

Social Service Human Relations Board
Minutes of the Special Meeting, October 22, 2014

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL** -

President Biggs called the meeting to order at 8:10 p.m. Present were Vice President Villareal and members Williams, Hyman, Radding, and Blake. Member Robles-Wong was absent.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Staff announced that Minutes of the Special Meeting October 2, 2014 will be provided at the Special Meeting of November 20.

3. **AGENDA ITEMS**

3.-A **REPORT ON PLAN DEVELOPED TO ASSIST ARSON FIRE VICTIMS AND ROLE PLAYED BY SSHRB.**

President Biggs shared that the Community Pancake Breakfast fundraiser held at the Elks Lodge, on October 19, was a great success, raising more than \$6500 for American Red Cross Local Disaster Services, \$2500 for the Alameda Relief Fund for arson victims, and \$1700 to assist the reopening of Angela's Restaurant. More than 60 community volunteers helped set up, cook, and serve 350 people a pancake breakfast. Joe Dalipe and Christopher Tam, coordinators of the Alameda Relief Fund, planned to work with others in the community to hold additional events and activities to raise funds for the arson victims through November, at which time the fund account would be closed

Member Williams reiterated her comment made at the October 2nd meeting regarding the city of San Francisco having a protocol for creating restricted fund accounts. She cited the Homeless Fund as an example, and agreed to bring information to the next meeting regarding San Francisco's process of creating a restricted fund account, and establishing a protocol for collecting and distributing the funds.

3-B. **DISCUSSION AS TO WHETHER INFORMATION GATHERED AT COMMUNITY OUTREACH FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP SHOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO RECOMMENDATIONS MADE TO THE CITY COUNCIL REGARDING COMMUNITY NEEDS.**

Staff shared that, since most Board members were attending the other breakout sessions, he would ask AHA staff to summarize the input received at the Public Services/Homeless session he facilitated, and make it available for discussion at the Board's Public Needs Hearing on November 20th.

3-C. **UPDATE FROM HOMELESS COUNT COMMITTEE REGARDING DATA COLLECTED**

**DURING COUNT CONDUCTED ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 AND NEXT STEPS
TO COMPLETE THE PROJECT**

President Biggs distributed a “Draft Summary Report on Homeless Count Conducted in the City of Alameda on September 24, 2014” (Minutes Attachment A) and thanked Board members for participating and acting as team leaders. It was agreed that the Board might consider conducting a second Homeless Count in the future.

President Biggs added that the Alameda County Homeless Count will be conducted early next year, and that the team assembled for the Homeless Count might be used in conjunction with the County effort, to provide additional information regarding the homeless in the City of Alameda. Member Williams suggested we might consider using the San Francisco approach for services for Alameda’s chronically homeless.

A motion was made to accept the Summary Report.
M/S Hyman/Williams

4. **BOARD/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA**

President Biggs shared that member Robles-Wong had resigned from the Board.

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM. M/S Villareal/Radding UNANIMOUS

Respectfully submitted by:

Jim Franz
Secretary

Draft Summary Report on Homeless Count Conducted in City of Alameda on September 24th 2014

The Process

On April 24th, 2014, in response to community concerns raised about a perceived increase in the number of homelessness, the Social Service Human Relations Board convened meeting of various service providers, the Police and other stakeholders. After receiving input and discussing which actions might be appropriate to respond to these concerns, the Board voted to move forward with developing and conducting a survey of homeless people living on the streets of Alameda.

A working group of the SSHRB developed a survey tool to be used for the count (attachment 1) and developed a plan for carrying out the survey. Volunteers were recruited from the APD Volunteer in Policing Program, the Alameda Collaborative for Children Youth and Their Families, service providers and members of the public. A training session was held for the volunteers and a version of the training was posted online. A total of over 35 volunteers were divided into 5 regions of the City and sent out in groups to engage with and interview persons identified as being homeless. Backpacks loaded with resource information, bus passes, phone cards, toiletries and socks were prepared and provided to interviewees.

The actual count took place on Sept 24th, 2014 from 6 am to 9 am.

Summary Results

A total of 17 persons were identified as being homeless, and of that number 8 were interviewed, and an additional 9 were observed but were not interviewed.

Of the 8 interviewed, 5 indicated they were chronically homeless – that is, either continuously homeless for a year or more, or homeless more than four times over a three year period. Among this group mental health issues also seemed apparent. 3 of the 8 indicated they are veterans.

The food bank was used by 4 of the 8 individuals interviewed. Several also mentioned they had used the hospital/emergency services several times.

Of the 8 interviewed, 4 listed Alameda as their last permanent address.

Several distinct locations in the city canvassed by the surveyors had multiple encampments but no one living in them at the time.

It is important to remember that each number represented was a human being who has been significantly traumatized in a way that resulted in becoming homeless. The personal stories they told the surveyors was compelling.

One young man is living on streets next to an apartment complex managed by mother and step father.

One person has been living in the same outdoor location for 5 years, supported by nearby businesses.

One person with memory issues and directionally challenged was “brought from Arizona by his brother and dropped off”. He has a difficult time accessing services as he can never find his way back after the first time.

Recommendations

The goal of this count was to get a baseline understanding of the extent of the homeless issue in Alameda, and we were successful. This was only a single point in time count and thus is not useful in establishing trends. While limited there are conclusions and recommendations that can be drawn from the data

gathered. Following are the preliminary recommendations being put forth by the SSHRB

1. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) urges innovative programs as part of CDBG funding. We recommend that \$20,000 of CDBG funding be set aside to support a case worker to help house and support Alameda's long-term homeless.
2. SSHRB requests that the Housing Authority set aside five or six units for the long-term homeless identified in the homeless count.
3. Establish an interdepartmental meeting including the Recreation and Parks Department, Public Works, Police, and the Housing Authority to look at the needs and impact on the homelessness in the context of planned development efforts.
4. Bring back the homeless-count volunteers to participate in the County-wide homeless count in January to gain a fuller picture of Alameda's unsheltered homeless.
5. Meet with senior officers of the Alameda Police Department to establish protocols for the provision of resources, e.g., the housing brochure, when encountering homeless people living in encampments.