

South Bay Coalition to End Homelessness General Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 15, 2015, 9:30 am – 11:30 am

St. John Fisher Church
5448 Crest Rd, Rancho Palos Verdes

Attendees: Co-Chair Nancy Wilcox, Ryan Bell (PATH), Brad Bridwell (Cloudbreak Communities), Chery Carew (Family Promise), Karen Ceaser (San Pedro Central Neighborhood Council), Stacey Creech (LA Port Police), Gabriel De La Mora (Alliance for Housing and Healing (AHH)), Elizabeth Eastlund (Rainbow), Mary Agnes Erlandson (St. Margaret's Center), Yolanda Gomez (AHH), Chika Hara (CPAF), Tahia Hayslet (Harbor Interfaith Services), Heather Hocking (BCHD), Misty Jesse (St. John Fisher), Zhen McCullom (DMH), Heang Means (DPSS), Brooklyn Mitchell (1736), Jessy Needham (CPAF), Theresa Porterfield (San Pedro First Presby), Alma Ramos (AHH), Nick Rasmussen (Family Promise), Roberto Ramirez (LA Port Police), Aldo Morales (LA Port Police), Elaine Ruggiero (BHS), Paul Stansbury (NAMI), Jim Tehan (Providence Little Company of Mary).

1. **Welcome and Introductions.** Nancy Wilcox opened the meeting at 9:40 am and everyone introduced himself or herself. Misty Jesse, from hosting organization St. John Fisher Church, spoke about the 70 ministries her congregation is involved with in the community; these include the Palos Verdes Thrift Store in Lomita and Family Promise of the South Bay.
2. **Minutes Review and Approval.** The minutes for the March 2015 meeting were tabled for approval until next month.
3. **Committee Reports**
 - a. **Advocacy:** Committee Chair Paul Stansbury first gave a brief overview on the purpose of this committee: it was created as a need at our July 2014 Retreat to help educate our civic partners and communities about the South Bay's homelessness landscape and to advocate for more regional resources. Individuals doing advocacy on behalf of SBCEH would represent the interests of the Coalition and not their individual organization. He reviewed the draft "Policy on Advocacy," which sets the foundation for our work in this area.

He went over key points in the "Public Policy Advocacy: What, Why & How" handout. Since we are not a 501(c)3, we are not restricted by lobbying regulations; however, he recommended we nevertheless follow them as a sound practice. We can lobby for a particular action but cannot endorse a candidate running for office.

Members of the Coalition get frequent requests to support legislation, often that requires a very short timeframe in which to respond. He led a discussion on how we should determine what position we should take. While there is applicable legislation at

the national level, it was felt we would have more impact on local issues -- to be the voice of our community on state and local measures. His committee will draft a set of "guiding principles" that can be used to inform future endorsement requests

- b. **Governance:** Nancy reviewed the "SBCEH Governing Board Creation" handout. It summarizes the board positions we must fill now that our By-Laws were approved at the March 2015 meeting. An *ad hoc* committee will be formed to address this. Mary Agnes Erlandson expressed interest in serving on this committee. Others are encouraged to contact Nancy.

4. Community Report Backs

- a. **Central San Pedro Neighborhood Council.** Karen Ceaser, Chair of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on Homelessness on this neighborhood council (NC), gave a report on her committee's work. Of the three NC's in San Pedro, this is the only one with a focused committee on homelessness. It is looking into the possibility of having mobile shower and toilet facilities in converted decommission busses; these are being used successfully in San Francisco. She voiced concern about not having storage facilities for the community's homeless, so lockers are another area in which her committee are investigating; policies to guard against the storage of weapons and drugs would be developed.

There was a discussion about where such services could be set up. In Long Beach, its Multi-Service Center is located in an industrial area, away from residential neighborhoods. There are community concerns that providing services could become a magnet for additional people experiencing homelessness. Tahia Hayslet remarked we are trying to better service those who already live here, often with deep roots in the local community. Nick Rasmussen brought up the idea of "tiny houses" that are used in Eugene, Oregon.

