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UNTIL APPROVED BY THE
CULVER CITY
COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
OF THE CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CULVER CITY
COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

February 18, 2020
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

The special meeting of the Culver City Committee on Homelessness was called to order at 7:07 p.m. in the Dan Patacchia Room at City Hall.

Present: Karlo Silbiger, Chair
Kim Gibson, Vice Chair
Ira Diamond, DPM, Committee Member
Mark Lipman, Committee Member
Deborah Wallace, Committee Member*

Member Wallace arrived at 7:41 p.m.

Absent: Collette Hannah, Committee Member
John Helyar, Committee Member

Staff: Tevis Barnes, Housing Administrator
Christina Stouffers, Homeless Outreach
Coordinator

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The Pledge of Allegiance

Diego Heard, Boy Scout Troop 764 led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Public Comment – Items NOT on the Agenda

Chair Silbiger explained meeting format and procedures; discussed role of the Committee; and he invited meeting attendees to introduce themselves.

The following member of the audience addressed the Committee:

Tevis Barnes, Housing Administrator, introduced Diego Heard, noting that he would be asking the Committee several questions in his efforts to earn a merit badge for Citizenship in the Community, Nation and the World.

Diego Heard, Troop 764, questioned what teenagers and those from his generation could do to help the homelessness problem, and what the Committee was doing to address the homeless situation.

A member of the audience advised Mr. Heard not to do drugs.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding a suggestion to help a non-profit help the homeless by collecting food or clothing; raising awareness; misconceptions about the homeless; educating oneself and others; addressing economic inequality; the main reason people become homeless due to not being able to afford to pay rent; work with the City Council to build affordable housing; allowing for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and other means to increase housing in Culver City; the Landlord Incentive Program; grants with Upward Bound House and St. Josephs Center; outreach to address misconceptions; feasibility studies to find ways to create new housing; information available on the Culver City website; the updated plan by the City to address homelessness in Culver City; the team working in the City to address issues; and addressing the different variables.

Robin Rickard indicated that he had been homeless for eight years and it was not as a result of drugs; he noted that homeless people need shoes and socks; and he stated that homeless individuals were no lower than anyone else.

Nancy Fox asked what percent of the current sales tax goes to homeless outreach programs.

Tervis Barnes, Housing Administrator, clarified that the Housing Department received no funding from the General Fund; she discussed the Section 8 Rental Assistance Program; the former Redevelopment Agency; the sales tax from Redevelopment Project Areas; money set aside for affordable housing; and support for housing and homeless services.

Nancy Fox felt it important to make funding sources clear; she discussed the proposed increase to business taxes; and she suggested outreach to Apple and Amazon.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding donations to non-profits by Jeff Bezos; collateral damage from the large businesses coming into the City; linkage fees; negative affects to the housing market; actions of other cities; additional revenue to the City's budget to cover pensions; and making a budget request for funding.

Steve Seigel questioned what services Culver City should provide; questioned whether there was an influx of homeless people; he questioned how it was determined where homeless are from; he expressed concern with an increase in homeless people in the Culver Elenda area and the safety of children walking to school; he questioned whether homeless people are allowed to be under the overpass; and he suggested building shelter for homeless individuals to the east of the City.

Tervis Barnes, Housing Administrator, noted that most people are homeless in an area for a reason; establishing residency; chronic homeless; invisible homeless people; relationships with Police, Fire and Outreach Teams and services; people who come through Culver City; the last Homelessness Count; newly homeless individuals; the increasing number of people who become homeless because they lose their homes; the Boise Decision; .

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding clarification that Culver City is part of Service Area Provider (SPA) 5; services provided in Venice for those from SPA 5; clarification that Culver City has only one shelter, so most of Culver City's homeless are sent to shelters in other cities; hot spots; potential sites to establish a safe parking program or a shelter; and consideration of potential sites at the December 9, 2020 City Council meeting.

Ron Basillian questioned whether the City considered the homeless encampment under the 405 overpass to be comprised of locals and he questioned whether people could be forced to go to shelters if they do not want to go.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding the ability to hold people for 72 hours; attempts to establish a shelter in the City; conservatorship legislation; determining whether the person is a danger to themselves or other people; and the feeling that policing is not the solution to homelessness.

Member Wallace arrived at 7:43 p.m.

Chelsea Byers, Everyone In, provided background on the organization; discussed upcoming and recent events and training, Homelessness 101; people who lose their housing due to increasing rents; education; humanizing the crisis; increased numbers of homeless; providing ways for people to be involved; the training series provided; she indicated that she wanted to be a resource to the community; and she noted the existing relationship with Culver City.

Discussion ensued between Ms. Byers and Committee Members regarding effective engagement; education; tangible examples; agreement to discuss ways to partner with Everyone In at the next meeting; and encouragement to interested meeting attendees to reach out to Ms. Byers directly.

