

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL
UNTIL APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL
AND THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS

SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE
CITY COUNCIL AND THE
COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

April 19, 2021
6:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Mayor Fisch called the special joint meeting of the City Council and the Committee on Homelessness to order at 6:05 p.m. in the Mike Balkman Chambers at City Hall via Virtual Webex.

Present: Alex Fisch, Mayor
Daniel Lee, Vice Mayor
Göran Eriksson, Council Member
Yasmine-Imani McMorris, Council Member
Albert Vera, Council Member

Present: Karlo Silbiger, Chair
Mark Lipman, Vice Chair
Daniel Behrendt, Committee Member
Darryl Cherness, Committee Member
Rachel Feldstein, Committee Member
Khin Khin Gyi, Committee Member

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Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Fisch led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Community Announcements by City Council Members/Information Items from Staff

Member Gyi announced an environmental symposium on April 22 by Southern California American Democrats for Action.

Council Member McMorris announced the Culver City Unified School District (CCUSD) Sustainability Committee and Walk & Rollers week-long Earth Fest event.

Council Member Vera asked that the meeting be adjourned in memory of Walter Mondale who was an advocate for housing and homelessness.

Council Member Eriksson announced that Feed Culver had served more than 40,000 hot dinners; he thanked those who donated; and he asked people to continue their support of the organization for those still experiencing food insecurity in the City.

Vice Mayor Lee discussed the reduction in the carbon footprint during the pandemic; his experiences getting around Los Angeles without a car; and he asked that every policy work to address the climate crisis.

Mayor Fisch discussed Earth Week; opportunities to get involved and raise awareness; actions to address the climate crisis; and the Future of Creative Talent Summit on April 21 to discuss working to make the entertainment workforce more inclusive.

Jeremy Green, City Clerk, announced that applications were being accepted for Commissions, Boards and Committees; she invited those interested to visit culvercity.org/serve, email city.clerk@culvercity.org or call (310) 253-5851 for additional information; she noted the May 17 application deadline; and indicated that applications received for bodies that did not currently have a vacancy, would be held for a future opportunity.

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Joint Public Comment - Items NOT on the Agenda

Mayor Fisch invited public comment.

Jeremy Green, City Clerk, indicated that no public comment had been received.

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Receipt and Filing of Correspondence

MOVED BY VICE MAYOR LEE, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MCMORRIS AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS AND CITY COUNCIL RECEIVE AND FILE CORRESPONDENCE.

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Action Items

Item A-1

COH - Administration of the Oath of Office to Newly Appointed Committee on Homelessness Member Bubba Fish

Jeremy Green, City Clerk, administered the Oath of Office to Bubba Fish and congratulated him noting that he could now participate as a full member.

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Item A-2

CC:COH - (1) Discussion of Proposed Changes to Culver City Committee on Homelessness Bylaws; and (2) Direction to the City Manager as Deemed Appropriate.

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

Chair Silbiger discussed the link between affordable housing and homelessness; scope of the work; the request that the name of the Committee reflect the reality of the work that needs to be done; the expanded mission of the Committee; composition of the Committee; the value of having a representative with lived experience being homeless; specific issues faced by senior and youth homeless and providing Committee representation for them; increasing the number of Committee Members; at-large members; staff support; and a request to include representatives from Enforcement Services and the Parks Recreation and Community Services Department at meetings due to their interaction with the homeless population in the City.

Discussion ensued between staff, Committee and Council Members regarding size of the Committee; ability to come to consensus; the proposed revision to the mission statement; support for including a member with lived experience; concern with residency

requirements; those forced out of the jurisdiction; clarification that members representing different populations would not be required to be Culver City residents, but would have a connection to the City; whether to set aside specific seats, or ensure that those considerations are taken with normal appointments; ways to be connected to the City; Council discretion during the appointment process; participation by multiple departments; the work of the Committee to advise the City Council; and the multi-faceted nature of homelessness.

Mayor Fisch invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the City Council:

Emily D. indicated that she wanted to speak on Item A-3

Jeff Schwartz indicated wanting to speak at the special City Council meeting.

Cary Anderson discussed his service on the subcommittee; previous changes to the bylaws; habitual absences; previously proposed ideas that have since been embraced; recycling theft; panhandling by bank entrances; and he asked for clarification regarding what new things were being proposed.

