

## CITY CLERK'S RECORD OF MEETING

### City Council Homelessness Subcommittee

February 25, 2021

Present: Mayor Pro Tempore Lauren Meister, Councilmember Sepi Shyne, Director of Human Services and Rent Stabilization Christof Schroder, Director of Public Safety Kristin Cook, Strategic Initiatives Manager Corri Planck, Social Services Manager David Giugni, Strategic Initiatives Program Administrator Elizabeth Anderson, Strategic Initiatives Program Administrator Diane Kahn-Epstein, Social Services Program Administrator Katie Egan, Strategic Initiatives Specialist Jenny Ivanova, and Acting City Clerk Melissa Crowder

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

#### Public Comment

- Jordan David:
  - Mentioned the recently discussed Homeless Resource Center by the City Council
  - Mission of City should be to end homelessness in West Hollywood
  - Socialized Housing
- Victor Omelczenko:
  - Housing Element
  - Where does homelessness fit in the City's Housing Element
  - Cash for Keys to senior citizens in rent stabilized units

Strategic Initiatives Program Administrator Elizabeth Anderson provided an overview of the City's Homeless Services. Strategic Initiatives Manager Corri Planck provided an overview of the City's five-year plan to address homelessness as well as provided an update on the goals of the plan.

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister commented on the Homeless Needs Assessment approved by the City Council. She noted that this helps the City identify needs in the community, specifically that we have a larger proportion of LGBTQ+ homeless individuals and those with mental and/or substance abuse issues.

Councilmember Shyne inquired about the following:

- Unique demographics
- Supportive housing - where are needs
- Bridge Housing/Day Center Facilities
- Pet-friendly facilities

Corri Planck provided information on bridge housing, permanent housing, congregate sites, and day center facilities.

- Victor Omelczenko:
  - 2016 – 81 homeless community members
  - 2020 – 112 homeless community members
  - Biden administration providing 100% shelter-in-place hotels for homeless community members
  - Governor Newsom “Project Home Key”
  - What has the City done to utilize these resources
  
- Cathy Blaivas:
  - Education and/or work program for homeless individuals

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister mentioned the Chamber’s program and Kitchen 24’s program to provide training to homeless individuals.

Social Services Program Administrator Katie Egan provided an update on service delivery from the City’s contracted homeless services agencies for the 2019-2020 contract year and the first quarter of the 2020-2021 contract year, as well as demographic data for community members who were placed into permanent housing during the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister inquired:

- 68 permanent housing placement
  - What percentage was due to substance abuse, mental health issues
  - How many contracts before they accepted service
  - What does it take to get someone to accept service
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- Victor Omelczenko:
    - \$300,000 Grant in 2019
    - Feasibility Analysis
    - Why hasn’t an RFP been issued
    - Safe parking for people living in their vehicles

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister introduced the next item and requested that staff include the MET Team cost as part of the discussion. Strategic Initiatives Program Administrator Elizabeth Anderson discussed the City’s current crisis response interventions. Social Services Program Administrator Katie Egan discussed the City’s available mental health resources as well as civilian crisis response systems used in other states.

Councilmember Shyne inquired/commented:

- When someone calls 911 what is the protocol for dispatching the MET Team versus the COPS Team
- Non-law enforcement solutions
- Cost of the MET Team
- Expansion of MET Teams

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- Letter sent to the County encouraging and advocating to expand the MET Teams
- Can we train a current WeHo deputy to be a MET Deputy
- Cost per deputy
- How much control does the City have in assigning a current deputy as a MET deputy

Director of Public Safety Kristin Cook responded to these inquiries. She commented that the MET Team is roughly \$530,000 annually. The County plans to have 60 MET Teams; however, COVID caused a delay in the expansion. She noted that the City should receive rates from the County within the next month or so. Ms. Cook spoke about how deputies promote throughout the organization and how they are trained as MET responders. The City has a MET Team stationed at the West Hollywood Station. Additionally, the County provided a MET Team at the West Hollywood Station that prioritizes West Hollywood. Ms. Cook provided information on how the City could accomplish adding a MET deputy without a large fiscal impact to the City.

- Victor Omelczenko:
  - Security ambassadors
  - Importance of public safety
  - Homeless encampment at Poinsettia Park
  - Where are the social service providers from LA City/LA County
  - Non-law enforcement solutions

Ms. Cook noted that Block by Block works directly with law enforcement and social services providers. This is the City's non-law enforcement solution.

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister inquired:

- Can we look into a mobile unit similar to CAHOOTS in Eugene, Oregon
- Coordination between a mobile unit and a mental-health trained deputy

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister and Councilmember Shyne agreed to meet monthly.

Councilmember Shyne agrees that this is an urgent issue, and that the City needs to do all that it can to assist our unhoused community members. She thanked staff for the presentation and answering her questions. She asked that we find creative ways to move forward and addressing this issue.

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister thanked the members of the public that spoke. She spoke about the surface parking lot at the Metro lot for drop-in service and restrooms. She and Councilmember Shyne agreed that a letter should be sent to the County and Metro regarding use of the site. Councilmember Shyne noted that 24-hour bathrooms are needed and mentioned pods similar to those in San Francisco and London and requested that staff look into this. Mayor Pro Tempore Meister commented that the homelessness should be included in the Housing Element. She thanked staff for a great presentation and conversation.

Strategic Initiatives Manager Corri Planck thanked everyone. She noted that she will work with the City Clerk to schedule future subcommittee meetings. She commented that she will discuss the proposal to utilize the Metro site with the City's Property Development Manager Brian League. She spoke about other funding sources for providing housing. Finally, she responded to inquires about training and education to our unhoused community members.

Katie Egan spoke about the City's Virtual Day of Service on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and noted that the initiative received over \$1,500 in cash donations and 260 in in-kind donations, which will help provide basic necessities and supplies to our unhoused community members.

The meeting adjourned at 10:22 am. in memory of Ivy Bottini.

*Melissa Crowder*

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Melissa Crowder, Acting City Clerk