



South Bay Coalition to End Homelessness General Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 27, 2020 Beginning at 10:00 am

Via Zoom Video Conference

Attendees: This was unavailable.

Welcome. SBCEH co-chair Mark Silverbush opened the meeting at 10:06 am. Because the meeting was held via video conference, our traditional round of introductions was not made.

Meeting Minutes Review. Minutes for the April 22nd meeting were not taken.

Special Topic: US Veterans Initiative/Inglewood's Veterans' Programs

- Speaker Akilah Templeton has been the Executive Director for US Vets/Inglewood for over three years. After giving some personal background that influenced her career path, she noted that US Vets is the largest housing organization in the country serving homeless and at-risk Veterans and their families. They have 21 residential sites and 9 service centers located in 13 cities across 5 states.
- The Inglewood site was founded in 1992 and now serves over 600 Vets on-site, including 225 in transitional housing, some in emergency shelter (ES), and over 400 in permanent housing. 10 ES beds are also available for non-Vets. There employ about 70 staff members.
- One of their specialized programs is for Vets on parole, with a 12 bed capacity (it has a waiting list).
- They offer a complete continuum of care, including outreach, treating and care programs, and after-care services for those who have exited other programs. Most of their Vets stay for about two years before moving on, but there was a strong desire to still stay connected with them. Akilah commented they would have a better chance of being successful if they could continue having an on-going relationship. Three case managers provide this "after care" service, which is available for any Vet in the county, not just their graduates.
- Other services they provide include intensive case management for their residents as well as for those in the adjacent Cloudbreak housing development.
- She continued to describe its participation in the "Silverstar" program located on the West LA VA campus. It provides: group therapy, family reunification, recreation activities, crisis management, senior services (important since this is an aging population) and other programs. These services are also available to those sheltering in place who do not want to be in a retirement community setting. Meals, workforce development, a career center, job training, and connections with potential employers are also provided.
- There is no wait list for the SSVF program, which provides temporary financial funds, including homeless prevention services (Pre-COVID, this was capped at 9 months assistance but has been extended to 12+ months). Immediate stays in motels is also available.
- The demographics of the participants currently at their site include:
 - Ages:
 - 25% are between 50-59 years of age, 28%: ages 60-69, 9% over 70
 - This aging population creates challenges so they have redesigned programs to meet their needs
 - 17% are between 30-39, 14%: 40-49.

- Gender: 96% are male, 3% women, 1% transgender. This does not reflect US Vets as a whole, where more women and families receive services and housing, like at its Long Beach site. Because of military sexual trauma, it was felt having physically separate programs would serve them best.
- Military branch: Army: 48%; Marines: 17%; Navy: 25%; Air Force: 9%; Coast Guard: 1%.
- Ethnicity: African-American: 65%; White: 30%; Hispanic: 12%; Native American: 2%; Asian: 2%; Pacific Islander: 1%.
- Post-COVID reflections. Akilah candidly shared that it has not been easy post-COVID. Staff is experiencing a crisis as well, with it being so difficult to provide services. They have reimagined their service delivery as most staff are working from home for safety. They work in teams of 10-12 on-site for a week, followed by additional teams working subsequent weeks to minimize possible COVID exposure and spread. They are finding it difficult to monitor substance abuse as consistently as they would like, and acknowledge the additional stress among the participants with feelings of isolation.
- Jon-Michael Hice provided an overview of the Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program. US Vets/Inglewood received an additional \$1.5M for this program under the CARES Act. With these additional resources, they have expanded the amount provided to each program participant. This includes longer term full rental subsidies, uncapped utility payments, child care, transportation, kitchen basics, and more. Vets who previously were enrolled in this program and successfully exited from it in past years are able to again receive benefits from it.
- [Special note: the following staff contacts were provided after the meeting]
 - Transitional Housing and Emergency Shelter: Jesses Henderson, jhenderson@usvetsinc.org
 - SSVF Rapid Re-Housing and Prevention Program: Jon-Michael Hice, JHICE@usvetsinc.org
 - Workforce/Employment: Dawnita Montgomery, dmontgomery@usvetsinc.org
 - Aftercare Services for those in stable housing: Fedra Hassanpour, fhassanpour@usvetsinc.org

Co-Chairs' Report Out

- Nancy gave the following updates:
 - The two "A Bridge Home" interim shelters (San Pedro and Wilmington) are slated to open in July.
 - LAHSA Homeless Engagement Team (HET) street outreach has shifted back to responding to LA-HOP.org reports, after being temporarily refocused on Post-COVID encampment outreach.
 - Measure H Citizens' Oversight Advisory Meeting is Wednesday, June 4th at 1:00 pm.
 - There are numerous educational webinars available, including LAHSA's Problem Solving, National Alliance to End Homelessness curriculum on general homelessness topics, Inner City Law Center's "How to be a great volunteer" on June 16th, and others on housing equity.
 - LAHSA posted on its website the two "Faith Convening" webinars that were held in May.
- Mark gave a federal funding update, including that the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) has been infused with an additional \$4 billion. Program "mega-waivers" are coming out from HUD with less restrictive participant eligibility and operational procedures in response to Post-COVID needs. He encouraged provider agencies to check with HUD and LAHSA for guidance on these programs, and to submit questions to HUD for any clarifications (he offered assistance in how to submit these inquiries).

The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 am.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Wilcox.