

COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

Monday, August 2, 2021 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Reno City Council Chamber

One East First Street Reno, NV 89501

Neoma Jardon, Chair, Councilmember, Ward 5, City of Reno

Oscar Delgado, Councilmember, Ward 3, City of Reno

Ed Lawson, Vice-Chair, Mayor, City of Sparks

Kristopher Dahir, Councilmember, Ward 5, City of Sparks

Alexis Hill, County Commissioner, District 1, Washoe County

Bob Lucey, County Commissioner, District 2, Washoe County

1. Pledge of Allegiance

The Community Homeless Advisory Board was called to order at 8:11 AM by Member Jardon, and the Board conducted the following business:

2. Roll Call

Present:

Neoma Jardon

Devon Reese, Alternate for Oscar Delgado

Ed Lawson

Kristopher Dahir

Alexis Hill

Bob Lucey

3. Public Comment (This item is for either public comment on any action item or for any general public comment.)

Eileen Bidwell spoke about the SAFE parking program and code that addresses legal concerns regarding it.

4. Approval of Agenda - For Possible Action

a. August 2, 2021

On motion by Member Reese, seconded by Member Lawson, which motion duly carried on a 6-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4 be approved.

5. Approval of Minutes - For Possible Action

a. July 12, 2021

On motion by Member Dahir, seconded by Member Reese, which motion duly carried on a 6-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5 be approved

6. Regional Homeless Shelters and Services

a. Our Place presentation including, but not limited to, planned shelter expansion and current staff needs - Amber Howell, Washoe County - *Non-Action Item*

By request of Member Jardon, items 6.b and 6.c were heard before moving forward with Item 6.a.

Kim Schweickert, Washoe County, gave a presentation on the scope and objectives for shelter expansion.

Member Reese absent at 8:34 AM

Member Reese present at 8:36 AM

Member Reese asked for more information about gardening space being provided.

Ms. Schweickert said there is dedicated land for gardening, but that it is unclear when that service will officially begin.

Member Reese asked if there were policies in place for transgender individuals staying at the campus.

Ms. Schweickert said there are trans women at the campus, and that currently there haven't been issues, but there is work being done to provide educational resources for the other populations using the shelter in order to integrate positively.

Member Reese asked if there will be plans to expand.

Ms. Schweickert explained that the hope is not to expand, but to transition people out so they no longer need the service.

Member Hill asked if tours are available.

Ms. Schweickert replied that yes, there are tours available but they are trying to keep them small.

Member Jardon asked about capacity given the issue of increasing houseless populations, remarking that the number of women at the compass has not gone down, and if that number persists, along with the expiration of the eviction moratorium, there will be a continuing capacity issue.

Ms. Schweickert explained that very few women choose to transition over, and that those who are eligible are invited but often refuse. The reason, Ms. Schweickert explained, is being explored, and that some of them choose this due to location or who are not able to based on criminal background, and that more information will hopefully be available as to why soon.

Member Reese talked about the Soul Seeds program and having seeds summit to help support the gardening space effort. Member Reese then asked what criminal records prevent women from being able to stay at the shelter, emphasizing that some things on many people's records are no longer illegal.

Ms. Schweickert explained that charges that are no longer illegal are not held against anyone looking to come to the shelter, and that most prohibiting charges are abuse related or sexual misconduct.

Member Dahir expressed hope that there won't be a need to expand the shelter, and wished for more data showing people are moving through.

Member Lawson said that in many other cities, there is a stable number of people being processed in and out, and expressed that if they are successful in processing as many people in as they are out, it is a good sign.

Ms. Schweickert agreed that the best data to show progress is that the same people are returning for services.

Member Jardon complimented the progress and recognition for the success in establishing transitional housing and other steps that move towards resolution.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

b. Board update and discussion on the Nevada Cares Campus shelter including, but not limited to, shelter usage and ongoing improvements - Doug Thornley, City of Reno - *Non-Action Item*

Doug Thornley, City Manager, City of Reno, provided an update on the Nevada Cares Campus.

Member Dahir questioned how the program is opened up to allow community involvement from those who wish to help.

Mr. Thornley explained that confidence that the shelter is able to run itself is needed, though people are allowed to come and help serve meals, adding there are ongoing conversations about how to involve the faith based community and others who want to participate.

