



Sonoma County Homeless Coalition Board

Continuum of Care Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

1:00 – 4:30 p.m. Pacific Time – Meeting held by Zoom

Zoom Recording:

https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/rec/share/IIXe3PYM78zNpWTc7gvntiQL73xOfcvYso2Um7Ups7xkIP_RPe_kdo4F3KA839EK.vyVN7xCYJdPR2FAv

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Welcome and Roll Call (00:05:58– 00:08:48)

Dennis Pocekay called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. and explained the Zoom rules around public comment, and the Brown Act guidelines.

Present:

Dennis Pocekay, City of Petaluma | Jennielynn Holmes, Catholic Charities | Sasha Brown, proxy for Natalie Rogers, City of Santa Rosa | Benjamin Leroi, Santa Rosa Community Health Center | Sean Hamlin, proxy for Chris Coursey, BOS County of Sonoma | Kathleen Pozzi, Community Member | Dot Norton, proxy for Martha Cheever until 2 pm, Community Development Commission; Martha Cheever after 2 pm | Chessy Etheridge, Community Member / LEAP | Una Glass, City of Sebastopol | John Baxter, proxy for Don Schwartz, City of Rohnert Park | Ron Wellander, City of Sonoma | Dannielle Danforth, West County Community Services

Joined During Meeting: Margaret Sluyk, Reach for Home | Jackie Elward, City of Rohnert Park

Absent:

Chris Keys, Redwood Gospel Mission | Cheyenne McConnell, TAY Representative | Mark Krug, Burbank Housing |

A quorum was present.

As this is the last Board meeting of 2023, Dennis Pocekay thanks the Board members whose terms are expiring for their dedication to the Board and to homelessness: Chris Keys, Katheen Pozzi, Mark Krug, and Ben Leroi.

1.-4. Approval of Consent Calendar (00:08:51 – 00:40:26)

- Dennis Pocekay, Homeless Coalition Board Chair, presented the Consent Calendar: 12/20/23 agenda; 11/15/23 minutes; Summary of Follow-ups from the Previous Meeting; and Reports for Standing Committee Updates.

Jennielynn Holmes moves to pull Item 4, “Reports for Standing Committee Updates” section from the Consent Calendar.

Jennielynn Holmes moves to approve Consent Calendar items 1, 2 and 3.

Una Rogers seconds.

Public Comment: Gregory Fearon

Objections or Abstentions: None

Motion approved.

Consent Calendar Item #4: Comment was received about the income growth metric for emergency shelters that is included in the NOFA, whether measuring earned and unearned income is an appropriate requirement, and the potentially detrimental impacts to benefits and services that may result. Discussion arose about the pros and cons of including the income metric in the NOFA. Providers urge caution in being watchful for negative ripple effects and systemic inequities. Assurance was offered that staff will be vigilant in seeing that good programs that serve the most vulnerable are not jeopardized.

Public Comment: Teddie Pierce, Adrienne Lauby

Una Glass moves to approve Consent Calendar item 4.

Kathleen Pozzi seconds.

Objections: None

Abstentions: One

Motion approved.

5. Reports from Lead Agency Staff (00:40:28 – 00:49:17)

- **Sonoma County Homeless Coalition Board Elections Update.**

Araceli Rivera presented a slide providing the results of the Homeless Coalition Board elections, which were held virtually on December 13th, 2023.

Board members whose terms are expiring are Chris Keys (at-large), Kathleen Pozzi (at-large), Mark Krug (homeless service provider), and Ben Leroi (licensed healthcare organizations).

The successful candidates and the seats they will fill are:

- Kristi Lozinto, Ya-Ka-Ama Indian Education & Development – At-large seat (8 applications received)

- Chris Cabral, COTS – Homeless Service Provider seat (6 applications received)
- Ben Leroi, Santa Rosa Community Health – Licensed Healthcare Organization seat (1 application received)

There is one opening remaining, which will be for a Tribal seat, to be elected at a later date by tribal members.

The new terms will begin with the January 24th, 2024, Board meeting.

Acknowledgment was made that changes to the election process may be forthcoming in the future and may require a revision to the charter.

Kathleen Pozzi thanks her colleagues and expresses her appreciation for the dedicated work of the Board throughout her term. She invites the Board to contact her with questions or issues regarding criminal justice as it relates to community members whenever needed.

