

HOMELESS SERVICES OVERSIGHT COUNCIL

HSOC Meeting

July 15, 2020 1:00 p.m.

Physical Location: Conference Room 1, Department of Social Services, 3563 Empleo St, San Luis Obispo, CA
Members and the public were also able to participate by Zoom call.

MEMBERS PRESENT	MEMBERS ABSENT	STAFF & GUESTS
Amelia Grover	Adam Hill	Abby Lassen
Anne Robin	Bettina Swigger	Angela Smith
Bill Crewe (alt for Paul Worsham)	Carlyn Christianson	Brandy Graham
Caroline Hall	Joe Thompson	Cara Vereschagin
Devin Drake	Marcia Guthrie	Carolyn Berg
Grace McIntosh	Mark Lamore	Cory Hanh
Janna Nichols	Marlys McPherson	George Solis
Jeff Smith (alt for Deanna Cantrell)	Steve Martin	Jean Field
Jessica Thomas		Jeff Al-Mashat
Kristen Barneich		Jessica Lorange
Marianne Kennedy		Joanna Balsamo-Lilien
Mariam Shah		Ken Triguero
Nicole Bennett (alt for Theresa Scott)		Larissa Heeren
Scott Smith		Laurel Weir
Shay Stewart		Lisa Jouet
Susan Funk		Nora Breslin
Tim Waag		Rick Rosen
		Riley Smith
		Russ Francis
		Tara Ozes
		Tony Navarro
		Wendy Lewis

AGENDA ITEM		CONCLUSIONS/ACTIONS
1. Call to Order and Introductions	Mariam called the meeting to order.	
2. Public Comment	<p>George passed on a message from the Public Works department, that the Blue Bag program (in which trash bags and personal sharps disposal containers were distributed weekly to encampment residents) was not budgeted in the 2020-21 fiscal budget.</p> <p>Mariam suggested that she could start attending meetings of the Board of Supervisors and providing an update on HSOC's activities during the Public Comment period.</p>	
3. Consent: Approval of Minutes		Janna moved to accept the minutes, seconded by Devin. The minutes were approved with none opposed and no abstentions.
4. Action/Information/Discussion		
4.1. Discussion Item: COVID Updates		
4.1.1. Discussion Item: COVID grant updates, presentation from HomeBase on Technical	Laurel shared that the County has awarded one round of COVID-related grants, and has learned that a second round of ESG-CV (Emergency Solutions Grant – Coronavirus) funding will be made available soon. This	

<p>Assistance for Grant Planning</p>	<p>grant will be approximately \$6 million. Before releasing an RFP (Request for Proposals), the County will be working with Technical Assistance provider HomeBase to look at the best use for this funding.</p> <p>Tara Ozes from HomeBase gave a presentation about the technical assistance that HomeBase would be providing. She explained that the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has authorized HomeBase to support communities implementing new COVID-related funding, which are facing new challenges and needs due to the pandemic. HomeBase helps by strategizing use of state funding, providing assistance to service providers, exploring and implementing innovative solutions, updating Coordinated Entry to incorporate COVID-19 considerations, and projecting need and coordinating investment planning.</p> <p>Tara took questions from the Council, and confirmed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions around planning are in progress. The end date for this work is the end of 2020, although HCD may allow this to be extended. • This work is a free initiative that HCD created with money that was left over from other funding programs. • HomeBase has a matrix of funding sources and uses of funds, but not one that is specific to SLO County. This will be customized to the County and 	
--------------------------------------	--	--

	<p>shared at a later date.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The goal of this work is to implement long term solutions that will last beyond the pandemic.• Different project activities will run concurrently.• The State is now an active participant in coordinating agreements between hotels and service providers.• HomeBase works with CoCs (Continuums of Care) across the State. Tara can send more information and sign people up to HomeBase's email distribution list if they email tara@homebaseccc.org <p>Tara also shared information about Project Homekey, a new State initiative which will allow for leveraging Project Roomkey agreements with hotels and motels, but is not limited to this. The aim is to support the acquisition and conversion of hotels and motels into Permanent Housing or Bridge Housing. Some of the funding will be set aside for operating buildings once they are acquired, but it is not clear how much will be set aside per community. The NOFA for Project Homekey is due for release later in July.</p> <p>Susan Funk asked about the timing of the second round of HHAP. Laurel responded that the first round of HHAP funding has not been awarded locally yet; this had been planned for Spring but set aside due to COVID. The RFP for HHAP funding may be included in the Planning department's Action Plan grants in September. If the</p>	
--	--	--

	<p>second round of HHAP funding comes out around the same time, both rounds may be included in the Action Plan RFP.</p>	
<p>4.1.1.1. Discussion Item: Possible special meeting in August</p>	<p>Laurel explained that another RFP for COVID-related funds, including HHAP, may come out in September, so HSOC may want to hold a special meeting in August. The HSOC could give general guidelines to County staff about priorities for the funds. The HSOC members supported having a meeting in August.</p>	
<p>4.1.2. Discussion Item: Safe Parking and other efforts to mitigate spread</p>	<p>Updates were provided on the Safe Parking programs from across the County.</p> <p>Grace shared that CAPSLO's (Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo) Safe Parking program is run in collaboration with SLO City. The program is for people who are participating in case management and aims to move them towards self-sufficiency and permanent housing. CAPSLO was approached recently by the County and City of San Luis Obispo about potentially expanding the program.</p> <p>Janna shared that 5CHC (5Cities Homeless Coalition) worked with the EOC (Emergency Operations Center) and County Parks & Recreation to create isolation opportunities, including ten spots at the Coastal Dunes campground in Oceano. This space allowed clients to</p>	

