

# CITY OF ANAHEIM

## HOMELESS POLICY WORKING GROUP

### MINUTES

July 27, 2017

Agenda Posting: A complete copy of the Homeless Policy Working Group Agenda was posted on Monday, July 24, 2017 at 8:30 a.m. at Anaheim City Hall and at the Anaheim West Tower.

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:38 a.m. on Thursday, July 27, 2017 at the Gordon Hoyt Conference Room, Anaheim West Tower, 201 S. Anaheim Blvd., Anaheim, California.

#### II. INTRODUCTIONS

Introductions took place around the room. The following Policy Group Members were present:

1. Natalie Wieckert, County of Orange
2. Mike Robbins, People's Taskforce
3. Eve Garrow, ACLU
4. Linda Lehnkering, Poverty Taskforce
5. Captain Eric Carter, City of Anaheim
6. Matt Bates, CityNet
7. Mayor Pro Tem James Vanderbilt, City of Anaheim
8. Council Member Jose Moreno, City of Anaheim
9. Council Member Denise Barnes, City of Anaheim
10. Jesse Ben-Ron, State Assembly
11. Norma Campos Kurtz, State Assembly
12. Calvin Sung, State Senate
13. Jay Burress, Visit Anaheim

The following staff members were present:

Kristine Ridge, Assistant City Manager  
Jackie Rodarte, Sr. Policy Aide to Council Member Moreno  
Leonie Mulvihill, Deputy City Attorney  
Theresa Bass, Acting City Clerk  
Brent Dennis, Director of Community Services  
Helen Myers, Sr. Policy Aide to MPT Vanderbilt  
Sal Figueroa, Council Aide to Council Member Moreno  
Lauren Gold, Communications Specialist  
Maggie Solorio, Executive Assistant

The following community members were present:

Lou Noble, Homeless Advocate  
Wes Jones, Anaheim Resident in District 3  
R. Joshua Collins, Founder of Homeless Advocates for Christ  
Kevin Park

Jeannine Robins, Anaheim Resident in District 4  
Abby McLaughlin, Student at Chapman University  
Tim Houchen, Homeless Advocate  
Liliana Moreno, Student at Price Elementary  
Bill Taormina, Clean City

III. SELECTION OF CHAIR – ACTION ITEM

James Vanderbilt nominated Jose Moreno as Chair of the Homeless Policy Working Group, seconded by Mike Robbins and Motion Carried unanimously.

IV. BRIEF TRAINING ON BROWN ACT/ROBERT’S RULES OF ORDER

Deputy City Attorney Leonie Mulvihill gave a 20-minute Power Point Presentation to familiarize the members of the Homeless Working Group with the basic rules of the Brown Act and the Robert’s Rules of Order.

Chair Jose Moreno asked what are the requirements in terms of a time limit that individuals may have for public comment and if that is something that can be decided by the body.

Ms. Mulvihill explained the committee could set reasonable rules for how it wants to conduct business. Generally, three minutes is thought to be sufficient time for somebody to state his or her purpose. The committee can certainly allow more or less time, though she does not recommend giving less than two minutes. Ultimately, it is up to the body and the chair to make sure the meetings are conducted effectively, allowing the public to speak in a matter that they deem reasonable.

Chair Jose Moreno also asked, in the interest of time and depending on how many members want to comment, can they shift the amount of time folks have to talk at each meeting. Ms. Mulvihill stated that is allowed, she would prefer the committee set a base line standard of two-minutes, but certainly it is not unheard of when there is a particular item to shorten that amount of time. Case by case basis can be done, the preference is to set that time and stick within that time.

V. PURPOSE STATEMENT, OBJECTIVES AND MEETING SCHEDULE

Chair Moreno thanked the panel members on behalf of the City Council and the residents of Anaheim for participating in this working group. In trying to capture the spirit of the panel and its purpose, Chair Moreno put together the following draft purpose and objectives for review, discussion and potential approval during the meeting or at the following meeting.

City of Anaheim Homeless Policy Working Group Draft Purpose and Objectives  
Purpose Statement: Develop and recommend a policy framework, and ensuing policies that seek to effectively and compassionately address homelessness in Anaheim.

Objectives: Via examination of current policies, public input and testimony, and review of sample promising policies the working group will:

- Develop a policy framework embedded in compassion and spirit of kindness
- Develop policy recommendations that seek to reaffirm and/or restore balance in effectively addressing resident and community concerns
- Develop recommendations to align city policies and resources with county and state efforts for greater effectiveness and efficiency

Council Member Vanderbilt asked for additional time to review the purpose and objectives and give recommendations at the next meeting.

Council Woman Barnes expressed for her the most apparent problem is the public's perception of Anaheim and how the homeless are treated. She thinks it would be good to present to the public various police scenarios as they approach the homeless. Maybe even give the guidelines of what the police can and cannot do. She thinks the police are doing a great job. She lives next to a park and would like more police surveillance. At the same time, it is a park and she does not understand when she sees the videos why the people are forced out other than they have a lot of baggage with them so that would make them assume that they are homeless. You can't just stereo-type somebody when in fact they are just trying to have the next hour of peace and quiet in a park, but the neighbors perceive it a different way.