Dennis Pocekay thanks Kathleen for her service and congratulates the newly elected Board members.

Public Comment: Adrienne Lauby

6. Service Provider Roundtable (SPR) Update (with TLC presentation) (00:49:19– 1:01:27)

- Margaret Sluyk reported that the safety workgroup is still in progress. Provider feedback will be solicited on proposed recommendations after the holidays, which will subsequently be presented to the Strategic Planning Committee and then to the Homeless Coalition Board.

Shelby Means provided an update about TLC Child and Family Services, an agency that has historically worked to support families and youth impacted by foster care. They also operate a non-public school in Sebastopol. They developed a Rapid Rehousing Program about four years ago and the numbers served since then have doubled.

TLC received funding last year with which they've opened a resource drop-in center for transition-aged youth that have been impacted by foster care or homelessness. Many are on the Coordinated Entry list or pending housing from other agencies and are utilizing TLC's resource center for basic needs such as employment, gas cards, or food needs. This creates opportunities to break down barriers and provide some case management to improve their life skills and help prepare them for entering housing. In 2023, TLC has thus far served 71 youths who are not part of their housing program, about quadruple the number from last year.

Dannielle Danforth recounted the assistance provided by Shelby Means and TLC in an instance a few months ago and expressed her appreciation for the great help and resources provided to the youth in need.

Public Comment: Gregory Fearon, Kaitlin Carney

Dennis Pocekay commented that he has found his interactions with TLC to be very positive.

7. Committee Roles and Responsibilities (01:01:31– 1:20:34)

- Dave Kiff stated that he would like to bring forth the review and adoption of the standing committees' roles and responsibilities each year in December, likely as a consent item.

Dave Kiff reported that the Strategic Planning Committee and the Funding & Evaluation (F&E) Committee have taken a "deep dive" into committee roles and responsibilities for adoption by the Board. The resulting documents are included in today's meeting packet and are intended to be posted on the website to provide clear information to interested readers.

Dave Kiff shared his screen to show two changes to the Strategic Planning Committee items 6 & 7 that had not yet been incorporated into the packet document, for the Board's awareness and review.

A request was received to change the wording for the Funding & Evaluation Committee to read "charter" rather than "document."

Una Glass suggests that the committee roles and responsibilities should be addendums to the governance charter and structured as appendices that can be updated at any time.

Public Comment: Victoria Yanez, Teddie Pierce, Adrienne Lauby, Gregory Fearon

Una Glass moves to adopt the roles and responsibilities with the amendments made by the Strategic Planning Committee, with the addition of the word "charter" instead of "document" under the Funding & Evaluation Committee, and that staff shall attempt to include these as appendices to the Governance charter for clarity and transparency.

Jackie Elward seconds.

Abstentions or Objections: None.

Motion approved unanimously.

8. Homeless Point in Time Count (01:20:36– 1:26:32)

- Karissa White presented slides providing a brief update about the upcoming Sonoma County Homeless Point in Time Count 2024.

The Point in Time Count is required by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be conducted at least once every two years in jurisdictions experiencing homelessness. Sonoma County conducts a count annually and includes those both sheltered and unsheltered.

This year's count is scheduled for January 26, 2024. A new methodology initiated in 2020 ensures that hard -to-reach or known encampment areas are covered by those who know the area.

Volunteers can sign up to receive notices through the CoC Listserv or can contact Karissa White at Karissa.White@sonoma-county.org.

Public Comment: Victoria Yanez

Michael Gause assured attendees that all maps and information with potentially identifiable information regarding encampments or the location of individuals are destroyed after the event and are not kept in the system.

9. Word from the Street (01:26:34 – 2:15:34)

- Rebekah Sammet presented as proxy for Chessy Etheridge, reporting that the weather has turned cold and winter warming centers have not yet been opened. Providers would like to see more funding and expansion for winter services. The current temperature thresholds for opening warming centers are leaving vulnerable populations out in the cold on nights that are near freezing.

Dave Kiff explained that the County is responsible for providing warming centers in unincorporated areas and the cities are responsible for their incorporated area jurisdictions.