	<p>'shelter at home' in a campsite. 5CHC provided daily meal delivery to people in the campsite. Through this work, 5CHC were able to house ten people and reunify two people with their family in Montana. The EOC opened their own Safe Parking program in the same campground, so the 5CHC site was subsequently moved to ensure separation. 5CHC's program evolved into the Safe Shower program, but this was canceled as part of the County's reopening. Now that the County is returning to lockdown, 5CHC are involved in conversations to restart this program.</p> <p>Caroline shared that Los Osos Cares had been running a Safe Parking program in Los Osos prior to the pandemic. The program was successful in that no additional problems seemed to be created, and did provide a place for a few people for a while. The program ended because the people using the program did not feel safe at the site.</p> <p>Tim shared that he was involved with the Safe Parking program at the Vets Hall, which averaged 22 cars and 28 people per night, and provided food and hygiene supplies as well as helping people with showers. However, this program was ended when the County began reopening.</p> <p>Devin shared that the County has tried to find a way to keep this program going, including considering moving it to the parking lot next to the DSS (Department of</p>	
--	--	--

	<p>Social Services) building on South Higuera street as a replacement site. However, this plan was met with opposition by neighbors. Devin suggested that any agency wanting to use the space for that purpose, and that would be able to talk to neighboring businesses and to provide security, should reach out to him.</p>	
<p>4.1.3. Discussion Item: Centers for Disease Control Guidance on Preventing Spread of COVID in homeless population</p>	<p>Dr. Rick Rosen from Public Health reported that Public Health is involved in testing efforts in all congregate settings, including congregate homeless shelters and informal encampments. Ideally, people would not be in congregate settings, but as this is not possible, the best measure is to keep cohort groups apart, thereby limiting the spread of infection. CDC guidance states that it is preferable that stable encampments are not disturbed, as people will disperse then return to the encampment, potentially spreading the infection between cohorts.</p> <p>Tim reported that this is the opposite to what has happened in the County, as encampments have been dispersed or threatened with dispersal, causing people to move about to other camps. Dr. Rosen agreed that this is a point of concern and this should be avoided.</p> <p>Laurel suggested that members of HSOC who represent a city can convey this to their cities as a public health concern, and could also be included in the update to the Board of Supervisors.</p> <p>The Council discussed planning for the winter warming</p>	

	<p>centers and creating a Zoom meeting between the current warming center providers.</p> <p>Jeff Al-Mashat reported that ECHO are working towards a solution for the upcoming sweep of the Paso Robles river bed, where there is an encampment of 75-100 people. The sweep has been prompted by the fire several weeks ago, which raised concerns about vegetation in the river bed. The dispersal of people from the river bed would be an opportunity for COVID to spread; last time the City of Paso Robles cleared out the river bed, people moved to encampments in Atascadero. ECHO are facing challenges finding a location for emergency shelter. They are looking at the possibility of acquiring multiple tents so that people can be kept apart while still being afforded shelter.</p>	
<p>4.2. Discussion Item: Public Review Draft of the Housing Element Update (2020-2028) – Airlin Singewald & Cory Hanh</p>	<p>Cory from the Department of Planning & Building (Planning) presented and took questions on the Housing Element Update.</p> <p>The Housing Element is a required element of the County Plan, with the goal of achieving an adequate supply of decent housing for residents of the unincorporated areas in the County. The objective for homelessness is to reduce homelessness and provide housing for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The Housing Element qualifies the County to receive funding from some sources. Over the last year, Planning has been working on updating the</p>	

	<p>Housing Element. The evaluation process allows for stakeholders, members of the public, developers and the County to work together on a plan to serve current and future residents. The current draft includes an inventory of sites which demonstrate that the county has enough land to meet the housing demand.</p> <p>Ken asked if the County is considering By-Right Zoning for sites for low or very low income housing. Cory answered that this is a consideration for reducing regulations and streamlining the process. However, the parcels identified for residential development don't have to be used for this. The aim is to show the State that there is enough zoned land to meet housing needs, not that the sites identified will have to be developed in particular ways.</p>	
<p>5. Committee Reports</p>	<p>Devin reported that the Homeless Services Coordinating Committee has not met since the last full HSOC meeting.</p> <p>Janna reported that the Finance & Data Committee has not met since the last full HSOC meeting.</p> <p>Scott reported that the Housing Committee met. Airlin and Cory from Planning presented on the Housing Element.</p> <p>Mariam reported that the Executive Committee met. One of the main items of discussion was the Blue Bag</p>	

	program not being funded in the new budget.	
6. Future Discussion/Report Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special meeting in August to discuss priorities for upcoming funding 	
7. Next Regular Meeting Date: September 16, 2020		
8. Adjournment	Mariam adjourned the meeting at 3:07pm.	