Meg Sullivan discussed the lack of knowledge and involvement on the part of housing providers; unrealistic comments; and involving someone who knows the financials and can bring real world experience to the situation.

Additional discussion ensued between staff, Committee and Council Members regarding support for involving a housing provider with experience providing services to the homeless in the process; concern with expanding the size of the Committee; concern with usurping the authority of the City Council by adding membership requirements; support for the proposed changes; achieving consensus; support for receiving a broader perspective; groups that experience homelessness in different ways; those earnestly seeking solutions; those traditionally left out; support for creating a solutions-based space; measuring success; Committee accomplishments; clarification regarding the agenda item being considered; adding the word Advisory to the Committee name; concern with use of the word advocate in the description; current staff resources and representation for the Committee; bringing in departments as needed; support for increasing meeting frequency and Committee size; the wealth of applicants; the importance of bylaws;

direction with regard to the proposed changes for formulation of the amended bylaws; the process; other Committees with nine members; work with LA city and LA county; level of work going on; number of families housed and re-housed; outreach; ensuring that when participation by other departments is needed, that it is allowed; support for leaving the mission statement as is; use of intentional language; the need to advocate for positions and policy changes; changing language in the mission statement from "combat homelessness" to "end homelessness"; ensuring that work is bottom up; concern with creating dividing lines regarding who is worthy and who is not; ensuring that homelessness remains the priority rather than changing the Committee into a general housing committee; concern with people making six figures per year making decisions for people who make four figures or less per year; the three-year process to find solutions and put plans in place; success or failure rate of the Committee; whether the City Council is adding the word Advisory to all City Commissions, Committees and Boards; items the Committee does other than advising the City Council; multiple departments already attending Committee meetings; effectiveness of having participation by multiple departments; concern with a name change de-emphasizing work done by the Committee; the importance of follow-up; and Council consensus regarding expanding the number of members to nine and changing the name of the Committee to the Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness.

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Item A-3

CC:COH - 1) Status Update on the Updated Plan to Prevent and Combat Homelessness; 2) Review Committee on Homelessness Program Priorities; and 3) Direction to the City Manager as Deemed Appropriate

Sol Blumenfeld, Community Development Director, provided a summary and update of housing programs; discussed previous review and approval by the City Council; current programming; the approval of a strategy in 2018 to produce 79 permanent affordable units with 55-year affordability covenants; expanded programming; implementation of 43 programs over a five year period; number of people served; Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) requirements; market-rate housing production; modular units; cost estimates; Sprung Shelters; support for Culver West Methodist Church to create 100 units; the Virginia and Venice lots; the Affordable Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

program; ordinances mandating affordable housing production; motel sites; the Motel Reuse Study; accommodating emergency shelter housing; repurposing City owned parking lots for modular transition or permanent supportive housing; collaborative funding from the county, state and federal government; property appraisals; site rehabilitation; recently completed projects; and implementation of programs and programming.

Tevis Barnes, Housing Programs Administrator, discussed the definition of homelessness; the focus of the Homeless Plan; creating sustainable, long-term, safe, and sanitary affordable housing; and City Council approval of the three-year roadmap to establish the City's approach to homelessness in the long-term.

Christina Stoffers, Homeless Coordinator, discussed the updated Homeless Plan; phases; stakeholder outreach and input; updated strategies; the review process; the final plan; presentation to key stakeholders; and she summarized goals of the Homeless Plan.

Tevis Barnes, Housing Programs Administrator, discussed funding opportunities; grants secured; alternative housing types; programs implemented or in the process of being implemented; motel reuse; launch of the ADU program; the mobile home preservation program; preventing homelessness in the senior population; the Housing Programs Matrix; the Landlord Incentive Program; the COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program to protect low income renters from falling into homelessness; the labor-intensive nature of the process; the Rapid Rehousing Program; and she thanked partners in the process.

Discussion ensued between staff and Council Members regarding funding from the county for the Rapid Rehousing Program; the Safe Parking Program; support for placing the focus on modular units rather than a shelter; the crucial nature of permanent supportive housing; temporary shelters; the importance of supporting extremely low-income housing into affordable housing to address the homeless population; appreciation to staff for their work; landlords participating in the subsidized housing programs; messaging; stigma attached to people who are homeless; the affordable ADU program; efforts to encourage participation; and a suggestion to establish finite priorities in order to move things forward.

