

Board of Directors — Regular Meeting Minutes

June 11, 2020, at 11 a.m.

Virtual meeting



Notice: This regular meeting of the SJCoC Board of Directors was called in accordance with the SJCoC Charter.

Location Notice: Because of guidance from public health officials, this meeting is being conducted virtually. Log-in information was distributed to the SJCoC General Membership:

Log-In Information:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81320321008>

Meeting ID: 813 2032 1008

One tap mobile

+16699009128,,81320321008# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Call to Order

11:02 a.m.

Roll Call

Present: Adam Cheshire, Matt Garber, Kate Hutchinson, Mike Kelly, Britton Kimball, John Ledbetter, Bill Mendelson, Randy Pinnelli (11:10 a.m.), Peter Ragsdale, Jenn Rowell (11:20 a.m.), Carrie Wright, Jon Mendelson

Absent: Edward Figueroa

Minutes

1. Minutes from 04-24-2020 meeting

No action

2. Minutes from 05-22-2020 meeting

Approved as submitted. Motion by Bill Mendelson. Second by Kate Hutchinson. Passes unanimously,

Public Comment

1. Public Comment on issues that appear on the 06-11-20 agenda

Wayne Richardson of Gospel Center Rescue Mission commented on the Strategic Plan. He believes there are two aspects that aren't covered sufficiently, drug addiction and the challenges that poses to obtaining stability and housing, and the plan's lack of focus on transitional housing, which includes at least 10 local agencies that provide that type of service. Phyllis also echoed those concerns.

Martin Ross of Ready to Work. Commented on the Strategic Plan. He said that additional outreach could be done to groups who can help communicate the benefits of helping people who are in homeless situations, such as schools, faith communities, etc.

Phyllis Grupe of the Shelter Committee also provided extensive written comments that were shared with the Board prior to the Board meeting.

Discussion, Information, and Action Items

1. Strategic Plan discussion and adoption

Amanda Wherman of HomeBase was asked to address concerns from the public comment period. She stated that a lot of time in the first section was spent trying to give the lay of the land in the community. Based on the process, the CoC and HomeBase landed on organizing the info in three core areas: Thinking structurally about how the system is coordinated; focusing on homeless crisis response such as shelter and other short-term solutions with an emphasis on shelter; focus on permanent housing solutions. This reflects the breadth and depth of what was brought together. Around drug addiction, we do have a number of references as substance use disorder treatment and the need for those services both in the intro and later on in the plan.

Jon Mendelson noted that previous Board comments were part of the Strategic Plan discussion. The Chair decided to call on each Board member present for additional comments to ensure all Board members had their voices and opinions heard before a vote on such an important topic.

Carrie Wright: A tremendous amount of input from community went into the plan and many revisions were made. No plan is going to be perfect, but I think an annual review is a good safeguard. Not sure I'm in favor of making a lot of additions or edits unless there is something glaring.

Peter Ragsdale: This is meant to be a living document. I don't think we should sacrifice hard work in the interest of making it perfect. Now we should focus on how do we make this document relevant, especially regarding exits from homelessness.

Randy Pinelli: Agreement with Carrie. It's been a long process, and I think hopefully we will at least get things started. I think it'll be nice to see it rolled out and begin to be utilized.

Bill Mendelson: (Originally was passed because he did not respond, but was offered an opportunity for comment once mute was turned off). I agree with Carrie Wright and Peter Ragsdale that the document as it stands has had a lot of input. I don't disagree with Britton Kimball's previous

comments that Housing First presents significant challenges with dealing with the unsheltered, but the real idea is if we can provide housing units and provide those same types of services as people are in that housing they will be successful. That's what Housing First is really focusing on. In some ways I agree that we could have a larger better impact if we focused on folks who had job experience, income, etc., but that right now is not where the money is. And if you want to use federal and state money, you need to focus on Housing First whether we think it works or not.

John Ledbetter: I agree with Carrie Wright and Peter Ragsdale. I don't think any of us went into this that this is a document that sits on a shelf. I see it like the Charter, that we make changes when we see we need to. The Committee is the place to make these comments and we ought to move forward.

Britton Kimball: I don't want to reinvent it, I agree with some of it but I think more things need to be included. I do think that the approach described in the plan don't help the majority of unsheltered homeless, there are people it will work well for, but there are people especially unsheltered homeless that it won't work for. I thought it was non-inclusive of those unsheltered. Will support the plan as a living document. But to be successful, it needs to address unsheltered homelessness and the reality of their existence.

Amanda commented about how the plan speaks to unsheltered homeless. The implementation addendum, which is the attached appendix, is where you really get into the nitty gritty of how you are going to implement the plan, and that's where you have flexibility.

Britton Kimball, continued: More comfortable with it in that light, but I think addiction component is a much bigger component than most people realize.

Jenn Rowell: I support what John Ledbetter was saying that it's a living document that will need updates. I think it's a great start. I have concerns about Housing First, as there is a huge misconception that it's Housing Only. It's a lot of work because it's providing services to someone to help them stay housed. Excited that we're continuing to move in that direction.

Mike Kelly: I'm kind of torn, because I know where Britton Kimball is coming from but I understand where the funding is at. I'm on the streets every day, and I hear what the homeless want to do and won't. I think a lot need rehab prior to getting into housing or shelter.

Kate Hutchinson: I thought the plan was very thoroughly researched and thought out. There are always things to add but that's what a strategic plan is for. Looking forward to digging in.

