

HOMELESS SERVICES OVERSIGHT COUNCIL (HSOC) MEETING MINUTES

Date

July 19, 2023

Time

1:02pm-3:04pm

Location

Room 101, County of San Luis Obispo Department of Social Services,
3433 South Higuera St, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401.

Members of the public were able to participate via Zoom.

Members Present:

Allison Brandum
Aurora William
Bettina Swigger
Brenda Mack
Clint Weirick
Christy Nichols (Alternate for Nicole Bennett)
(Supervisor) Dawn Ortiz-Legg
Devin Drake
Elaine Archer
Erica Stewart (Alternate for Michelle Shoresman)
Garret Olson
Jack Lahey
Janna Nichols
Kathy McClenathen
Kristen Barneich
Luke Dunn
Marcia Guthrie
Mark Lamore
Rick Scott
Rochelle Sonza
Susan Funk
Susan Lamont
Wendy Blacker
Wendy Lewis
Zara Landrum

Members Absent:

Amelia Grover
William Crewe
Jeff Smith
Jessica Thomas
Jim Dantona
Michelle Shoresman
Nicole Bennett
Rick Gulino
Rick Scott
Shay Stewart
Steve Gregory

Staff & Guests:

Abby Lassen
Anne Robin
Brandy Graham
Daisy Wiberg
Erica Jaramillo
George Solis
Haley Dodson
Jeff Al-Mashat
Joe Dzvonic
K Welles
Kate Bourne
Kelly Abbas
Kristin Ventresca
Laurel Weir
Lauryn Searles
Lisa Howe
Marc Sabin
Matt Leal
Merlie Livermore
Morgan Torell
Rita Holland
Russ Francis
Sarah Montes Reinhart
Staci Dewitt
Steve Stucky
Suzie Freeman
Trisha Raminha
Yael Korin
Yesenia Alonso

1. Call to Order

Susan Funk called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm.

2. Introductions

No introductions were made by newcomers or guests.

3. Public Comment

During public comments, Anne Robin shared that this is her last HSOC meeting as she is retiring from the SLO County Behavioral Health department. She mentioned that Morgan Torell will be taking her place as the HSOC representative. Janna Nichols of the 5Cities Homeless Coalition requested the Executive Committee to consider polling the group about a change of time for the full HSOC meeting. Janna suggested the time change to be either at the beginning or ending of the day to accommodate those who are coming from other parts of the county. Wendy Lewis of ECHO shared that as of yesterday, they have helped 101 men, women and children get back into permanent housing. Supervisor Dawn Ortiz- Legg shared that the Board of Supervisors has been getting a lot of feedback from the community regarding the unhoused. She mentioned the importance of communicating with the community the efforts that are being made towards the issue of homelessness. Kristin Barneich from the City of Arroyo Grande shared the same sentiment mentioning the use of social media in showcasing the SLO County efforts and accomplishments towards this issue. Mayor Erica Stewart mentioned the City of SLO will support SLO County's efforts in information dissemination via the use of social media. Brandy Graham from CAPSLO gave an update on the Veterans Services. She mentioned that more Veteran families are reaching out to their services. Before closing public comments, HSOC Chairperson Susan Funk and Supervisor Ortiz-Legg recognized Anne Robin's significant contribution as head of the SLO County Behavioral department.

4. Approval of Minutes

Devin Drake moved the minutes to be approved, seconded by Kristen Barneich. Minutes passed by voice vote.

5. Action/Information/Discussion

5.1 Implementing Five-Year Plan Line of Effort 1 - Create Affordable and Appropriately Designed Housing Opportunities and Shelter Options for Underserved Populations

5.1.1 Discussion Item: Update on Encampment Resolution Fund Grant Applications and Award
Kristin Ventresca, Homeless Services Division's Communications and Data Administrative Manager presented an update on the Encampment Resolution project. This project will be located behind the Department of Social Services building and will be called the Welcome Home Village. This project will help reduce homelessness by providing the most vulnerable individuals, specifically those living on encampments along the Bob Jones Bike Trail with a place to call home. The Welcome Home Village will comprise of an 80-unit non-congregate housing facility which includes 34 interim supportive housing units and 46 permanent supportive housing units. Residents will be provided on-site case management and other resources. The Bob Jones Bike Trail corridor was selected because of its designation as a fire and flood zone, and it hosts the largest concentration of homeless encampments in the City of San Luis Obispo.

The \$13.4 million from the State of California's Encampment Resolution Fund will allow to reduce the number of encampments along the bike trail, provide the services and support people need to get back on their feet, and allow the trail and related open spaces to be used by the community as originally intended. To address the environmental concerns, there will be installation of sanitation services along the bike trail to reduce waste and trash accumulation. The Fund also helps in the expansion of the City of SLO's ongoing outreach to those living in the encampment area with the addition of Good Samaritan Shelter's field teams. There is an anticipation that people may begin moving from the Bob Jones Bike Trail corridor and into the Welcome Home Village as soon as Spring 2024. Kristin also mentioned that there will be a Community Information session regarding this project sometime in the fall of this year. George Solis, the Administrative Grants Manager shared that the County of San Luis Obispo submitted a total of three Encampment Resolution Funding applications. SLO County received the third highest award in the state behind San Diego and Los Angeles counties. An application for the South County (Five Cities) was not awarded any funding. A third project application, for the City of Paso Robles is pending and awards will be announced by the end of summer. George also mentioned that the state will release a third round of Encampment Resolution Funding in December. He shared that SLO County, along with providers and City partners would apply again in January or February, using the lessons learned from previous applications.