Member Jardon expressed that many members of the faith based community want to be involved, but with transition of services to the county it is important to direct them there to be able to find those opportunities.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

c. Board update and discussion on the Nevada Cares Campus safe camp including, but not limited to, guest enrollment and future planning - Dana Searcy, Washoe County - *Non-Action Item*

Dana Searcy, Special Projects Manager, Washoe County, provided updates on the Nevada Cares Campus safe camp.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

d. Board update, discussion, and possible recommendation to staff related to the Interlocal Agreement for Shelter Operations and other Homeless Services related to the transition of responsibilities from the City of Reno to Washoe County - Doug Thornley, City of Reno, Neil Krutz, City of Sparks, and Eric Brown, Washoe County - *For Possible Action*

Mr. Thornley provided an update on the ILA for shelter operation and transition of services to Washoe County.

Community Homelessness Advisory Board took a recess at 8:56 AM

Community Homelessness Advisory Board reconvened at 9:00 AM

Member Lucey made a comment on an early Our Place presentation, and the need to provide services to individuals after they have left so they can function after leaving.

Ms. Schweickert expanded on the issue, saying that case workers follow individuals so they can offer support before someone spirals back into homelessness.

Member Jardon said in some settings, those who transition out will be provided with basic necessities, and wondered if there is help of this kind.

Ms. Schweickert said that there are started kits provided, many of them through faith based organizations.

Mr. Thornley resumed the update on the Interlocal Agreement.

Kate Thomas, Assistant County Manager, Washoe County, spoke to the operating costs portion of the presentation.

Member Lawson absent at 9:12 AM

Member Lawson present at 9:13 AM

Member Jardon asked if there was a more detailed breakout of the budget.

Ms. Thomas explained that there would be a Phase II focused presentation with a deeper breakdown.

Member Dahir said people like to look at cost relative to the number of people being helped, but that the amount spent is establishing long term plans and programs that could be better explained to the public so they understand where the money is going.

Neil Krutz, City Manager, City of Sparks, spoke to the next steps for the Nevada Cares Campus.

Member Hill took the time to thank the board, the City of Reno and the City of Sparks, for the efforts being made to work towards a regional approach.

Member Jardon said there was lots of fine detail work being done, and asked what the board can do to direct in the future when they don't know what the outstanding items are.

Mr. Krutz said that because there has not been agreement on what is outstanding, there isn't yet a way to move forward.

Member Jardon expressed being under the impression they needed to give direction to fine-tune before going back to the other jurisdictions.

Mr. Thornley said they are diligently working through the hang ups related to capacity and what the division of the operating expenses are. Mr. Thornley said the board can give direction about if they are happy with the shape of things, then vote to move forward.

Member Hill said there should be a deadline for this, and wanted to know if it could be brought back in September.

Member Jardon expressed wanting to complete the transition to the county by September 1st.

Ms. Thomas said there needs to be adequate adjustment space, and that it may be difficult to have direction hinge on a number.

Member Lawson suggested coming up with a number knowing that it can always be adjusted if needed, and that they should just move forward aiming for a September transition.

Member Jardon clarified that the numbers in question were the fiscal numbers for the division of cost between the entities, which Ms. Thomas confirmed.

Member Reese absent at 9:30 AM

Member Reese present at 9:32 AM

Member Dahir expressed a belief that on principle everyone is leaning in the same direction, and because they do not hold the final decision anyway, there is no need to delay.

Member Lucey voiced support for setting the deadline to come back and be fully executed no later than September 1st.

Member Jardon agreed with Member Lucey.

Mr. Krutz explained the concern the City of Sparks has regarding the sharing of financial responsibility with the county.

Member Hill expressed the belief that the managers need to work together to find a resolution, and that there needs to be trust for Washoe County.

Member Jardon asked about a possible August 23rd date for reconvening, and that the issues that should be resolved by then are floor capacity and the monetary division.

Mr. Thornley agreed that these are the issues outstanding, and that a lot of what is needed is to put words on the page.

Mr. Krutz said that things are not simple, and that the ARPA funds being used come with lots of restraints.

Member Jardon voiced support to the managers for all the work they've done.

On motion by Member Hill, seconded by Member Dahir, which motion duly carried on a 6-0 vote, it was ordered that key details be agreed upon by August 15th, in order to bring back the transition of responsibilities at a special meeting on August 23rd, for ultimate resolution by the first meeting in September, with direction to staff to continue working with Sparks to increase support of the capital cost, and ensuring Washoe County staff be able to provide emergency housing to those who need it.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

7. Community Partners

a. Board update on fundraising campaign for Phase II of the Nevada Cares Campus - Kate Thomas, Washoe County - *Non-Action Item*

Ms. Thomas provided an update on the fundraising campaign for Phase II of the Nevada Cares Campus.