Mayor Fisch invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the City Council:

Elizabeth Sitton was called to speak and indicated that she was present to speak on a different item.

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Freddy Puza provided background on himself; expressed support for the Committee on Homelessness and staff; thanked the City for the work they do and encouraged more efforts to keep people in their homes or to house people; discussed concern with criminalizing poverty; prioritizing resources; providing funding for housing; use of the Housing First model; effectively and efficiently addressing homelessness; providing help with basic needs; average cost savings demonstrated by housing people; the need to collaborate with regional partners; and the need to act now.

Emily D. asserted that homeless people were the result of a problem, not the cause; discussed expensive developments being built around the City driving up rent; the need to be bold and be an example for the rest of the country; she expressed support for the Direct Housing program; and she thanked all of the Committee Members for their hard work.

Robert Mahler asserted that current actions of the City were not working; discussed increasing crime rates; the need to provide authority to the Culver City Police Department (CCPD); asserted that people did not want to live in housing provided by the City; discussed a house recently raided in Sunkist Park; and the lack of enforcement of laws on the actions of the homeless.

Cary Anderson discussed the origin of the Committee on Homelessness and his previous service on the Committee; recycling theft; Section 8 housing; his experience being homeless; concern that laws were not enforced for the homeless; he questioned whether the homeless were going to continue to be ignored; and he felt that the Homeless Industrial Complex was being developed with people making money.

Shelly Rosekelly observed that the unanimous approval of Housing First had not been included in the workplan; discussed money included to create pop up tent shelters; wrap around services; benefits of the Housing First program vs. emergency based band-aid services; the housing crisis in the City; landlords being prioritized over neighbors; financial incentives for vacant units over providing affordable units; ignoring people in desperate need; societal failure; care not cops; housing as a basic human right; \$1 billion allocated in funding to fight the

homeless crisis in Los Angeles; and she asked the City to be part of the solution.

Rashelle Zelaznick expressed support for the Direct Housing/Housing First program supported by the Committee, but not included in the workplan.

Shannon Zigg Theus expressed support for the Housing First program and wanted to see it included in the workplan; asserted that the program was sustainable and asked to hear specifics about actions to take; discussed cost effectiveness; and refocusing housing as a social justice and economic understanding.

Rebecca Rona Tuttle, Equity and Human Relations Advisory Committee Chair expressed her personal views including surprise that not enough had been done to alleviate homelessness; she was encouraged by ideas being proposed; stated her support for the Committee on Homelessness; support for adding the Housing First pilot program to the workplan and enacting the program soon; discussed vocal residents that have voiced troubling things about people experiencing homelessness; stereotypes being used about unhoused individuals; unhoused families; blaming people for their circumstances; the national problem; she noted that each unhoused person has a history, faces challenges and is scared; and she pointed out the importance of addressing the issue in the City of Kindness.

Andrea Leon-Grossman provided background on herself; expressed opposition to criminalizing the unhoused and support for the Housing First program; recommended that the City consult experts; discussed use of existing vacant housing and converting vacant commercial properties; the need for low-income and no income housing; including health care and job assistance; band-aid services; cost savings; success rate for temporary housing vs. permanent housing; ensuring that there are not too many strings attached; allowing people to bring their pets and belongings; allocation of taxes and bonds to affordable housing rather than for water privatization; federal support; ensuring that money gets allocated to affordable housing on the westside; and she asked that people testify at the Regional Water Board meeting on April 23 to insure that money goes to build affordable housing rather than to water privatizers.

Suzanne Debeneditis thanked Council Members for their efforts to address homeless issues, and former Mayor Gary Silbiger for spearheading the issue; discussed messaging on affordable ADUs;

addressing housing as a moral issue without creating climate impacts; echoed comments from previous speakers; and she urged the City Council to take action to approve a Direct Housing/Housing First program.

Chelsea Byers was called to speak, but was not present in the meeting.

Frank Clark was called to speak, but was not present in the meeting.

