

Homeless Policy Steering Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes | August 12, 2020

Online Zoom Meeting | 3:00 PM-4:30 PM

1. Welcome. Call to Order: 3:03 PM

2. Roll Call

HPSC Voting Members in Attendance:

Elected Officials

County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Damon Connolly

Mayor – City of Belvedere

James Campbell

Community Development

Community Development Agency:

Jillian Zeiger (proxy for Molly Kron)

Public Housing Agency

Marin Housing Authority:

Michelle Taniguchi

Consumer Representative

Bill Hale

Faith-Based Organizations

Marin Organizing Committee:

Pat Langley

Homeless Service Providers

St. Vincent de Paul:

Howard Schwartz

Ritter Center:

Community Action Marin:

Chandra Alexandre

Homeless Housing Providers

Homeward Bound:

Paul Fordham, Mary Kay Sweeney

Center Point:

Marc Hering

Buckelew:

Connie Mann

Veteran's Services

HHS Veteran Services:

Spence Casey

Employment Services

Downtown Streets Team:

Zoe Neil (proxy for Karen Strolia)

Women Helping All People:

Royce McLemore

Youth

Side by Side:

Laura Taylor

Older Adults

Aging Action Initiative:

Chrisula Asimos (joined after action items)

Others in attendance:

Carrie Sager - Marin HHS, HPSC Staff

Ashley Hart McIntyre - Marin HHS, HPSC Staff

Tara Ozes – Homebase

3. Introductions/Announcements

- a. Bill Hale shared an update on equity participation and share appreciation mortgages, as a strategy to entice sellers for Project Homekey purposes; this strategy could afford a better price to the seller for acquisition of properties;

- b. Damon Connolly commented that we're in the market for a motel/hotel, but a number of participants on the call are making headway with finding and acquiring properties for Project Homekey (update forthcoming).

4. Public Comment

- a. None

5. Approval of HPSC Draft Meeting Minutes from May 13, 2020 Quarterly Meeting and July 1, 2020 Special Meeting

- a. No discussion; Damon Connolly called for a vote.
- b. Chandra Alexandre moved to approve the draft May and July minutes. James Campbell seconded the motion.
- c. Bill Hale abstained from the vote. All others in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

6. Approval of 2020 CoC Competition New Project Scoring Tool

- a. Action to approve the 2020 Marin CoC Competition New Project Scoring Tool
- b. Tara Ozes from Homebase led the discussion; the 2020 draft CoC Competition New Project Scoring Tools are unchanged from the 2019 version, because the 2020 CoC Competition NOFA has not yet been released (and it is unclear if a competition will take place this year, or if it takes place, if it will be similar to past years or more of an abbreviated project-renewal process).
- c. James Campbell moved to approve the 2020 CoC Competition New Project Scoring Tool; Howard Schwartz seconded the motion.
- d. All in favor, none opposed. Motion carried.

7. COVID-19 Update

- a. Ashley Hart McIntyre provided an update on Project Homekey, and the Marin County COVID-19 response: The county has done a variety of things, included establishing handwashing stations, port-o-potties at locations to help those unsheltered maintain hygiene, supplemented meals at St. Vincent de Paul of Marin's. The County has provided outreach workers and case workers; for those who are particularly vulnerable due to COVID-19, the county has been operating 3 hotels – 2 for single adults, 1 for families, which serve 145 individuals all total; Project Homekey will be building on the success of Project Roomkey.
- b. Ashley continued, saying that the Homekey program will provide \$600M across California for acquisition of property for permanent housing, and interim housing to convert to permanent housing in the near future. Today, the County will be submitting an application for a Tier 1 Homekey project. Per county counsel guidance, the County cannot disclose what the projects are because active negotiations are ongoing. The County doesn't have to have a contract negotiated with the properties before they apply, so the County is applying before that piece is in place.
- c. Damon Connolly asked if applications are site-specific.

- d. Ashley responded yes; there is a surprising amount of interest – the County is working with 3 properties, though a total of 5 expressed interest, but 2 couldn't make it work. It's first-come first-served, with points as a tie breaker, so hoping to submit the application tonight.
- e. James Campbell asked how many will be housed.
- f. Ashley responded, the County cannot operate all 3 projects, so if all 3 are funded the County would have to make a choice, and there are options down the road. The maximum the County can do would be 70 units, give or take; a more realistic estimate has us at 18 units, but may see up to 70.
- g. Ashley continued that in light of the fact that so many have lost income, the County and Marin Community Foundation partnered to provide a program for those who lost income, which was supplemented with \$1M and another \$1M in CDBG from the CARES Act, all routed through several partner agencies (including St. Vincent de Paul of Marin, Ritter Center, Community Action Marin, West Community, and Marin Women Helping All People). They've tried to get as much geography covered as possible, but the need was so overwhelming, and had to close the list in June, which was disappointing but not overall unexpected. \$500k was spread across 7 different agencies who had been partnering to provide more flexibility for an "off-ramp," and other sources may be donating as well. The project was limited to those with 30% Area Median Income who could demonstrate income loss with no other options. The project strove to minimize barriers - roughly 60% came from primary Spanish speakers, with hotspots in the canal and Southern Novato.
- h. Royce McLemore asked "Now what?" - So many people have been calling Women Helping All People, from past clients to new clients. We are still in the same situation as in June, employment has been cut and people can't work. What will the County do?
- i. Damon Connolly interjected that the County Board of Supervisors has extended the eviction moratorium through the end of September. Tenants can't be evicted for non-payment of rent on the basis of COVID. A huge issue is how do folks repay back rent? We have built-in a moratorium for 3 months, but this won't be long enough. There is movement at state legislative level that would make it one year, and we're supporting that, but even at the local level, will have to revisit that issue. We will look at a longer time frame. A moratorium is good, but we can't have a situation where on the day it ends we have lots of back rent that results in eviction. In the case where essential workers come down with COVID, there is potential income for them.
- j. Ashley Hart McIntyre responded that she wished she could provide more information on Isolation & Quarantine program, in response to last question, but there are some supports available and the County can send out communications from that team with more information on assistance available. According to recent estimates, state and federal partners anticipate that up to 40M people will become homeless as a result of COVID.
- k. Damon Connolly interjected that it will take a mobilization at every level of government, but we'll keep pressing at the local level.
- l. Ashley mentioned that Marin Community Foundation has a COVID Relief Fund set up, and anyone can donate money to support relief. It's not as well utilized as it could be, so would