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Consent Calendar

Item C-1

Approval of Minutes for the Special Meeting of January 7, 2020

MOVED BY MEMBER LIPMAN, SECONDED BY MEMBER DIAMOND AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED (ABSENT MEMBERS HANNAH AND HELYAR), THAT THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL MEETING ON JANUARY 7, 2020.

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Action Items

Item A-1

Discussion and Recommendations. Discussion Regarding the Committee on Homelessness Initial Recommendation to City Council for the Fiscal Year 2020/2021 Housing Division Budget

Tevis Barnes, Housing Administrator, provided a summary of the material of record.

Member Lipman expressed support for the public comment discussion; noted that many concerns would be addressed in the discussion; he discussed the second draft of the Emergency Plan to End Homelessness; solving issues within the next fiscal year; the need to directly house the homeless; the Housing First model; Project 50; money saved by directly housing people; the budgetary ask; the Rent Registry; landlord incentives; elements of the plan; the new state law prohibiting landlords from discriminating against those whose rent is paid by a third party; housing access; roommates; moving people into market rate housing; working directly with landlords; permanent supportive housing; guiding people through the process; providing a hand-up rather than a handout; people who graduate through the system; funding; creating a vacancy tax; linkage fees; money in the state budget to directly house people; state funding; writing a letter to the governor requesting an allotment of funding to Culver City for direct housing; offsets and surpluses; savings realized by reducing burdens on emergency services; offsets for future budget; proposed motions; he asserted that the people live there are drug addicts, refuse help and prefer to live on the streets; and a suggestion to go big.

Chair Silbiger invited public input.

The following members of the audience addressed the Committee:

Frank Clark questioned how homelessness would be classified;

he noted that there are those who need help and will accept it; those who need help but will not accept it; he indicated that he had not seen any families on Globe Avenue; he felt that people from Culver City should be helped first; he expressed concern with people coming to Culver City to get aid.

Member Lipman discussed different people at different levels of need; the experience of Salt Lake City's Housing First program; the 98% reduction in homelessness; addressing those most ready to be housed first; he discussed 15 years of researching solutions to homelessness; and he clarified that the solution had been proven effective in many other cities besides Utah.

Kerry Harvey questioned whether there is a sunset provision for providing housing; employment; people willing to get back on their feet; and addressing the population with drug issues.

Tavis Barnes, Housing Administrator, discussed the Continuum of Care system; barriers; losing track of people during the long, expensive process; the Housing First model as a low barrier model; the goal to get people off the street; development of a case plan; prioritization; Fair Housing Laws; prohibitions on excluding people; weighted consideration; creating a plan; case management; allowing people to stabilize; helping people to get documentation so that they can get a job; and the length of the process.

Member Lipman discussed the Housing First model noted that there was not a length of time where someone is cut off; helping people help themselves; the 98% success rate of Los Angeles county's Project 50; the number of people falling into and dying of homelessness every day; and people being pushed out of affordable housing.

Ross Pirot questioned how the vacancy tax rate would be structured; questioned whether the goal was to incentivize the landlords to open up housing or to raising revenue; the amount of money expected to be in the share for Culver City; and concern that the City Council is not willing to use the Housing First model.

Discussion ensued between meeting attendees, staff and Committee Members regarding the need for nexus studies; other cities and jurisdictions discussing the vacancy tax rate; the

ratio of vacant units to the number of homeless people; state money; using state money to implement the plan to show that it works and is more cost effective to house people; and cost savings during the first year.

Denise Neal discussed her experiences being homeless; she stated that the system did not work; the actual service providing system; illegal evictions; help from the Culver City Police Department; and she felt it was important that people who have been through being homeless involved in the process.

Megan Trust asked about the number of homeless people in Culver City; prioritization; Project 50; tracking; and what constitutes success.

Tevis Barnes, Housing Administrator, discussed the Annual Homeless Count; the number counted at the 2019 count; changes in the numbers year to year; the Housing First model; preference for Culver City homeless; the first come first served method; weighted preferences; serving people who are ready first; and the difficulty of quantifying the human dynamic.

Chris Oliver, Upward Bound House, discussed those at risk of becoming homeless; Rapid Rehousing; programs at St. Josephs Center; market rates; other solution centers around the county of Los Angeles; and an observation that most homeless are not from other places.

Tevis Barnes, Housing Administrator, discussed people from Culver City using resources from Los Angeles; trade-offs between cities and counties; differing housing policies; success as being defined as getting people into permanent housing; and clarification that Project 50 is a county program.

Steve Seigel questioned if all the homeless people get housed, if more homeless people would come trying to find housing.