Dennis Page discussed the stated budget impact of eviction moratoriums; decreased business licenses; the importance of mental health and other support services; work programs; rent control and tenant protections; and costs for Fire Department inspections.

Maggie P. thanked the City for their work; discussed end solutions; acknowledging contradictions; causes of homelessness; crime symptomatic of resources not being met; the need for housing and basic infrastructure; testing the validity of existing structures; eliminating the need for punishing policing; and she encouraged the City Council to reallocate money from the CCPD budget into housing and ensure that basic needs are met.

Disa Lindgren urged the City Council to take action to end homelessness in the City and to work to understand how residents can obtain housing; she discussed the lack affordable housing as a major factor in creating the local crisis; the need for bridge and permanent housing; the importance of adopting a Housing First approach; providing applicable supportive services; providing temporary shelters and safe parking only as they serve the goal of permanent housing; keeping houseless individuals safe by keeping them from interacting with CCPD; decreasing the load of calls to address homeless issues carried by CCPD; adopting measures to increase the amount of affordable housing in the City; and the interconnected nature of racial and economic justice.

Kimberly Ferguson expressed appreciation for the work done; questioned the process for identifying the number of homeless individuals identified as the responsibility of Culver City and asked what the number is; discussed maintenance and upkeep of the new housing for the homeless; support for Direct Housing and Housing First; allocation of Section 8 vouchers; and proposed zoning changes.

Discussion ensued between staff, Committee and Council Members regarding the spread of expenditures over 40 programs; the Housing Matrix; the continuum of care program; meeting people where they are; implementation of the Housing First model; the Rapid Rehousing program; prioritizing funding for permanent supportive housing over shelters; direction from the City Council to focus on affordable housing, bridge housing and permanent supportive housing; operational funding; concern with continued funding for housing; the Rapid Rehousing program; collaboration with Saint Josephs and Upward Bound House; short term rental assistance; rental assistance programs provided by the City; Section 8; lack of funding; the COVID-19 rental assistance program; staff sharing across divisions; the COVID ERAF program; urgent need during the pandemic; staffing overhead for programming; outreach to bring people up-to-date as to what is being done; appreciation for resident engagement and public comment; benefits of permanent supportive housing; perception that nothing is taking place; modular units in the Community Garden; agreed upon near, mid, and long-term solutions; constrained resources; Key Performance Indicators (KPIs); measuring effectiveness; frustration over the lack of visible results; people dying on the street; disagreement that staff is implementing Housing First; non-solutions that only prolong the problem; directly addressing the workplan; lack of support for shelters; county jurisdiction; limited affordable housing in the City; cost per person to house people vs. the cost per person to house an incarcerated individual; cost per person for emergency services; cost dynamics; scattered housing; vacancies in Culver City; willingness to fund CCPD; available monies; a suggestion to remove items 1a and 2 from the workplan to redirect money to a Housing First program; and concern that the original intent of the ADU Incentive program to house the homeless is being changed into workforce housing.

Additional discussion ensued between staff, Committee and Council Members regarding the Housing First methodology of case management; the proposal for the ADU Incentive Program to encompass as many groups as possible; development of the Homeless Plan in concert with the Committee with the approval of the City Council; the consultant; resources focused for modular and motel reuse to create affordable units and permanent supportive units; the inclusionary housing ordinance creating permanent units; three families from Upward Bound that moved into units created through density bonus land use policy; the focus of resources to build affordable and permanent supportive units but also to provide information on tensile structures;

feasibility of constructing shelters without strong partnership from the county; the need for county funding to operate a shelter; shelters as an important part of the solution; creation of permanent supportive housing and a shelter; the affordability covenant for 55 years required for the ADU program; the problematic nature of using the low to moderate income housing fund; ways to address housing production with linkage fees; origin of funding and repercussions for use; Measure H monies; vacancy rates in the City; length of time to create permanent supportive housing; the need to help people in the near-term; and funding.