- b. **Redondo Beach Homeless Task Force.** The City of Redondo Beach created a task force to address homelessness in its city, comprised of citizens from its council districts, law enforcement, fire department, and library staff; it is chaired by its city manager Joe Hoefgen. Nancy and Mark Silverbush were asked to participate in their monthly meetings (along with Kerianne Lawson, representing Beach Cities Health District). The Task Force is making its recommendation to its City Council in May.

- 5. **LAHSA'S Coordinating Council Report Back.** Tahia and Elizabeth Eastlund provided a report from this monthly meeting. Because of HUD's changed funding priorities, LAHSA is shifting its programs to be in line with this federal agency. Rapid re-housing is now the preferred method for aiding homeless families, while transitional housing, though not the most cost-effective, remains a viable intervention for victims of domestic violence and transitional age youth.

They went over LAHSA's "Homeless and Housing Services Capacity Building Discussion Guide" and asked for community feedback on it. LAHSA is reviewing its governance policy for HUD compliance.

6. Co-Chairs' Report. Nancy reported on the following:

- a. The League of Women Voters "Homeless Forum" is all set for April 27th. It will be held at the Redondo Beach main library.
- b. SBCEH is holding a community meeting to discuss the Homeless Count "opt-in" city results on July 7th at the Carson Center.
- c. The Food and Harbor Area "pocket guide" resources have been updated.
- d. She will be attending a LAHSA "Winter Shelter" meeting next week.
- e. Our May General Meeting will be held at the LAPD Harbor Division.

7. Member Agency Announcements. The following announcements were made:

- a. Elaine Ruggiero reported the Hawthorne Behavioral Health Services' (BHS) Family Health Center will be opening this summer.
- b. Jessy Needham said the Center for Pacific Asian Families (CPAF) is holding a Mother's Day community event at Gardena Valley Baptist. Mom's will be given makeovers by volunteer makeup artists.
- c. Mary Agnes Erlandson announced the LAX Community Area CROP Hunger Walk was being held on May 16th.
- d. Nick Rasmussen announced the grand opening of the Family Promise of the South Bay affiliate on May 17th. They will be holding their annual "Cardboard City" fundraiser at St. James Catholic Church in Torrance June 6-7th. They are looking for a part-time van driver with a class "B" license.
- e. Jim Tehan said Providence Little Company of Mary has an opening for a full-time health care educator.
- f. Elizabeth Eastlund reported Rainbow Services has positions open for a full-time bookkeeper and part-time bilingual resident worker.
- g. Paul Stansbury reminded us that May is "Mental Health Awareness Month" and the San Pedro Mental Health Center will be holding its annual Community Health Resource Fair on May 28th.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 am.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Wilcox.

South Bay Coalition to End Homelessness

Policy on Advocacy

In keeping with the purpose of the South Bay Coalition to End Homeless (SBCEH) “Develop And sustain a collaborative to effectively address the needs of those experiencing homelessness to ensure human dignity and compassion through education, advocacy, and coordination. To this end the SOUTH BAY COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS encourages communication and networking, provides training and education, identifies services, promotes program best practices, and performs advocacy..” To perform advocacy the SBCEH will need to advocate for community education, legislation, projects, and other activities by educating individuals, organizations and elected officials. It may also need take positions and support legislation, projects and other activities. Normally it will advocate but it may also need to lobby for legislation and projects. It will not support individuals for elected offices.

In order to advocate for legislation, projects or other activities, normally a position paper or resolution will be submitted to the South Bay Coalition for adoption. Once the position paper or resolution is approved, then the Chair of the SBCEH will determine how best to disseminate the information to the community and elected officials. Individual members will determine and work with their own organization to determine they will advocate for the position or resolution. Once a position or resolution is approved, members may advocate with the community, organizations and elected officials based on the approved position of the SBCEH. Individual members shall not speak for the SBCEH supporting or working against legislation unless it has been approved by the SBCEH.

At times it may be necessary because of the legislative process locally, at state and national level, to advocate for legislation, projects and other activities where it is not possible to submit to the SBCEH for approval. In these situations the Board will be empowered to advocate and/or lobby for the item with concurrence of the officers of the SBCEH. At the next regular meeting, the position, resolution, letter of support or advocacy efforts will be reviewed with the SBCEH.

