

**COMMUNITY HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY BOARD**  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2020, 9:00am

PRESENT:

Neoma Jardon, Member (via Zoom)  
Ed Lawson, Member (via Zoom)  
Kristopher Dahir, Member (via Zoom)  
Marsha Berkbigler, Member (via Zoom)

ABSENT:

Bob Lucey, Member  
Oscar Delgado, Member

The Community Homelessness Advisory Board convened at 9:09 a.m. via Zoom webinar online. Following the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of our Country, the Clerk called the roll and the Board conducted the following business:

**AGENDA ITEM 3.** Public Comment.

City Clerk Turney stated no general public comment was received prior to 4:00 pm on the business day before the meeting.

**AGENDA ITEM 4.** Approval of the December 7, 2020 meeting agenda.

On motion by Member Berkbigler, seconded by Member Dahir, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 4 be approved.

**AGENDA ITEM 5.** Approval of minutes of the November 2, 2020 meeting.

A motion by member Berkbigler seconded by member Dahir, which motion duly carried on a 4-0 vote, it was ordered that Agenda Item 5 be approved.

**AGENDA ITEM 6.** Board update on Our Place, women and families shelter, including program outcomes and usage - Amber Howell, Washoe County

Amber Howell, Director of Washoe County Human Services Agency, provided an update on the Our Place campus, the new woman and family shelter located on the corner of 21st St. and Glendale Ave.

The main objectives of the Our Place campus include separating populations at Community Assistance Centers (CAC) for safety concerns, increasing intake services and decreasing incidents that involve police, REMSA, and the M.O.S.T team.

The Our Place campus currently has nine buildings on property.

Amber Howell provided an overview on the Our Place program model. The main areas of focus for the program include the removal of barriers in accessing shelter and creating an intensive intake process to provide a thorough screening for all individuals.

Chair Lawson inquired about the time frame for individuals graduating from the Our Place program.

At 9:29 a.m. Member Berkbigler stated she needed to take a brief recess. With her absence, quorum was broken. The meeting was recessed at 9:29 a.m.

The meeting was reconvened at 9:31 a.m. with members Berkbigler, Dahir, Jardon, and Lawson present.

Amber Howell clarified the length of stay was extended from three months to six months in efforts to provide safer discharge plans that allow individuals to better prepare for graduation and transition out of Our Place. Howell stated the two main discharge issues that the Our Place team is facing are lack of mental health placements along with affordable housing. Data shows 64% of Our Place residents are experiencing mental health concerns.

Mr. Arlo Stockham, Acting Assistant City Manager, City of Reno stated the CAC is accommodating women and family overflow from Our Place.

Howell shared the new additions to the Our Place program include a new mini medical clinic staffed by a full time APRN to mitigate emergency room visits. Access to the State's Psychiatrist board has been granted to mitigate emergency room visits and provide support for the residents.

Our Place has partnered with Washoe County Regional Animal Services to offer pet supplies, vaccinations, licensing, and microchipping for residents' pets. Our Place has designated areas to accommodate for safe keeping of small possessions for residents.

Howell presented data on the number of women, families, and adults who have been served through Our Place as of June 2020.

Member Dahir inquired what Our Place was planning on doing as the campus becomes full during the winter months and how they will accommodate additional individuals seeking shelter.

Howell indicated Our Place will accommodate for families and women as space becomes available on the campus. Those who are unable to reside at the Our Place campus due to overflow will be partnered with a diversion case manager whose number one responsibility is finding housing or safe shelter for those individuals.

There was no public comment and no action was taken on this item.

**AGENDA ITEM 7.** Board update and discussion on the Built for Zero initiative, including an overview of the homelessness solutions matrix and commitment to Built for Zero renewal for 2021 - Dana Searcy, Washoe County - For Possible Action

This item was continued for a later meeting. There was no public comment and no action was taken on this item.

**AGENDA ITEM 8.** Board update and discussion on the Nevada Cares Campus including, but not limited to, potential uses, improvements, and operations - Arlo Stockham, City of Reno - For Possible Action

Arlo Stockham provided an update on the Nevada Cares Campus. The three main points focused on acquiring the Nevada Cares Campus property, discussion on possible outdoor camping sanctions, and discussion on possible outdoor camping sanction models.

Mr. Stockham confirmed the Governor's Bowl purchase was completed and is now in ownership by the City of Reno. The Wells Cargo purchase is to close by the end of the week.

Discussion ensued on possible interior design options for the Governor's Bowl shelter property.

Chair Jardon inquired if the fireproof covid-19 dividers that are currently in the tent structure, will be used at this new facility.

Mr. Stockham confirmed the fireproof covid-19 dividers are portable and will be moved to the new Governor's Bowl shelter with the possibility of more dividers being constructed. It was emphasized that with the current budget the shelter has facilitated storage, lockers, restrooms, shelter, and social distancing protocols. Future improvements and amenities will be granted as the budget accommodates.

Discussion ensued on how the public sector and faith based organizations could assist and be involved in improving the quality of the shelter and amenities, to improve the overall success within this shelter.

Mr. Stockham initiated discussion on an outdoor use area at the Governor's Bowl designated for a camping sanction. If an outdoor camping sanction is approved resources and management will need to be addressed, due to Volunteers of America not having the ability or budget at this time to facilitate or organize such sanction.

Chair Jardon stated after discussion with Grant Denton, Karma Box Project, she supports an outdoor camping sanction and believes the sanction would provide security and stability for individuals compared to the current camping situation that is taking place within the community.

Reno Police Chief Jason Soto provided insight and data on the experiences Reno Police has experienced within the last four years regarding calls to service from the CAC. He stated that in 2015 - 1,180 calls for service were received from the CAC; this number increased to 3,151 by 2019. It was stated that whether or not the camping sanction is approved the number of calls to service will increase and resources will need to be addressed.

Discussion ensued regarding resources, enforcement, and safety concerns involved with implementing an outdoor camping sanction or future ordinances addressing those experiencing homelessness and camping in undesignated areas within the community.

Mr. Stockham summarized that the overall consensus of the committee regarding outdoor camping sanction is in support. Mr. Stockham also stated that the City of Reno is extremely stretched on resources and could use support and assistance from the other agencies to submit a request for proposal and model for the outdoor camping sanction.

Kate Thomas, Assistant County Manager, Washoe County, stated they would look internally to see what resources the County has available for assistance.

There was no public comment and no action was taken on this item.

**AGENDA ITEM 9.** Board members announcements, reports, and updates, including future agenda items requests.

No action was taken on this item.

**AGENDA ITEM 10.** Public Comment

City Clerk Turney stated closing general public comment is reserved for public comment received after 4:00 p.m. the day preceding the meeting.

Public comment was received from Carl Marrujo concerned about mental health services available for the homeless. This comment has been submitted to the board and is part of the official record.

**AGENDA ITEM 11.** Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, on motion by Member Berkbigler, seconded by Member Lawson, which motion duly carried on a 4 - 0 vote, the meeting was adjourned at 11:43 am.