



Sonoma County Homeless Coalition Board

Homeless Coalition Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

1:00 – 5:00 PM, Pacific Time – Meeting held via Zoom

Zoom Recording:

https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/rec/share/so4HUAZvgTM_3u81t_4p1wHpZC0AdIA2Q9nBcjS9bk7L2oVP_T5iLuyx-I7YtsrkR.QYexLMegU2qXXILC

Passcode: Y@WjJVQ8

Welcome and Roll Call Introductions (00:05:36–00:08:09)

Jennielynn Holmes called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm and explained the Zoom rules regarding public comment and Brown Act guidelines.

Present: Jennielynn Holmes, Catholic Charities | Ben Leroi, Santa Rosa Community Health | Natalie Rogers, City of Santa Rosa | Dennis Pocekay, City of Petaluma | Chris Coursey, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors | Martha Cheever, Community Development Commission | Una Glass, City of Sebastopol | Jackie Elward, City of Rohnert Park | Dannielle Danforth, West County Community Services | Margaret Sluyk, Reach For Home | Chessy Etheridge, Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAP) | Chris Cabral, Committee on the Shelterless (COTS) | Salvina Norris, Sonoma County Indian Health Project (SCHIP) | Kristi Lozinto, Member At-Large | Ron Wellander, City of Sonoma | Angelica Smith, Tribal Seat | Aaron Mello, LEAP Board

Absent: Cheyenne McConnell, TAY Representative

A quorum was present.

1 - 4. Approval of Consent Calendar (00:08:11 – 00:10:00)

- Jennielynn Holmes, CoC Board Chair, presented the consent calendar items:
 1. 10/23/24 meeting agenda
 2. 9/25/24 meeting minutes
 3. Summary of Follow-ups from Previous Meeting(s)
 4. Reports for Standing Committee Updates
- **Public Comment:** None
- **Motion:** Natalie Rogers moves to approve the Consent Calendar.
Second: Martha Cheever seconds the motion.

Abstentions or Objections: None.

Motion passes. The consent calendar is approved.

5. Housing First Presentation: Alignment with Support Services & Safety (00:10:04–1:35:35)

- Helene Schneider provided a slide presentation informing the HC Board about the US Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), and providing an overview of federal “Housing First” policy. As Senior Regional Advisor for USICH, Helene is based in Santa Barbara and covers the State of California for this small stand-alone federal interagency. USICH is led by US Department of Health and Human Services (HSS) Secretary Xavier Becerra, and is dedicated solely to preventing and ending homelessness in the United States. Additional information is included in the meeting packet of materials for Item 5, or at the following website: <https://www.samhsa.gov/homelessness-programs-resources>.

- **Public Comment:** Gregory Fearon

Informational item only: no action taken

6. Reports from the Lead Agency: (01:35:41 – 1:50:22)

- Heart Team Information: James Alexander, Homelessness Services Division Director, reported that he has convened monthly meetings with representatives for the various street outreach subregions, with the goal of enhancing collaboration and coordination to reduce the number of unsheltered individuals.

A new Health Program Manager for the Homeless Encampment Access and Resource Team (HEART) should be in place within the next month.

- Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Seat: Araceli Rivera reported that a tracking sheet has been created to record HC Board absences and use of proxies. This oversight will allow for communication and support to those who may be experiencing difficulty in maintaining attendance.
- Funding Priorities and Next Steps: Michael Gause relayed that the Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is being finalized this week, and work will soon begin on the local Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for next year, which should be released in December or early January.
- Point in Time (PIT) Count: Michael Gause reported that the Lead Agency will be convening a meeting in November with the PIT Count consultant (Applied Survey Research) and city partners to plan and brainstorm about training and coordination for the upcoming January 2025 PIT Count.

Additional information concerning Lead Agency reports are available in the meeting packet of materials for Item #6.

- **Public Comment on Item #6:** Gregory Fearon

Informational item only; no action taken

Note: Vice Chair Una Glass will preside over the meeting proceedings from 3:00 – 3:30 PM as Chair Jennielynn Holmes must step away for a short time due to a prior commitment.

7. Service Provider Roundtable (SPR) Update (01:50:24 – 01:54:29)

- Margaret Sluyk reported that discussion at the recent Service Provider Roundtable centered around safety issues and also focused on providers' desire to explore concerns they may have regarding the County as the Lead Agency, but for which they may be reluctant to express as much of their funding is provided via the County.
- **Public Comment:** None.

Informational item only; no action taken.

8. MOU Between Sonoma County Homeless Coalition and Lead Agency: (01:54:30 – 02:26:28)

- Jennifer Solito, Interim DHS Director, shared her screen to display a red-lined version of the draft Lead Agency version of the Memo of Understanding (MOU) between the Homeless Coalition and the Lead Agency, and explained the suggested edits she had added to the document subsequent to her review with County Counsel.