Matt Garber: I agree with many of the thoughts expressed, especially Bill Mendelson that we're following within HUD's guidelines for Housing First, but also the thoughts about how we had such a thorough vetting within the community. There is still some tension, but we aren't going to be able to necessarily have competing interests both met in one document. I feel like we've at least had a significant amount of vetting and I'm pleased with the document we have.

Edward F.: Absent

Adam Cheshire: Appreciate all the work and leadership of HomeBase. There have been a ton of good comments, and certainly what Matt Garber stated about a tension between approaches. We experience that every day. The document has been through so much that we are at a point where it is unrealistic to address all of those concerns, but I feel those concerns have been addressed to the point where we are ready to move forward. Minor changes in terms of strengthening language here and there, no problem, but get out of this meeting with a document that the SJCoC Board says is ready for consumption, the next step is to move this forward to governing bodies and try to get some broader support.

Jon Mendelson: Asked for minor updates to be made to Page 28 stating that the System Performance Measures were adopted by the SJCoC Board as well as the System Performance and Evaluation Committee, and to Page 29 to recognize that the System Performance and Evaluation Committee has endorsed a “no wrong door” approach to accessing services, and has not endorsed a single point of system entry. Asked for major update by eliminating the breakout box regarding a “Funding Advisory Group” — Concerned that this highlight will be used as an opportunity to hijack the process and circumvent the SJCoC, which has been set as the backbone agency regarding a response to homelessness in San Joaquin County and Stockton through extensive work over the past 5 years, including grassroots organization of service providers and homeless individuals, technical consulting by HUD, and consulting with outside think tanks. I fear that any Funding Advisory Group that is outside the SJCoC will be hijacked by bad-faith actors who don’t understand or care about the work that is happening, the challenges of that work, or the restrictions so many providers face because of strings tied to that funding. Minor updates – Page 28 and Page 29. My extensive comments about the Funding Advisory Group.

Motion by Bill Mendelson to adopt the San Joaquin Response to Homelessness strategic plan with all modifications proposed by Jon Mendelson Bill.

Carrie Wright: This item was discussed in Committee and it was recommend that it be left in. I would support a motion to fix the two small items but not the additional change.

Motion dies for lack of a second.

Motion by Bill Mendelson to adopt the San Joaquin Response to Homelessness strategic plan with minor modifications proposed by Jon Mendelson, leaving in language regarding the Funding Advisory Council. Second by Carrie Wright.

Roll call vote: Adam Cheshire y, Edward Figueroa absent, Matt Garber y, Kate Hutchinson y, Mike Kelly y, Britton Kimball abstain, John Ledbetter y, Bill Mendelson y, Randy Pinnelli y, Peter Ragsdale y, Jenn Rowell y, Carrie Wright y, Jon Mendelson y

Approved 10-0.

2. Update on Project Roomkey and COVID-19 response

Discussion of planning to help discharge homeless served by Project Roomkey and other Non-Congregate Shelter stood up to address COVID-19 health crisis.

Primary strategy to focus on re-housing support for those in Roomkey.

Bill Mendelson: For folks in Project Roomkey, the real issue is that there don't appear to be the number of available permanent housing units that people could move into. Of course, these dollars are supposed to be spent in a short period of time, and many of the folks in PR are going to need continuing assistance past the timeframe of the ESG money.

Carrie Wright: New ESG money has a two-year window. Internally workshopping how to get the money out the door.

Strategic Planning Committee and Shelter Committee could help provide additional thoughts or guidance about a more robust plan to help Roomkey residents into permanent housing.

Bill Mendelson: Before this goes to any committee, they should have a clear idea of as to how the funds can be used so that they don't waste their time.

Chair proposed to work with committees, as well as the City of Stockton and San Joaquin County to help with discharge planning.

3. Update on timeline for local HHAP Notice of Funding Availability
Update from ad hoc committee on HHAP application process on establishing a NOFA to solicit local projects.

Carrie Wright: Good progress has been made on the local NOFA.

The Board agreed through unanimous consent that it wants to review the NOFA before it's sent to the Stockton City Council and San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors.

4. SJCoC Local Rank Policy for FY2020 CoC Program Competition **Added to agenda on 06-08-2020**

Bill Mendelson: The work of committee chair Melanie Estarziau has been exceptional and extensive.

Motion by Bill Mendelson to adopt as submitted by the System Performance and Evaluation Committee. Second by Kate Hutchinson. **Passes unanimously.**

Updates from SJCoC Committees

1. The Coordinated Entry Committee chair will step down. Kay Rhustaller deserves a lot of credit. Matt Garber has volunteered to chair that committee. On hold right now just because of current circumstances. Reconvene, and work on Strategic Plan elements.

2. Education Committee: John Ledbetter is working with Adam, committee to move forward with those recommendations. Had email convo with most of our committee. Hoping by July to be in person.
3. Data Committee: Hasn't been meeting, but HMIS Lead Agency has provided a considerable amount of info to the County and City and the Shelter Committee. An update on Project Roomkey: 64 people enrolled, and the original plan was for all single adults, but there are two couples being housed. Coverage in HMIS of motel but also of the Gospel Center COVID space is at 100%, and there are ongoing conversations with Dignity's Alcove to have trailers housing veterans identified as at risk from COVID included.

Additional Items and Updates

Board Comments

Adam Cheshire: There is a plan to include Curt Klaus and some of his colleagues to present to the General Membership and SJCoC Board of Directors.

Adjournment

Motion by Bill Mendelson. Second by Mike Kelly. Adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

Next meeting

11 a.m. July 9, 2020

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