Mike Robbins thought it would be important to share with the public the statistics and the fact that homeless people are attacked far more often than homeless people would ever hurt anyone else. Chair Moreno asked Mr. Robbins for those statistics.

Calvin Sung asked if there was end date to the working group and suggested, that education be added to the objectives.

Kristine Ridge responded there is a timeline. The working group was established with a specific goal in mind. Staff anticipates that the meetings will occur every two weeks through the end of October, which hopefully will give the group enough time to kick off the program, do research, dialogue, build policy consensus, create recommendations and prepare a final report that would be presented to the City Council.

After some discussion, the working group continued the approval/adoption of the Purpose and Objectives to the next meeting so that the working group has additional time to review them and possibly provide additional comments and/or additions.

Chair Moreno moved on to review the Homeless Policy Working Group Meeting Schedule and Milestones proposed as follows:

#### Homeless Policy Working Group Meeting Schedule

July 27, 2017	Thursday	8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
August 11, 2017	Friday	8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
August 25, 2017	Friday	8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
September 8, 2017	Friday	8:30 a.m. -10:00 a.m.
September 22, 2017	Friday	8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

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October 6, 2017	Friday	8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
October 20, 2017	Friday	8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

## Homeless Policy Working Group Milestones

Project Kick Off/Orientation	1st Meeting
Research & Dialogue	2nd, 3'd, and 4th Meetings
Build Policy Consensus	5th Meeting
Create Recommendations	6th Meeting
Finalize Report to Council	7th Meeting

Kristine Ridge noted that for the next meeting staff hopes to bring a panel of homeless individuals and that the members of the panel will have an opportunity to listen to their stories and ask them questions. Staff thought it would a great way to get to the heart-of-the-matter and see who these individuals are. Chair Moreno asked members of the public and members of the panel if there are individuals who they are working with that it would be important for the group to hear their experiences and their perspective, if they could please recommend those folks to Assistant City Manager Kristine Ridge. They are hoping to have three or four folks to give some public testimony and share their experience.

Kristine Ridge further noted that staff is also working on a tentative schedule to bring individuals from different state and county organizations to present information in addressing the issues. They also want to have service providers come in and explain what they encounter on a daily basis and what their challenges are servicing the homeless population so that the panel may have a good representation from all the different components that are working on the homeless issue.

## VI. OVERVIEW OF CITY'S APPROACH TO DATE

Assistant City Manager explained in detail what was included in the binders provided to the working group.

Kristine also gave an overview of the City's approach to address homelessness. Many years ago, the only city employee that ever had anything to do with homeless was the City's frontline, the police officers. At that time, they were ill equipped with what they were encountering. Fast forward to now; the City has evolved substantially in the programs and the efforts that it uses to address homelessness in the City. The Police Department alone has evolved tremendously, they have specially trained officers, they collaborate with mental health clinicians and they perform weekly outreaches to name a few. The program they have put together is phenomenal and it has been recognized in magazine articles and duplicated in other law enforcement agencies. Not only the Police Department, but the City itself has evolved and we now involve multiple City departments in attempting to address this issue.

The current City Council has made it a priority to address homelessness in the city and the City's approach has been a dual-approach, it is aimed at both improving the life of the homeless and addressing the impacts to the local businesses and to the residents. Having recognition to that approach, they also realized early on that local government is not the

solution to solving homelessness and that they cannot do it alone. It is going to take extensive collaboration to address this issue with other governmental entities including faith-based and nonprofit service providers. With that in mind, in January of 2014, the City contracted with CityNet to help facilitate a collaborative. Since their inception, which started as pilot program with very firm performance objectives has evolved into a multi-year contract and since inception, they have conducted 779 street exits. Staff is very pleased with those results and though they recognize it is not enough, they realize there are still a lot more homeless people that they have to address, but the CityNet's program has had a compassionate approach and has achieved some fabulous things.

In addition to the collaborative, the City also has a number of programs. Anaheim is very fortunate to have its own housing authority, so it has made substantial progress on bringing housing units specifically for homeless. The most recent one is Rockwood Apartments where 48 homeless families are now living under a roof. The Housing Authority has also done two very creative programs. Partnered with the Anaheim Union High School District, they can identify kids in our schools on the verge of homelessness and getting them housing. The City is kicking off another program where they are addressing the chronic homeless and providing them vouchers for housing with wrap around services.

At the regional level, Anaheim actively collaborated with the County of Orange to help them find a site to open a first-ever year-round shelter and multi-service center. That is now open and running and has a 100-bed capacity. Eventually, they will go to a 200-bed capacity. The shelter is in Anaheim and not only did Anaheim assist in helping them find a site, they also contributed a half-million dollars. So regionally, the City of Anaheim has reached out and done a lot to provide services to the homeless.