Discussion ensued between meeting attendees, staff and Committee Members regarding concern with people coming from out of state; clarification that majority of homeless people are from the Los Angeles area; Project 50; measuring success; instituting a continuing program; measuring success; the fact that 15 people become homeless every day; the number of homeless in Culver City at present; being the pilot program

to illustrate a working model that is successful; acknowledgement that Culver City cannot solve the problem of homelessness in California; where the current homeless could be housed; new state law prohibiting discrimination against third party payers; housing being current built; fair market rates; landlord incentives; using a scattered site solution; and the deadline to make the recommendation.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding support for Housing First; collaborative housing; concern with properly addressing needs; cost; support for trying a pilot program; sustainability of the program; the Rental Assistance Program (RAP); the number of people on the Section 8 waiting list; lack of funding from redevelopment monies; average subsidies; clarification that the proposed program is not dependent on Section 8; the upcoming City Council discussion on funding for a Bearcat Armored vehicle for the Police Department to save lives vs. saving lives by taking people off the street; clarifying priorities of the City; the competitive process for state funds; landlord discretion; landlord incentives; concern with making too large a request; making a realistic approach; making a case for the request; case management; a request for \$1 million for Direct Housing costs; concern with providing multiple options; the vacancy tax; Accessory Dwelling Units; linkage fees; requests for state funding; support for Housing First; making a serious case to the City Council with a varied approach and a clear plan; legitimate ways to provide units; the sunset of Measure Y; identifying top service users; reducing top users of emergency services; instituting a pilot program; looking at the issue from a global perspective; making recommendations in relation to funding; and a recommendation that staff formulate a plan to request \$1 million for direct housing costs in a variety of different programs from the General Fund; concern with the length of time to institute programs while people are dying on the street; support for paying rent to get people off the street faster; concern with the process for ADUs; whether to re-introduce a RAP program dedicated to homeless individuals; housing the hidden homeless; state standards; using half of the money for a trial program to serve 20 people with the other half used to continue to work on other programs; a suggestion to ask for \$2 million to get 40 people off the street; a suggestion to address the unhidden population; giving first priority to high users; and shared housing.

Denise Neal suggested addressing the issue of homeless

students by making use of student housing complexes, and she discussed issues created by moving homeless people to different jurisdictions.

Kathy McConkey noted the importance of making a visible difference; showing a definitive financial win; and the ability to gain more funding next year.

Further conversation ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding the difficulty of finding units; accounting with Police and Fire Departments; how much money will be saved; finding funding; the California Endowment; consideration of various proposed motions; study of initiating a vacancy tax and linkage fees; rent control; the lack of an inclusionary ordinance in the City; and finding the right balance of what to ask for that could get approved.

MOVED BY CHAIR SILBIGER, SECONDED BY VICE CHAIR GIBSON AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED (ABSENT MEMBERS HANNA AND HELYAR) THAT THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS: APPROVE MOTION 1 FOR \$1 MILLION INSTEAD OF \$7 MILLION AND REMOVE CASE WORKER SERVICES SINCE THAT IS ALREADY COVERED AND STIPULATE THAT AT LEAST HALF OF THE MONEY SHOULD GO TO THE DIRECT PAYMENT OF RENT IN A PILOT PROGRAM FOR AT LEAST 20 PEOPLE WITH PREFERENCE GIVEN TO THOSE IN MOST NEED.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Members regarding additional consideration of the vacancy tax; appreciation to meeting attendees; clarification that the proposed program would be a pilot program; agreement to hold the remaining agenda items to the next meeting; discussion of the Inclusionary Ordinance; time sensitive items; consideration by the Housing Subcommittee; and scheduling for the next meeting.

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Item A-2

Debrief - 2020 Homeless Count Subcommittee. Receive a Debriefing on the 2020 Homeless Count

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

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Item A-3

Update - Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness. Receive an Update on the Implementation of Goals and Actions Under the Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness Including a Discussion on Action 3G Under the Plan(Conduct Feasibility Studies) Including the Potential Development of City Owned Sites (AmVets) and Action 1B (Safe Parking)

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

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Item A-4

Update - Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee. Receive an Update from the Outreach and Engagement Subcommittee

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

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Item A-5

Update - Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative Subcommittee. Receive an Update from the Los Angeles Homeless Initiative Subcommittee Including a Discussion on the Status of Measure H Funding

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

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Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

Chair Silbiger invited public comment.

No cards were received and no speakers came forward.

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Receive and File Correspondence

None.

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Items from Committee on Homelessness Members

None.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 9:35 p.m., the Culver City Committee on Homelessness adjourned to Tuesday, March 17, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

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TEVIS BARNES
SECRETARY of the Culver City Committee on Homelessness,
Culver City, California

APPROVED

KARLO SILBIGER
CHAIR of the Committee on Homelessness, Culver City,
California

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that, on the date below written, these minutes were filed in the Office of the City Clerk, Culver City, California and constitute the Official Minutes of said meeting.

Jeremy Green
CITY CLERK

Date