Note: Due to the length of the previous agenda items, Item #10, the 10-minute break, occurred out of agenda order and was taken prior to the conclusion of Item #8, in advance of Item 9.

10. 10-Minute Break: 3:20 – 3:30 PM (2:26:32 – 2:35:40)

- Upon return from the break, roll call was taken to confirm that a quorum remained.

8. Continued: (02:37:02 – 2:54:47)

- Jennifer Solito shared a second draft MOU, between the Homeless Coalition and the Collaborative Applicant, to resume the MOU discussion. The two documents are very similar, but a Collaborative Applicant must be designated in order to apply for almost \$4.6 million in Continuum of Care (CoC) grant funding available from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Many agencies represented by the HC Board will receive this funding, but the application must be submitted through a unified agency. Suggested red-lined edits for this document are virtually identical to the MOU with the Lead Agency that was just presented.

A particular suggestion of note was that the HC Board consider amending the time frame for termination of the MOU from the stated 180 days written notice to conceivably a year or more, given the complexities of making the transition to another entity, which is an expensive, time-consuming, and difficult process.

Many aspects of the draft MOU and the realities inherent in making a change of Lead Agency were discussed and will continue at the November 20, 2024 HC Board meeting.

Informational item only; no action taken.

Note: **(2:54:50)** At this time, Chair Jennielynn Holmes returned to preside over the remainder of the meeting.

- **Public Comment: None.**

9. Word from the Leap Board: (02:54:56 – 3:03:40)

- Chessy Etheridge reported that there has been an increase in newly homeless families with children, and described the complexities in finding space in family shelters.

Informational item only; no action taken.

- **Public Comment:** Amy Appleton, Ludmilla Bade

10. 10-Minute Break: Taken previously, during Item #8.

11. Homeless Coalition Committees: (03:03:46 –00:34:12, 2nd recording)

- Jennielynn Holmes provided a PowerPoint report regarding the various HC Board Committees and proposing some new committee structures, including the discontinuation of the Strategic Planning Committee and the addition of a membership selected Ad Hoc. Options were also provided for discontinuing or restructuring the Funding & Evaluation Committee, or establishing a project scoring ad-hoc in lieu of the Committee.

Jennielynn led the HC Board in an in-depth discussion regarding the proposed changes and suggested options.

- **Public Comment:** Ludmilla Bade, John Baxter
- **Motion #1:** Chris Coursey moved to approve the following recommendations. Ben Leroy seconds.
 1. Continue the Coordinated Entry Advisory Committee
 2. Continue the HMIS Committee
 3. Continue the Governance Charter review ad hoc with attention to Brown Act
 4. Discontinue the Strategic Planning Committee
 5. Add a member selection ad hoc

Abstentions/Objections: None

Motion is approved.

- **Motion #2 (Funding & Evaluation Committee)**

Angelica Smith moves to discontinue the F&E Committee and replace with a working group of non-conflicted members, similar to the Continuum of Care workgroup. Margaret Sluyk seconds.

Roll Call Vote:

Approve: Dennis Pocekay, Jennielynn Holmes, Natalie Rogers, Chris Coursey, Margaret Sluyk, Chris Cabral, Angelica Smith, Kristi Lozinto, Martha Cheever, Chessy Etheridge, Una Glass, Ron Wellander, Salvina Norris.

Oppose: Jackie Elward

Abstain: Dannielle Danforth, Ben Leroi

Motion is approved.

12. Review Agenda for November Coalition Board Meeting: (00:34:15 – 00:38:12)

- There will be two HC Board meetings in November:
 - November 4th, 10:30 AM Special meeting - regarding one CoC Builds NOFO application
 - November 20th, 1-5 PM Regular HC Board Meeting

Jennielynn Holmes displayed the agenda for the November 20th Regular Board Meeting.

Una Glass requests, on behalf of Dennis Pocekay, that a presentation from an expert regarding Lead Agency issues be provided by February 2025.

Jennielynn Holmes confirmed that the safety issues mentioned today will be included in the November Lead Agency staff report.

- **Public Comment:** None.

13. Board Member Questions and Comments : (00:38:15 – 00:41:40)

Angelica Smith – after a two-year effort, a park in Healdsburg was renamed in honor of an indigenous person, Laura Somersall Park; also, the City of Santa Rosa will be acknowledging the Pomo and Wappo people in the month of October.

Ron Wellander – suggests evaluating a different frequency or time frame for HC Board meetings to alleviate meetings that are four hours in length.

- **Public Comment:** None.

12. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda: (00:41:15 – 00:43:48)

- Ludmilla Bade – comments on Strategic Plan Committee and process

Adjournment: 4:56 PM (00:43:49 – 00:44:11)