. Chair Jardon explained an agreement was mentioned at the last RTC meeting, but the State and Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) indicated there are long term plans for NDOT to take over the property. There was discussion on a possible temporary agreement for an overflow shelter.

Kate Thomas, Washoe County, stated she will talk to the State to discuss the possibility of using the DMV site for a temporary overflow space.

Member Dahir asked about funding for a new, larger overflow shelter and how COVID has impacted the homelessness situation. Member Dahir suggested a pilot program with churches to create a financial adoption program to help with some of the costs associated with care and services.

Member Dahir asked how the City of Reno and the State came to the agreement of \$6,000,000 for the land for the Governor's Bowl. Mr. Stockham stated the specific dollar amounts will be better known once the appraisal process is complete. Member Dahir stated he would be interested in having additional conversations regarding the price of the land and that he believes the current price is strange.

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

AGENDA ITEM 8. Public Comment

Chair Jardon asked how future agenda items are to be submitted.

City Clerk Turney advised if there are future agenda from the board, they are to be sent to the City Manager's office.

City Clerk Turney stated public comment received after 4:00pm the business day prior to the meeting has been placed in general closing public comment. Comments received prior the cut-off are heard in opening general comment, or with their corresponding item. City Clerk Turney noted public comment may be received for this board by way of sending an email to CityClerk@reno.gov, submitting online public comment through our online public comment form or by leaving a voicemail at 775-393-4499. All of this information is included on the top of each posted agenda.

Public comment was received from Lauren Evans who is concerned with homelessness and services.

Linda Grace is concerned about the condition of the back of the CAC.

Sally Tate is concerned about enforcement and the current conditions of Barbara Bennett Park.

Dawn Houghtling asked about permanent solutions and is concerned about the services being offered.

Jennifer Nelson who is worried about homelessness increasing in the North valleys.

AGENDA ITEM 9. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, on motion by Member Dahir, seconded by Member Delgado, which motion duly carried on a 5 - 0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 9:49 am.