The year-round shelter, Bridges at Kraemer is a county facility operated by Mercy House and opened in May. The full capacity of the beds was reached within three weeks of opening. They have served 110 individuals since opening day; they have transitioned three into permanent housing and secured vouchers for two others. Even though it is only a partial opening, they have instituted services at the center. They are going to have a more robust multi-service center when they open.

Kristine noted that was a very brief overview and that if there is any specific program that the working group wants to hear more details of; she could put it on a future agenda.

Matt Bates from CityNet thanked staff for putting the binder together and encouraged the members of the committee to read the documents provided. He agrees that if they are going to develop policy frameworks that context is critically important. He also encourages everyone in the room to not only read, but to encourage others to read because his experience in engaging the public in these matters is that very often they are not aware that these documents exist and if they do they have not read them. The more people that are educated on what is being done and what has been done and the limitations, the better everyone can understand the reality.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public comments were open for 2 minutes.

R. Joshua Collins stated one major problem with the homeless ordinance is that it is selectively enforced. It is as if you pass a law that says no white shirts in the park, but you only target certain people with white shirts. No shelter was previously offered, so reimbursement is owed to the homeless community. A lot of damage has been done with the no camping ordinance. The chief has lied, not just abandoned property was taken, but property that was not abandoned was also taken. They have video to prove that. Police officers should be ticketing criminal activity, not life-sustaining activity. The City needs to decriminalize poverty. Jesus was homeless and it is not a crime to be poor. In addition, this committee needs to have homeless people represented. He does not believe people should be forced into shelters. If people are homeless and in a park but not committing a crime, why do they need to be put into a shelter? They are not hurting anybody, but police comes to ticket them and tell them they are going to take them to jail if they do not take the shelter offer.

Wes Jones stated the City does not have permanent affordable housing available. The County also does not have permanent supportive housing and they do not put money in their budget for the future. He stated the model of the Kraemer Shelter is to put people in, they give them services and then they are to move on to permanent supportive housing. There is an 8-10 year wait for permanent supportive housing with the county, so does not see the shelter as being a rousing success under the current model. The panel needs to create a new type of thinking, safe zones or another type of solution.

Lou Noble stated criminalization of the homeless is not working. The City has suppressed them. He stated there are people that are being oppressed and that is why they have so many homeless with mental illnesses and drug addiction. The women, the elderly and the disabled that are out there on the streets are in harm because not only are they being preyed upon by the drug addicts but also by law enforcement. He feels there are some police officers that try to help, but there are those that do not and abuse the ordinance. Lou wants to repeal the camping ordinance and put a stop to the confiscation and abuse of power that the police have.

Jeannine Robins expressed she is very happy that this working advisory board has been formed. She thanked everyone sitting on the panel and advised them she has very high expectations of them.

Tim Houchen handed out a document he prepared for the Anaheim Homeless Work Group labeled Community Development vs. Public Safety: A current overview of Anaheim's policies on homelessness and evidence-based policy recommendations for efficient solutions to address homelessness. He wants to know what type of funding would be contingent if federal funding in form of ESG's, HOME and CDBG's were to be drastically cut back. He would like the panel to find ways that the federal funding can continue. He would like to see the panel figure out some topics and each time they have a meeting, then they can bring a couple of speakers to talk on that particular subject.

Bill Taormina thanked the working group for taking the time to serve on the panel. He stated homelessness is one of the most important issues that is being dealt with in the region. The trends show that the more growth and success they have in the business community in Anaheim, so grows the problem with homelessness. He suggested that the panel find a way to use that success to solve this problem. The answers are there, they just have to put the resources together. He does not look at homeless as homeless, but as resource-less. These folks are resource-less, it is not just homes they need, they many other things. He urged the panel to include the business community, to ask the business community to help them. The business community has the ability to run quicker and faster through private sources to solve this problem and marshal those resources quicker in accordance with the City's rules and regulations. Call upon college professors, graduate students etc. from local schools and the medical community, doctors, psychologists. He would like to see some of those folks on this panel as well because mental illness is a huge part of this. Also, break the panel in to smaller working groups and pepper in some of the business community, so that they can help them offline to bring answers and then bring it back to the full board. The answer is out there, they are very grateful as citizens for the panel's sacrifices that they are going to make to help those who cannot help themselves.

Kevin Park heard great comments at the meeting and wants to know if the audio will be available or if there is an email where people can submit their comments.

Kristine Ridge responded at the conclusion of the meeting, the audio recording will be available on the website under Major Initiatives, Homeless, right hand corner.

#### CLOSING COMMENTS

James Vanderbilt recently learned that Mr. Taormina is helping the City expand the storage center facilities we have and though the specifics are still being worked out, he certainly has backed up his words with his efforts and wanted to acknowledge that and thanked Mr. Taormina for his involvement in homelessness in many different ways.

Chair Jose Moreno asked if it would be of interest to the group to shift where they meet so that they may be more accessible to other parts of the city. He also asked members for suggestions of space where they can convene a meeting. He also asked for microphones for the next meeting so that the audience can hear more clearly.

#### VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m. to Friday, August 11, 2017 at 8:30 a.m.