

CITY CLERK'S RECORD OF MEETING

City Council Subcommittee on Homelessness
August 26, 2021

Present: Mayor Pro Tempore Lauren Meister, Councilmember Sepi Shyne, Director of Human Services & Rent Stabilization Christof Schroeder, Strategic Initiatives Manager Corri Planck, Social Services Manager David Giugni, Katie Egan, Strategic Initiatives Program Administrator Elizabeth Anderson, City Clerk Melissa Crowder.

The meeting was called to order at 8:31 A.M.

Approval of meeting agenda. Motion passes.

Public Comment:

Michael Wojtkielewicz, West Hollywood, spoke about a recent DAB meeting where he believed there was a conflict of interest, and commented on the Social Justice Task Force and the lack of representation of an unhoused or disabled member.

Item 3.A. Receive Information From Dr. Jonathan Sherin, Director Of Los Angeles County Department Of Mental Health

Dr. Sherin commented that LA County is ahead of the curve regarding crisis response. When emergency calls are made, some must wait a long time for emergency personnel to show up. He shared information about the Therapeutic Transport Program, which was developed for homeless mental/behavioral health emergencies. The County has made efforts to improve the programs and developed a formal steering committee to find a way forward.

The term "mental health crisis" needs to be defined. 10% of all homeless are in LA County. Not all need an emergency crisis response in real time. He explained the purpose of the Homeless Outreach & Mobilization Engagement Team, which is for people not in emergency crisis.

Dr. Sherin stated the need for a coordinated regional call center, which is not currently coordinated with groups and agencies. The program should have the ability to assess calls and cases to be triaged by a team of experts; law enforcement, substance abuse/mental health experts, clinicians, and peers. This would help determine what is happening in the field and which is the best team to respond.

Next, he expressed the need for a sophisticated array of responders so the region can do its best to deploy an effective response team. He described the County's Co-Response Teams, which is a combination of law enforcement officers and clinicians responding together. A health and human service-type response is necessary to relieve law enforcement. The County is under-resourced regarding crisis responders, mental and

behavioral health teams, and co-response teams, and he shared there is about 20% of the responders we ideally need in LA County. Law enforcement strongly supports the efforts being made to get resources.

Lastly, Dr. Sherin commented that we need enough receiving and stabilizing facilities to keep people off the street, and out of jail and hospitals. If they can't be taken to a place of residence, they need to go to either urgent care or a crisis residential facility to avoid going back to the street and out of jail.

He mentioned the received funding to hire national experts who have set up emergency response systems, and they are helping with a full landscape analysis. The County aims for a relationship and contract with West Hollywood to draw down money from federal government for certain types of services and bring assets to the community.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, West Hollywood, spoke in favor of the speaker and the acknowledgment of the multiple layers of homelessness.

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister thanked Public Safety Commissioner Tory Berger for connecting the City with Dr. Sherin. She commented that most of the unhoused members of the West Hollywood community suffer from mental health concerns. She inquired if the County has enough mental health facilities to accommodate those people.

Dr. Sherin responded that some of the data is misleading. The Department of Mental Health states 5-10% of unhoused population are mentally ill. He expressed the need to stratify the different populations of homeless (fractured family, substance abuse, socioeconomic reasons) which thus far has not been done thoughtfully. We have a public health and safety emergency in LA, and he believes in a more aggressive and humanitarian approach since we are a decade behind. He stated the County has 4,000 treatment beds but the analysis revealed we need 8,000. The field of mental health overall is underfunded.

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister asked about Measure HHH, and if the County is directing the money in the right way. Dr. Sherin responded that we could be more strategic in our investments where the goal is a community where health care, education, training, healthy meals are provided.

Dr. Sherin briefed further that LA County is trying to get enough funds to test the concept of temporary housing, and \$100 million over 3 years. The program Home Pilot has guaranteed resources, seeking the severely mentally ill to ensure appropriate care and no waste of resources.

Councilmember Shyne commented that City staff will reach out to Dr. Sherin regarding detailed status of programs for a city to city partnership. She mentioned the development and recent Council approval for a West Hollywood behavioral crisis response unit, which would be a mobile health response without using law enforcement.

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister introduced Ryan Vienna of the MET Team. Mr. Vienna commented that the MET Team is working collaboratively with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and their focus is on acute and imminent threat situations that go beyond the capabilities of the DMH. He advocated for more co-response teams also.

Item 3.B. Development of Citywide Behavioral Health Crisis Response Unit

Motion by Councilmember Shyne to table item and approved.

Items from Subcommittee Members:

Mayor Pro Tempore Meister requested that residents who live in affected areas be invited to this subcommittee meeting.

Councilmember Shyne indicated that the September meeting is during the League of California Cities conference, and she will be away, so an alternative date is needed.

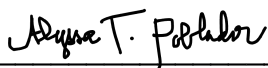
Items from Staff:

Strategic Initiatives Manager Corri Planck noted that the Homeless Initiative Update Town Hall meeting has been set for October 27th.

Public Comment:

Michael Wojtkielewicz, West Hollywood, spoke about migrant children refugee housing given by sponsorship and family members.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 A.M. to the next subcommittee meeting to be determined at 8:30 AM via teleconference.



Alyssa T. Poblador, Recording Secretary

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