



**South Bay Coalition to End Homelessness
General Meeting Minutes
for April 28, 2021
held via Zoom Teleconference**

Attendees: This list was unavailable.

Welcome. SBCEH co-chairs Mark Silverbush and Nancy Wilcox opened the meeting at 10:03 am. Because the meeting was held via video conference, our traditional round of introductions was not made.

Advocacy. SBCEH Advocacy Chair Paul Stansbury reported on pending legislation at all levels of government.

- At the federal level, President Biden is set to announce the \$4 trillion Infrastructure and America's Family Plan, with housing as a key component. Other bills we are following include the American Housing Mobility Act.
- At the state level, AB 816 (Chu) will hold local governments accountable for their homeless plans and is endorsed by CSH and Housing CA. SB 679 (Kamlager) would establish the Los Angeles County Affordable Housing Solutions Agency that would increase affordable housing through renter protections, preservation of affordable housing, and producing new affordable housing units. AB 988 (several co-authors) is looking into establishing a "9-8-8" number to connect people with suicide prevention and mental health crisis counselors.
- Locally, all eyes are on Judge Carter's ruling that all the Skid Row people living on the streets must be provided shelter or permanent housing by October. We continue to report on Measure J's spending recommendations to provide alternatives to incarceration with the \$100 million Year 1 budget.

Special Topic #1: Faith Collaborative to End Homelessness (FCEH). Guest speaker Pastor Lisa Williams of San Pedro United Methodist Church is our Service Planning Area (SPA) 8/South Bay representative on this collaborative. (Please refer to her attached briefing for the primary details.)

- She became involved with this collaborative through Steven Yu, former LAHSA supervisor who was this agency's faith lead. By having the faith community partner with mainstream services, we can achieve so much more toward our goal of providing services, shelter, and housing to people experiencing homelessness.
- Faith Based Organizations (FBO) are not leveraging available public resources. Congregations do not have the infrastructure to learn and understand the complex homelessness system.
- A major FCEH accomplishment was the January LA County Board of Supervisors 5-0 passage to hire a consultant who will survey the FBO homelessness efforts and then make system-level recommendations that will help to better integrate them into our overall homelessness response system. The consultant may be in place as early as next month.
- The faith collaborative is growing by creating deeper connections with the faith community. It plans on working along side a FBO to help guide them through the homelessness system. It is looking to fill other gaps, such as providing service information using more common everyday language.

Special Topic #2: Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority's (LAHSA) Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB). Guest speaker Gloria Johnson, LAHSA's LEAB Chair, reflected on her life story and the importance of integrating persons with lived expertise on all aspects of homelessness policy and operational procedures.

- Gloria’s mother was only 14 years old when she gave birth to her. Her mom became drug addicted at age 18 so Gloria was raised by her grandmother until she passed away eight years later, forcing Gloria to enter foster care until she turned 18. Her difficult life continued to be extremely challenging as she became a survivor of domestic violence while raising her young sons. She experienced homelessness off and on over the years as she struggled to be financially independent being a nurse’s assistant while more heartbreaking experiences disrupted her ambitions.

She was finally offered permanent supportive housing, which allowed her to provide a safe and stable home for her family. During this time, she attained two associates degrees, a bachelor’s degree, and multiple certificates. After building a savings, she was eventually able to move to an affordable housing unit. She has worked in Veterans programs, was the Coordinated Entry System regional coordinator for South LA (SPA 6), worked professionally in drug diversion programs, and has been a housing navigator. Over the years, she has helped 150 people move into permanent housing, most of whom are still housed after a 1-year check-in period. Having grown up in Long Beach, Gloria is now back in the South Bay residing in Hawthorne.

- The purpose of the Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAB) is to give feedback on policy, procedures, and upcoming legislation when viewed through the lens and experience of those who have lived unhoused. Members have been panelists at national conferences and Homeless Initiative listening sessions to share their expertise and inspiration. Meeting monthly, LEAB members represent many homelessness subpopulations, including seniors, disabled persons, DV survivors, LGBT, Veterans, families, mental health, and persons of color. Gloria advocates on behalf of all these subpopulations when she represents the board. LAHSA also has a youth advocacy group called the Homeless Youth Forum of Los Angeles (HYFLA).
- Members of LEAB have influenced the policies on all the boards and committees on which they sit, including the CES Policy Council and Continuum of Care Board. Additionally, they provided inputs to these programs: street outreach, DV, Accessory Dwelling Units, and CES Refinement. Members add tremendous value in providing a trauma-informed care approach as well as specific services that are sometimes overlooked in programs such as Project Roomkey.
- There are many opportunities for LEAB members to be involved in our community. Gloria attends the City of Hawthorne’s Homeless meetings and supports SBCEH. She can meet with city councilpersons to help them understand the need for more affordable and low-incoming housing. Being involved at the start of policy conversations is much more effective, rather than at the end. Lastly, she advocated for agencies to understand the importance of having on staff persons with lived experience so they can assist to find solutions to barriers others may be experiencing.
- Gloria’s personal ambitions are to help shape college social work curriculums to better prepare students for the real world of case management. At the national level, she would like to participate in a campaign to connect others with lived expertise across the county so they can share and learn about local challenges and successes.

Special Topic #3: LAHSA Community Engagement. Guest speaker Brittany Jones, LAHSA’s new Government and Community Relations Associate Director, provided the following information.

- Every SPA will have a Community Relations Coordinator (CRC), formerly known as Community Engagement Coordinators. She is currently interviewing candidates for these positions and wants them to already have some work experience or personal ties with the community in which they serve.

- In the past, their focus was primarily centered around the Homeless Count effort but now the CRCs will have more responsibilities to building long-term relationships with a broader group of SPA stakeholders, so they do not have to start from scratch when the Count comes around. They will be also available to answer operational questions about homelessness programs and assist with bringing together stakeholders so they all can be more impactful.
- In response to a question, Brittany said that while she is initially onboarding, her engagement with SPAs will be more general but after a few months it will be tailored to each region based on its needs. She will include SBCEH in helping to identify what those are.

Member Announcements.

1. Keith Bennett with the City of Carson announced its upcoming homeless resource fair at Dominguez Park on May 11th from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm.
2. Zulma Gent with the City of Torrance informed us of the upcoming homelessness listening session for Torrance-based faith organizations. The City has already held sessions with the general public, homeowner associations, and the business community. Their feedback will be incorporated in the City's Homeless Plan currently in development.
3. Jennifer Pesavento with SoCal RoC said registration is now open for its Summer and Fall sessions. SoCalROC offers career technical training and is located in Torrance but serves students from as far away as neighboring counties. She gave an example of their tuition being a public institution as compared to getting the equivalent instruction from a private sector agency: the dental assistant program at SoCal ROC is \$1,500 vs. \$15,000 through a private organization.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 am.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Wilcox.