Member Hill commended the efforts to make this a public/private partnership.

Member Dahir expressed that the input of local businesses is needed as well in order to make these efforts successful.

Member Jardon received clarification from Ms. Thomas that an update will be available in the next two weeks, and that the presentation for Phase II plans will help to bolster support from the community.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

b. Board update on transitional and affordable housing planning related to Phase III of the Nevada Cares Campus - Amy Jones, Reno Housing Authority - *Non-Action Item*

Amy Jones, Executive Director, Reno Housing Authority, provided an update on Phase III and transitional housing.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

c. Hope Springs presentation including, but not limited to, guest intake process and campus availability - Sharon Chamberlain, Northern Nevada Hopes - *Non-Action Item*

Member Jardon expressed wanting the Hope Springs presentation to be moved to a future agenda as Sharon Chamberlain was not available.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

d. Village at Sage Street presentation including, but not limited to, resident intake process and current availability - Pat Cashell, Volunteers of America, and Devin McFarland, Village at Sage Street - *Non-Action Item*

Pat Cashell of Volunteers of America introduced Devin McFarland of Village at Sage Street to provide an update on intake and current availability.

Member Jardon complimented Ms. McFarland on the update and all the work being done, and clarified that current capacity was at 97%, the average stay is about six months, and that the units are single and not for couples or pets.

Mr. Cashell said that there is currently an ask for floor installation experts or financial contributions.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

e. Karma Box presentation on maximizing community support and involvement - Grant Denton, Karma Box Project - *Non-Action Item*

Grant Denton of Karma Box Project gave a presentation on maximizing community support and involvement.

Member Lawson spoke about food issues and directing faith based organizations to provide services effectively.

Member Hill expressed support for expanded services that are connected through an information hub.

Member Dahir said many who want to help do it in ways that have unintended consequences and that there is a need for community education immediately.

Member Reese raised concerns over the board not having lived experience, and that it is challenging to provide direction when you don't, and emphasized that many of the issues surrounding the unsheltered are issues that everyone has but in a different setting.

Member Jardon expressed that there is a need to balance respect for individuals with the resources available and overarching good.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

f. Downtown Reno Partnership presentation including, but not limited to, ambassador outreach and transportation services - Austin Pollard, Downtown Reno Partnership - *Non-Action Item*

Austin Pollard, Operations Manager, Downtown Reno Partnership, gave a presentation.

Member Hill absent at 10:43 am
Member Hil present at 10:45 am

Member Reese addressed Mr. Pollard's personal experience with individuals in crisis.

Mr. Pollard expanded on how, when engaging with thousands of individuals, there are numerous occasions where they employ lifesaving measures such as CPR and dealing with overdose.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

8. Election of Chair and Vice Chair for the Community Homelessness Advisory Board for July 2021 - July 2022 - Community Homelessness Advisory Board - *For Possible Action*

On motion by Member Lawson, seconded by Member Reese, which motion duly carried on a 6-0 vote, it was ordered that Alexis Hill be named Chair of the Community Homelessness Advisory Board.

On motion by Member Dahir, seconded by Member Reese, which motion duly carried on a 6-0 vote, it was ordered that Ed Lawson be named Vice Chair of the Community Homelessness Advisory Board.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

9. Board members announcements and updates, including future agenda items requests. No discussion will take place on this item.

Member Jardon requested to see on the next meeting the items that couldn't be covered today such as the ILA update and transition finalization, the Phase II and Hope Springs update, a heat map for homeless facilities, and the beginning conversation on establishing a hub for services

Member Dahir said, because of changes at the Eddy House and the transition to the County, he would like to see an update on and from the youth contingent. Member Dahir added that the area surrounding the Cares Campus is covered with trash, and there should be a plan to maintain the property even if the cause is unrelated to residents.

Member Jardon received confirmation that the future meetings will be held at the county now that they have taken over.

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

10. Public Comment (This item is for either public comment on any action item or for any general public comment.)

No public comment or action was taken on this item.

11. Adjournment - For Possible Action

There being no further business to discuss, on motion by Member Jardon, seconded by Member Dahir, which motion duly carried on a 6-0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 11:03 AM.