

Board of Directors — Special Meeting

March 23, 2020, at 2 p.m.

Minutes of virtual meeting



Notice: This special meeting of the SJCoC Board of Directors was called in accordance with Section VIII, Part E of the SJCoC Charter by Chair Jon Mendelson to facilitate needed coordination and action regarding the COVID-19 public health crisis.

Call to Order

2:02 p.m.

Roll Call

Jon Mendelson, Kate Hutchinson, Randy Pinnelli, Carrie Wright, Bill Mendelson, Mike Kelly, Jenn Rowell, John Ledbetter, Britton Kimball, Pete Ragsdale, Edward Figueroa, Adam Cheshire, Matt Garber

Minutes

1. Minutes from 03-12-2020 meeting

A correction from Edward Figueroa was requested to better reflect his statement regarding the idea that there “needs to be one position from the agency that is the HMIS Lead.” Motion by Bill Mendelson. Second by John Ledbetter. Approved 13-0.

Public Comment

1. Public Comment on issues that appear on the 03-23-20 agenda

No Public Comment was made.

Discussion, Information, and Action items

1. Update regarding planning and action in response to COVID-19 for persons without permanent housing

Jon Mendelson provided a short recap of the SJCoC’s stated strategic priorities for responding to COVID-19, including support for front-line shelters and outreach teams; obtaining space for those without housing who require quarantine or convalescence, actionable referral pathways for those without housing to health care resources, and prevention of homelessness for all populations who are losing income due to the public health crisis. A letter stating these priorities as guidance was distributed to the

SJC Board of Supervisors and the city councils/city leadership of Lodi, Manteca, Stockton, and Tracy on March 17.

Adam Cheshire provided an update regarding resources being made available by the State of California. The state is making some money available through SB 89, and said that it's clear that the County is expected to direct HHAP funding toward a response to COVID-19 as well. The State and County are working to open hotels and motels that can be used for the homeless during the COVID-19 response, including details on who will provide case management, health care support, food, and other support services. There is a sample agreement for leases between the County, and David Tolliver from General Services is acting as the County's lead.

Carrie Wright provided an update on the trailers the City of Stockton is getting from the State that can be used for the homeless. For quick deployment, the trailers need to be located where there are RV hookups and appropriate infrastructure rather than simply located on city land or next door to existing emergency shelters, and this effort is ongoing.

Jon Mendelson expressed his hope that hotels and trailers could be considered strategically and as long-term resources for the homeless beyond the COVID-19 crisis timescale. Matt Garber commented that if hotels and trailers are to be used as long-term resources, those locations should be carefully considered. Jon Mendelson stressed the need for this to be a countywide, not just Stockton-centric, approach.

Kayce Rayne updated the Board about SJCoC efforts made to research protocols for service providers to screen homeless individuals for COVID-19 and refer them to appropriate providers of health care and resources. The research also contemplates how to prepare homeless households for isolation, using service providers with rapport with the population as information conduits, and the importance of tracking time and resources spent on this effort in order to maximize potential for reimbursement later on down the road. This effort is being sourced from other communities and local public health care officials and resources, and will be ready for distribution sometime this week. The SJCoC Board approved this effort and the release of the resources, provided the resource is vetted by San Joaquin County public health liaisons and the Chair. Approved by unanimous consent.

Kristen Birtwhistle updated the Board about a United Way-Community Partnership for Families effort to provide locations for the collection of cleaning supplies for emergency shelters and food providers. Today was the first day the operation was open, and will continue to be open rain or shine.

Adam Cheshire provided an update that the state is making "truckloads" of supplies available, and St. Mary's Dining Room was suggested (and accepted by St. Mary's CEO Edward Figueroa) as a drop-off point because of its warehousing capabilities. These supplies will be available to service providers countywide.

Carrie Wright provided a brief update on the City of Stockton's \$1.2 million appropriation of general fund money toward a COVID-19 response, and stated the City Council will help determine actual expenditure of this money at a regular meeting on March 24, 2020. She ensured the SJCoC that she would make sure the SJCoC Strategic Priorities regarding COVID-19 response were forwarded to the person at the City who typically provides the City Council with items for the meetings.

2. Emergency expenditures from San Joaquin Continuum of Care

The State is providing about \$540,000 from SB 89 directly to the SJCoC to respond to the COVID-19 crisis, and about \$2 million total between the SJCoC, San Joaquin County, and City of Stockton. There has also been a relaxing of Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention rules to allow for expenditure of those funds during the crisis. Jon Mendelson asked for a Board discussion regarding the typical process for the SJCoC to fairly disburse funds vs. the need to quickly make funding available, a challenge given that details from the State are still being determined.

Peter Ragsdale stated that the most important thing is to make sure money gets on the street quickly, and that “sound business practices” and a reasonable action plan and accounting of where the money is spent should be sufficient to show a good-faith process. An exhaustive process would be “ill-advised.” Matt Garber added that if it is framed as being utilized toward obtaining a state resource, there wouldn’t be reason to go through an extensive bidding process. Peter suggested there could be an application period, but a percentage of resources to every organization that applies. Money spent expeditiously is better in this case, he said, than an extensive rate and rank process. Bill Mendelson stated there is still the need for dollars to match eligibility uses and local priorities, and that there is still the need to identify what sources of money will be strategically used for what purposes. SB 89 is obviously for an emergency response, but HHAP there needs to be a discussion about scrapping the HHAP spending prioritization process in favor of a small group being able to make decisions rather than the original community-inclusive process. Adam Cheshire said that the COVID-19 crisis may make it necessary for changes in HHAP plans to be made. He stated that “it’s clear to me” that local communities will be pivoting to use HHAP and HEAP toward COVID-19 response, and that the State sees SB 89 as a supplement to HHAP. Jon Mendelson suggested that clarity from the State regarding both SB 89 and HHAP would be welcome and would allow the Board to make more strategic decisions regarding its funding allotments and recommendations for the County and City allotments.

Edward Figueroa and John Ledbetter agreed that the discussion of SB 89 expenditures and HHAP realignment needs to be considered in its own meeting. Jon Mendelson proposed a meeting for Friday, March 27, with the time at the urging of a Board member for 8 a.m.

John Ledbetter asked for a standing meeting time, whether it was once a week or twice a week. Jon Mendelson responded that the Friday morning meeting would be made a standing meeting for the duration of the public health crisis, but that rapidly evolving circumstances make scheduling additional meetings more appropriate on an as-needed basis.

Additional Items concerning COVID-19 response

No additional comments

Board Comments

No additional comments

Adjournment

3:21 p.m.

Next meeting

8 a.m. Friday, March 27 — virtual meeting

Board Membership: Adam Cheshire, Edward Figueroa, Matt Garber, Kate Hutchinson, Sgt. Mike Kelly, Britton Kimball, John Ledbetter (vice chair), Bill Mendelson, Jon Mendelson (chair), Randy Pinnelli P.A. (secretary), Peter Ragsdale, Jennifer Rowell

Minutes: Randy Pinnelli and Adam Cheshire