Draft 4-8-2015

Public Policy Advocacy: What, Why & How

What is public policy advocacy?

Advocacy encompasses a wide range of activities that influence decision makers. Advocacy includes traditional activities such as litigation, lobbying, and public education. It can also include capacity building, relationship building, forming networks, and leadership development. Lobbying refers to activities that are intended to influence a specific piece of legislation.

Why should I advocate?

Nonprofit organizations play a vital role in the development and implementation of public policy to promote an informed, healthy, and strong democratic society. We witness and respond to the impact of public policies on the people we serve, whether they are patrons of the arts or residents of a homeless shelter. Few institutions are closer to the real problems of people than we are. Nonprofits can be an important bridge between policy makers and their constituents.

Effective advocacy builds your capacity to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number of people and communities you serve. Engaging in public policy advocacy can also raise awareness of your organization's mission, mobilize your constituents, and attract positive media attention.

Nonprofits & Lobbying

Lobbying and advocacy are NOT interchangeable. Generally speaking, advocacy encompasses many different kinds of activities designed to promote a cause or idea. Lobbying refers to specific activities intended to influence legislation, and there are rules governing these activities.

Nonprofits—whether they are a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4)—are allowed to engage in lobbying activities; although the rules are stricter for (c)(3) organizations. There is no limit on the amount a (c)(4) can spend on lobbying activities. However, federal law prohibits (c)(3) charitable organizations from spending a “substantial part” of their time and budget on lobbying. Unless your organization is involved in a substantial amount of lobbying, you are unlikely to come close to the financial limits.

What constitutes lobbying?

As defined by federal tax law, lobbying is any attempt to influence specific legislation. Lobbying includes 1) contacting or urging the public to contact policy makers for the purpose of proposing, supporting, or opposing legislation; or 2) advocating the adoption or rejection of legislation. Regulations divide lobbying into two types: direct and grassroots.

Direct lobbying is any attempt to influence legislation through communication with any member or employee of a legislative body or any other government official who may participate in the formulation of legislation.

Grassroots lobbying is any attempt to influence legislation by swaying the opinion of the general public. In this case, the organization encourages the public to lobby.

It's important to note that being engaged in public policy is not strictly about lobbying. There are many policy-related activities you can engage in that don't constitute lobbying. It only counts as lobbying when you ask a decision maker to vote for or against a specific piece of legislation. Educating decision makers and lawmakers about an issue is NOT considered lobbying; nor is hosting a public meeting or distributing a report about an issue.

(Nonprofit Association of Oregon)

SBCEH Governing Board Creation

Prepared for April 2015 SBCEH General Meeting by N. Wilcox

Governing Board Makeup

1. 13-17 Members
2. (a) Initially elected by “Active Coalition Members” initially until at least 13; (b) then by Governing Board and SBCEH Active Members at the Board Mtg
3. Members:
 - 1) Board Chair (elected annually)
 - 2) Vice Chair (elected annually)
 - 3) Secretary (elected annually)
 - 4) Treasurer (elected annually)
 - 5) Coalition Co-Chair 1 (elected annually)
 - 6) Coalition Co-Chair 2 (elected annually)
 - 7) Standing Committee: Education (elected annually)
 - 8) Standing Committee: Coordination (elected annually)
 - 9) Standing Committee: Advocacy (elected annually)
 - 10) Governing Board Member 1 (3 year term)
 - 11) Governing Board Member 2 (3 year term)
 - 12) Governing Board Member 3 (3 year term)
 - 13) Governing Board Member 4 (3 year term)
 - 14) Governing Board Member 5 (3 year term)
 - 15) Governing Board Member 6 (3 year term)
 - 16) Governing Board Member 7 (3 year term)
 - 17) Governing Board Member 8 (3 year term)

Discussion Points

1. “Active Coalition Membership” determination (participate in SBCEH events minimum 5x/yr)
2. “Annual Business Meeting” target date
3. Nomination process for Governing Board Members