



Las Vegas

Agenda Item No.: 57.

**AGENDA SUMMARY PAGE
CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF: JANUARY 3, 2007**

DEPARTMENT: NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES
DIRECTOR: STEPHEN HARSIN

Consent Discussion

SUBJECT: Report on the status of the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition (SNRPC) Committee on Homelessness (CoH) regional effort - All Wards

Fiscal Impact:

No Impact Augmentation Required
 Budget Funds Available

Amount:

Funding Source:

Dept./Division: Neighborhood Services/Initiatives

PURPOSE/BACKGROUND:

On September 25, 2003, the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition (SNRPC) established the Committee on Homelessness (CoH) to ensure that there are adequate resources and supportive services available to assist those most in need in Southern Nevada. The CoH is comprised of representatives from the city of Las Vegas (Orlando Sanchez), Clark County, Clark County School District, State of Nevada, law enforcement and area service providers.

RECOMMENDATION:

Report only no action required.

BACKUP DOCUMENTATION:

1. Agenda Memo
2. Submitted at meeting Pamphlet of the Las Vegas Police Department H.E.L.P. Team by Mayor Goodman

Minutes:

No motion required. A report was given.

STEPHEN HARSIN, Director of Neighborhood Services, indicated that this matter was placed on the Agenda at the Mayor's request. MAYOR GOODMAN explained that he was left perplexed after a few homeless individuals were given a perfect opportunity to receive social services and decided against it. Therefore, he asked ASSISTANT COUNTY MANAGER DARRELL MARTIN to touch on that and try to explain during his presentation, so that he can perhaps make sense of it.

ASSISTANT COUNTY MANAGER MARTIN, who also serves as the Chair of the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition Committee on Homelessness, indicated to the Mayor that he had experienced some of what the providers deal with on a daily basis. And it was the Mayor that made the issue of homelessness regional, which prompted the creation of the Committee on

CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF: JANUARY 03, 2007

Homelessness, to broaden the scope.

Although each jurisdiction has a separate program to address homelessness, the various jurisdictions try to work together and coordinate services. And even though 12 people chose to refuse services, there are many success stories that do not get mentioned or receive any publicity. Over 200 people have received assistance this fiscal year through a \$4 million grant from the State.

SHANNON WEST indicated that the monies from AB-580 were utilized specifically to fund a mobile crisis intervention program and case management program for the chronically homeless, or those that have been homeless for longer than one year and have had the most difficulty. The ladder program is not about transitional living, but rather about ending homelessness for those people that enter the program. One of the mobile crisis intervention programs targets youth to keep them from repeating the cycle of homelessness as adults. She mentioned other programs, but most noteworthy is the Chronic Case Management Program. This is a new program wherein the clients are given the kind of wrap-around services needed to help them live independently.

COUNCILMAN REESE remarked that feeding the homeless in the park enables them. There will always be a certain amount of homeless people that will refuse help, and they will remain homeless until institutional help is forced on them.

As the representative of the area with the most homeless centers, COUNCILMAN WEEKLY said he is trying to find ways of mitigating the issue and coordinating the services, because many times agencies take different directions. Regarding the nighttime intervention event, he asked if volunteers would be present to speak with many of the men and women that have formed encampments on Main Street and Forecaster Lane. LINDA RANDALL DOYLE, Founder and Executive Director of Straight From The Streets, answered that most services available during the day are made available during the night. But her organization cannot cover the entire Valley. The issue of homelessness was out of control even 25 years ago when she started volunteering. Part of the issue is lack of manpower.

COUNCILMAN WEEKLY insisted and asked if Neighborhood Services was contacted, and any other necessary organizations, to ensure that all aspects are covered and that there is a collaborative effort. MS. DOYLE indicated that her organization cannot force people to become involved, but she leverages her resources, and she contacted every organization she could remember. She noted that her program is intense, and the subjects have to agree to commit to certain conditions. COUNCILMAN WEEKLY noted that the various agencies have to come together for the betterment of mankind and not worry about who gets credit.

MYRNA PEELY, Social Services with Help of Southern Nevada, added that one of the primary responsibilities of the groups that came together was to help coordinate with the various agencies. She introduced some individuals who have worked the streets and have achieved some successes. She then introduced some of the clients, KEISHA HILL, WILLIAM OLSEN, JOHNNA HELDMAN, MICHELLE WORSING, JAMES WALKER, BRENDA HAWKINS

CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF: JANUARY 03, 2007

and an UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER. Each of them shared their story and how the program they entered into has helped them succeed. The counselors walked them through problems and approached them on the street and offered various ways in which they could be helped. Many people want to be helped, but sometimes the bureaucracies they have to go through with different organizations make them renounce their efforts. MRS.

HELDMAN pointed out that the program she entered into is the only program she is aware of that helps couples. Also, the counselors are there and ready to assist in anyway possible. MR. WALKER said he and his minor daughter received assistance without being reported to child services. MS. HAWKINS noted that she was left homeless through a fraudulent housing program. She received assistance through the City's EVOLVE program thanks to COUNCILMAN BROWN, who subsequently set up a hotline for victims of this fraud.

MAYOR GOODMAN was surprised to hear all the success stories with all the assistance being offered. It appears that MS. DOYLE'S program is the only program that is helping. MS. DOYLE interjected that her program is only one of others under one umbrella. Only MR. WALKER and MS. WORSING are her clients. MS. WEST noted that the programs spoken about are for the chronic homeless who are unable to access some of the traditional resources.

MS. WEST advised that the chronic management program was part of a pilot project that will end June 2007. It has been evaluated, and there is a desire to increase the number of street outreach teams. There are also many other significant efforts underway.

COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN said that the City has taken a lot of positive steps to help the homeless. Nevertheless, she asked MS. WEST for her recommendation on what the City's next step should be. MS. WEST indicated that everyone involved has worked hard to create the processes. It is important to allow the various organizations to come back periodically and give a status report. COUNCILWOMAN TARKANIAN added that hopefully in the future assistance can be given to the mentally ill. MS. WEST indicated that it is already part of a legislative initiative. MAYOR GOODMAN encouraged the testimony givers to speak to other homeless individuals and encourage them to accept help.

AL HESSER stated that all the testimony was very uplifting, and it was nice to see that at least three speakers defeated the stereotype for the homeless. He noted that women and children make up 45 percent of the homeless population, and, if people are rejecting the services offered, it probably means they are not well thought out. Forty-two percent of the homeless in this country are Black, versus thirty-nine percent White, which, in his opinion, should greatly concern COUNCILMAN WEEKLY.