encourage people to mobilize a donor base. We are looking at a very big shortfall for 2021-2022.

- m. Royce McLemore asked if the waiting list been taken care of.
- n. Ashley replied no, roughly 1k people who are on the list will receive a notification that they will not receive assistance through the rental assistance program. The County does see small pots of money beginning to come in, and the Marin Community Foundation just gave an extra half-million dollars. For the first time, all Rapid Rehousing and Prevention providers are working off of a single list, so there is no duplication of efforts and wasted time. This is a great example of coordination to work off of that waitlist, so folks back in May 2020 may still receive assistance. Marin Health and Human Services is still working in partnership with Public Health and health providers to plan to more aggressively test for COVID, and that needs are met in the Isolation & Quarantine program. The County is hoping before Fall gets underway to have good protocols in place.
- o. Further comments: None.

8. Coordinated Entry Update

- a. Michelle Taniguchi provided an update that to date the Marin Coordinated Entry System has housed 215 people.
- b. Carrie Sager provided programmatic updates, that the Coordinated Entry committee is currently working on the Coordinated Entry Evaluation for the year, working with Homebase to finalize this. At the next quarterly HPSC meeting, we will have updates for this year's application.
- c. There is a new version of the VI-SPDAT, and there was a consensus from providers to test it for families but not individuals at this time. Depending on this trial, we will decide whether to adopt that assessment or not.
- d. Michelle provided an update that Marin Housing Authority is expecting another Mainstream Voucher NOFA, and have already been awarded 42 of these vouchers. To be competitive, MHA wants to utilize 80% of what they've been awarded, and are working with a new housing locator who was hired recently.
- e. Carrie interjected that Mainstream Vouchers in the past have been crucial in continuing housing placement, especially since MHA has gone into shortfall in the past, so we are really hoping to be awarded these additional vouchers.
- f. MHA has also applied for another round of VASH vouchers. The last few times they applied they have been awarded these vouchers, and have been competitive because the housing authority works so well with Coordinated Entry, which is unusual for CoCs.

9. Mill Street Update

- a. Paul Fordham provided the update: Since the HPSC last met, Homeward Bound has been able to secure \$3M in NPLH dollars, with total fundraising close to \$14M needed to do the construction. Mill Street is officially closed down, and residents have moved into New Beginnings, with lots of success in placing participants in housing. Homeward Bound is working with the city of San Rafael for a construction date, hoping to demolish the building in the coming months, and hoping to start construction in October – November 2020. Then,

- in 12-18 months, Mill Street will reopen with a rebuilt shelter on the first floor and 2 floors of housing above it. The project also received a \$750k grant from city of San Rafael as well.
- b. Damon Connolly asked if there is a need for a temporary “sprung” shelter. How does that fit in? Sounds like residents were able to be relocated.
 - c. Paul responded that Homeward Bound is working to find a temporary site to locate Mill Street shelter during construction, but unfortunately they keep hitting dead ends. They have reached out to local congregations and CalTrans, but are also currently operating a County motel for the next few months (for Project Roomkey). The hope is that if the Project Homekey site is quiet, Mill Street staff can staff that. They are looking for anything like a congregate church-like site, or sprung structure (which cost usually \$1M), so they’ll need a pretty much free site. Homeward Bound is confident that there will be places for persons to go. If anyone has ideas about locations, please email Paul.
 - d. Damon Connolly commented that even though current residents are housed, the community still needs a temporary shelter. Paul agreed; Homeward Bound does want to find a temporary shelter in between, maybe Project Homekey, but this may not happen until January.
 - e. Bill Hale asked if there are any shelter beds available at all.
 - f. Paul responded that Homeward Bound does run 4 other shelter sites, a few Transition to Wellness beds, and Mental Health beds. Since shelter-in-place was announced, the Bay Area had no new admissions into shelter because in congregate settings COVID can spread. The County motel program has provided an additional 100 beds to the CoC, but if someone falls into homelessness tomorrow, they wouldn’t have a place to go overnight. If the programs are able to move others from shelter to housing, it would be possible to bring more people in.

10. NOFA Update

- a. Tara Ozes provided an update regarding the latest news about the 2020 CoC NOFA and CoC Program Competition. This matter is still being considered by Congress; the House of Representatives, via the HEROES Act, is recommending that all CoC renewal projects be funded without a competition this year, and the Senate HEALS Act (currently in committee) is in agreement with this; however, because of delays caused by disagreement between other aspects of these bills, there is no clear indication at this time when or if there will be a CoC Program Competition this year, or what it will look like. Homebase will provide an update to the HPSC when more is known.
- b. Further comment: None.

11. Adjourn 3:47 PM