5.2 Implementing Five-Year Plan Line of Effort 3 – Improve and Expand Data Management Efforts Through HMIS and Coordinated Entry System to Strengthen Data-Driven Operational Guidance and Strategic Oversight

5.2.1 Discussion Item: Updates on Efforts to Improve the HMIS System

Kristin Ventresca shared an update on Homeless Services Information Management System process and the efforts that are being made to improve the HMIS system. This project is an investment to provide data-driven insights, support service delivery, and maximize service partner capacity to service participants. In her presentation, Kristin presented slides showing who are involved in this process, project scope, timeline, key milestones, estimated costs, and funding solution. She ended her presentation by mentioning that the County Homeless Division will be seeking the HMIS system upgrade approval from the Board of Supervisors in August.

5.2.2 Action Item: Vote to 1) Recommend an Allocation of up to \$1,067,804 from Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAP) Grant Round 3 Funds to be Used for Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Improvements, Consistent with HHAP 3 Guidelines for Use of Initial Funding; and 2) endorse the County's Homeless Services Information System (HMIS) Steering Committee's recommendation to move ahead with an upgrade of the HMIS system and engaging a supporting services provider to assist in the transition.

George Solis provided the background for this Action Item. Kristen Barneich moved the motion to approve with amendment endorsing the HMIS plan. Devin Drake seconded. Roll called; motion passed.

5.3 Discussion and Action Items: Updates from County Staff

5.3.1 Action Item: Vote to use 1) a Census Methodology for the 2024 Homeless Point in Time Count of Unsheltered Persons; and 2) an Observational Count Combined with a Sampling

Methodology for obtaining demographic and survey information for unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness

Kari Howell presented a brief background on this item. Kristen Barneich moved the motion to approve. Janna Nichols seconded. Roll called, and motion passed.

5.3.2 Discussion Item: Update from staff on activities of the Homeless Services Division

Erica Jaramillo, Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Manager shared that the County applied to HUD's (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development) Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP) that will serve unhoused youth ages 24 and under. The CoC is also working to support the formation of the Youth Advisory Board. Erica also mentioned that on July 5, 2023, HUD released Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the FY 2023 CoC Program competition. Today, the County released Program for Proposals and will be accepting applications for renewal of projects as well as for bonus funding projects. The Homeless Services Division will be hosting a virtual informational meeting for the CoC this Friday, July 21 starting at 9:30am. Additionally, there will be a special meeting of HSOC in August to vote on funding recommendations.

Erica reported that the Grants unit is working on implementing Neighborly software, a grants management software system for administering state and Federal funding. Once implemented, agencies will be able to apply for funding through this system. This program will allow the County to administer grant programs more efficiently. The Grants unit is also preparing for the 2024 Action Plan NOFA (Notice of Funding Availability) to be released in the fall. The goal is to release a super NOFA that will include all available State and Federal funding opportunities all at once for more strategic planning of funding resources.

Besides the earlier update on the HMIS (Homeless Management Information System), Erica shared that the Communications & Data team is actively immersed in communication strategies around the SLO Encampment Resolution funding award. The Communications team has been connecting with local business owners, property owners and tenants, and scheduling informational events that will be open to the public.

5.4. Discussion Item: Committee Updates

Elaine Archer of the Housing Committee provided updates regarding the housing voucher situation and what is happening on the housing creation front. On the voucher issue, Elaine shared that in June, HASLO (Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo) received a letter from HUD (US Department of Housing and Urban Development) informing them that HUD will take back \$672,000 from HASLO's voucher program funding reserves. According to Elaine, if this reserve amount is taken, this could mean that by the end of December, there will not be enough money to meet the monthly expenses of the voucher program. Elaine and her team are working on how to reach out to HUD to reverse this decision. For the time being, HASLO must pull vouchers off the street and put applicants back on the waiting list. She also reported that the maximum capacity on the emergency and mainstream housing vouchers have been reached. There will be no new emergency housing vouchers issued after September 30th. The mainstream vouchers remain as ongoing program and applicants will be called off the waiting list as more vouchers become available in the future.

Regarding the status on creation of housing, Elaine shared that there are eight properties, located in Pismo Beach, San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay, Templeton, and Paso Robles respectively, that will be leasing up and looking for new tenants. Some of these units have preferences for Veterans, senior citizens and some units are set aside for those with serious mental illness.

Elaine mentioned that there will be about 140 beds in the next 12 months that are coming off the Coordinated Entry list. She also reported that the construction of the Maxine Lewis building will start next winter and will offer 40 beds dedicated to those who are homeless. People's Self- Help Housing also has another project that has been approved and will start construction in Grover Beach.

Jack Lahey shared that Services Coordinating Committee is currently reshaping its function and purpose and future meetings are being scheduled to discuss how to make this a more efficient committee.

Mark Lamore identified the PIT (Point in Time) Census, HMIS updates and the Grant Scoring Rubrics as the ongoing focus for the Finance & Data Committee.

Susan Funk mentioned that the Executive Committee is having an ongoing discussion on how to make each HSOC committee more functional, having good information flow and ensure that everyone's time on the committees is well spent.

6. Future Discussion/Report Items

- Executive Committee to poll HSOC to change time of meeting to start/end of the day

7. Special Meeting to Approve Funding Recommendations: August 28, 2023, at 9am.

8. Next Regular Meeting: September 20, 2023

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 3:04pm.