Further discussion ensued between staff, Committee and Council Members regarding concern with creating a scorecard; the ongoing, cyclical nature of homelessness; the importance of civil engagement; setting an example for the community; ensuring that the City stays solution-focused; the importance of managing expectations; support for the efforts of staff; support for the Housing First model; ensuring that immediate concerns are being addressed; demonstrated progress; upcoming messaging; systemic issues; concern with spending money that the City does not have; support for the pallet housing option; providing transparency; disruption of staff efforts with the focus shifted to the COVID-19 Rental Assistance Program; the three most feasible projects; support for the motel reuse project and modular units at the Community Garden; the importance of providing permanent, sustainable units; lost funding from the California Community Foundation; recognizing homelessness as an emergency; appropriate use of City funding; facilitating the efforts of Culver Palms Methodist Church to create 100% affordable housing; the Housing First model to get people into housing as quickly as possible so once they are stabilized, other issues can be treated; the ability to connect people to employment when they have an address; the need to prioritize permanent supportive housing over shelter; focusing money on a rotational seasonal shelter shared with other cities on the westside; decreasing the timeline for projects; prioritizing extremely low-income affordable housing; protecting those vulnerable to losing their homes; rehousing those who fall into homelessness; potential use of land at Vets Park; the Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative; Culver City use of the County Homeless Information Portal; facilitation of delivery of homeless services; tracking services to individuals; coordination with Saint Joseph; support for the direction the City is moving in; using a hybrid model on the Virginia lot; buy-in needed from Los Angeles for the Venice lot; work toward the motel reuse program; partnership with the Methodist Church; the importance of the City's

contribution; ensuring safety for all community members; clarification that homelessness is not a crime; the service first model of CCPD; addressing challenges with a long-term approach; partnerships between CCPD and mental health providers; acknowledgement that arrests are not the answer to homelessness; optimism for the process moving forward; the importance of trying every option; effectiveness of efforts to date; being open to helping some people to chip away at the problem; a request that the City try something new and expand the Rapid Rehousing program to house as many people as possible; the newness of the Housing First program; length of time to implement public policy; differing viewpoints; and the number of people rehoused by the Los Angeles Housing Services Authority (LAHSA) over three years.

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Presentations

Item P-1

CC:COH - Presentation from the Saint Joseph Center Culver City Homeless Outreach Team Regarding Homeless Outreach and Engagement

Tevis Barnes, Housing Programs Administrator, indicated that due to the late hour, several Saint Joseph Center representatives were no longer available and the presentation needed to be rescheduled.

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Item P-2

CC:COH - Presentation to City Council and Committee on Homelessness Regarding Pallet Shelters

Patrick Diller, Pallet, provided background on the organization and a presentation on pallet shelters; discussed treating homelessness as the emergency it is; the goal of providing interim housing toward permanent supportive housing; installations around the country; process and length of time for installation; features of the shelters; coordination with services; shelters as an important tool to address homelessness; organizing people by shared experience; effective targeted services; safety for homeless individuals and the community; same day sheltering; success and extension of the pilot project

in Redondo Beach; success rate of pallet housing vs. for shelters; long-term success of stable housing after living in pallet housing; and higher success rates for addressing chronic homelessness with pallet housing.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Diller, staff, Committee and Council Members regarding case management services; the two-bunk system; cost per unit; different shelter sizes; single occupancy shelters; necessary infrastructure; bathroom facilities; different needs for different sites and servicing requirements; mobile shower and laundry facilities; and food access.

Patrick Diller, Pallet, narrated a presentation on Los Guillicos Village operated outside of Santa Rosa by St. Vincent DePaul which has now moved from a congregate shelter model to a non-congregate shelter model due to the success of the pallet shelters; he discussed 24-hour onsite management and security; amenities; transportation into the City; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility; community engagement; art and landscaping; length of time to install and create the site; and shelter lifespan.

Council Member Vera received clarification regarding usage data for the chronically homeless; and occupancy.

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Public Comment - Items Not on the Agenda

Mayor Fisch invited public comment.

Jeremy Green, City Clerk, indicated that no public comment had been received.

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Items from Council Members/Committee Members

None.

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Council Member Requests to Agendize Future Items

None.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 10:21 p.m., the City Council and Committee on Homelessness adjourned the meeting in memory of Walter Mondale.

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Jeremy Green
CITY CLERK of Culver City, California
Culver City, California

ALEX FISCH
MAYOR of Culver City, California

KARLO SILBIGER
CHAIR of the CULVER CITY COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
Culver City, California

Date: _____