Comment was received expressing the sentiment that city and county agencies should collaborate between jurisdictions and adopt a unified approach to providing warming centers.

Dave Kiff explained that a model for winter shelters could be proposed within the NOFA for next year. This provision was in the NOFA for this year but there were no applicants. Discussion evolved about the obstacles that have constrained various entities from providing warming center services, and potential strategies to engage stakeholders in collaboration to develop an overall solution.

Public Comment: Adrienne Lauby, Gregory Fearon, Ludmilla Bade

Chessey Etheridge moves that staff convene a meeting with the cities to address the policies for opening winter warming centers.

Una Glass seconds.

Una Glass offers an amendment to direct staff to submit a letter from the Homeless Coalition Board to the Chair of the Mayors and Councilmen's Association advising them that the Homeless Coalition Board is interested in placing the issue of emergency warming and cooling centers on their meeting agenda, to discuss how cities are managing this need, and how they might collaborate on making their efforts more effective. Dennis Pocekay, Chessey Etheridge, and Una Glass will compose the letter.

Chessey Etheridge accepts the amendment.

Roll Call Vote:

- **In favor:** Dennis Pocekay, Ben Leroi, Margaret Sluyk, Martha Cheever, Chessey Etheridge, Una Glass, John Baxter, Jackie Elward, Ron Wellander, Dannielle Danforth
- **Abstentions:** Jennielynn Holmes, Sean Hamlin.
- **Objections:** None

Motion approved with two abstentions.

10. 9-minute break: (02:15:45 – 2:24:13)

Meeting resumed at 3:20 pm; staff confirmed a quorum was present.

11. Phase III – How the Lead Agency plans to incorporate data to inform the Coalition's decisions. (2:24:57 - 02:50:00)

- Dave Kiff spoke about "Becoming a More Data-Informed System – Phase III," which involves how data will be used to inform system of care decisions in the Long-term Funding Strategy.

Dave Kiff referenced the five-page report included in the meeting packet as item #11. The report serves as an outline of the intended approach of lead agency staff, problems encountered in the past, progress that has been made in choosing metrics and envisioning how they will be utilized in the future on the website and printed materials, as well as being incorporated into the NOFA. Also described was a plan for implementing an annual system needs analysis. Some tools to be employed include Stella Modeling from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), pro-bono consultant work offered by All-Home, as well as assistance from the

Department of Health Services' (DHS) technical staff. Phase III would involve at least an annual review to assess what's working and areas in which improvement is needed. **John Baxter moves** to approve the Lead Agency's staff approach as outlined in the packet item, with a revision to the wording under "Where We're Proposing to Go," page 32, the second bullet point, to read **"to review and potentially revise performance metrics at least annually and including input from providers as to what the impact of those possible changes in metrics might be."**

This change will also be made to the section entitled "The role of the Funding and Evaluation Committee is to:" under the third light bullet point to read..."If warranted, revise metrics in advance of NOFA release **at least annually.**"

Una Glass seconds.

Public Comment: Teddie Pierce

Abstentions: One

Objections: None

Motion approved with one abstention.

12. Review Agenda for Next Coalition Board Meeting (2:50:05 – 2:52:48)

- Dennis Pocekey went over the draft January 2024 agenda for review and comment or additions. No proposals for additional agenda items were received.

The meeting schedule for 2024 will continue to be on the fourth Wednesday of the month, from 1:00 – 5:00 pm. The next meeting date will be January 24, 2024.

Community Assistance Recovery & Empowerment (CARE) Court and Bridge Housing will be discussed as there have been questions about whether they may be the same thing.

Public Comment: None.

Araceli Rivera will be sending out emails to current Board members to confirm that they will be continuing on in the new year. Please respond so you can be included on the upcoming calendar invite.

13. Board Member Questions and Comments (2:50:50 – 2:56:57)

- Jackie Elward requests that Thai Hilton send an email reminder about the Homeless Memorial Day event scheduled for tomorrow, 12/21/23, from 11:00 am – 12:30 pm at the Arlene Francis Center. An initial email was sent a couple of weeks ago, but Thai will send a reminder.

Public Comment: Victoria Yanez

14. Public Comment on items not on the Agenda (2:57:03 – 3:01:01)

Victoria Yanez, Teddie Pierce

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:58 pm.