

## MINUTES

### JOINT CITIES / COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT MEETING CITIES OF ARROYO GRANDE, GROVER BEACH, AND PISMO BEACH, AND THE OCEANO COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2008

**SUBJECT: SERVICE NEEDS FOR HOMELESS AND PEOPLE IN  
TRANSITION IN THE SOUTH COUNTY**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** Grover Beach Mayor Shoals called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the South County Regional Center, 800 West Branch Street, Arroyo Grande, CA.

2. **ROLL CALL**

Elected officials from the following agencies were present:

City of Arroyo Grande: Council Members Arnold and Costello, Mayor Pro Tem Fellows, and Mayor Ferrara.  
(Council Member Guthrie was absent.)

City of Grover Beach: Council Members Ashton, Bright, and Lieberman, Mayor Pro Tem Nicolls, and Mayor Shoals.

City of Pismo Beach: Council Members Ehring and Vardas, Mayor Pro Tem Higginbotham, and Mayor Reiss.  
(Council Member Rabenaltd was absent.)

Oceano Community Services District (CSD): Directors Dahl and Mann, Vice President Bookout, and President Hill.  
(Director Dean was absent.)

Also in attendance: County Supervisor Jerry Lenthall, District 3.  
County Supervisor K.H. "Katcho" Achadjian, District 4.

Also present were staff members from the following agencies:

City of Grover Beach: City Manager Perrault, City Attorney Koczanowicz, City Clerk McMahon, Community Development Director Hansen, Planning Manager Gould-Wells, and Police Chief Copsey.

City of Arroyo Grande: City Manager Adams.

City of Pismo Beach: City Manager Rice and Police Commander Norton.

Oceano Community Services District: General Services Manager O'Reilly.

**FLAG SALUTE** The flag salute was led by Grover Beach Police Chief Copsey.

3. **Elected Officials - Discussion Item Regarding Service Needs for Homeless and People in Transition in the South County.**

Grover Beach Mayor Shoals welcomed all those in attendance, stating that the goal of the workshop was to receive presentations from service providers in order to learn about various assistance programs available in the South County so as to be able to chart a course for improving the delivery of services to people in need in a more efficient manner.

- a) **Definition of Problem - Presentations by Service Providers.**

Mayor Shoals announced the names of the following organizations, whose representatives provided a brief overview of their respective organization's programs, services, facility locations and building types, facility needs, the number of clients served, and the ages of program clients who were children:

Economic Opportunity Commission (EOC) - provides services to the homeless including overnight shelter, morning meals, daytime locker storage, laundry facilities, telephone access, medical assistance, veterans affairs counseling, and bus tokens. Approximately 50 individuals can be provided with overnight shelter, with overflow facilities available for an additional 25 - 30 people, as well as the Healthy Start program, which provides medical and nutrition programs for youth and qualified families.

- Jodi Smith, Homeless Services Director;
- Dee Torres, Prado Day Center Manager;
- Larry Feldt, South County Office, Case Manager;
- David Lichty, Prado Day Center and Grover Beach EOC Office, Case Manager; and
- Dela Wagner, Case Manager.

South County People's Kitchen - provides one nutritious meal per day, seven days per week/365 days per year, to those in need. The organization is comprised of 18 local churches plus Arroyo Grande Community Hospital, with approximately 300 volunteers working in 35 various teams. 50-100 clients were served per day at the program's previous location on South 9<sup>th</sup> Street in Grover Beach. Currently, 20-40 people are served per day at the new temporary site in a County-owned building on Longbranch Avenue in Grover Beach.

- Betsy Ehrlar; and
- Nancy Imwold.

SLO County Housing Authority - provides rental subsidies and transitional housing assistance to qualified individuals and families, sponsors a First Time Home Buyers Program to assist the "working poor" and a Matching Fund Program to assist qualified individuals and families in moving towards home ownership.

- Carol Hatley, Executive Director, SLO County Housing Authority.

Additional comments were received from the following attendees:

San Luis Obispo County Food Bank - distributes donated retail food products, surplus produce from local growers, and commodities from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to individuals and food distribution programs.

- Carl Hansen, Executive Director.

Community Health Centers of the Central Coast (CHC) - provides medical services for the homeless, as well as to those who are either under-insured or un-insured.

- Patti Diefenderfer, Program Manager, Health Care for the Homeless Program.

People's Self-Help Housing of San Luis Obispo County - provides affordable housing to qualified individuals and families, many of whom are employed but can't afford housing.

- Scott Smith, Deputy Director.

El Camino Homeless Association (ECHO) - provides overnight shelter, counseling, and medical services to the homeless at a leased church facility in Atascadero.

- John Lauffer, President, provided a packet of informational materials on the ECHO program and recommended viewing his organization's website at [www.echoshelter.org](http://www.echoshelter.org) regarding the successful operation of ECHO's shelter services program. He also:
  - 1) referenced recent state legislation that allowed development of such facilities without requiring a Conditional Use Permit;
  - 2) spoke in support of cities adopting local Ordinances prohibiting overnight camping along streets, pan-handling, and open containers; and
  - 3) suggested agencies adopt local zoning regulations that required higher densities in downtown areas to improve access to social service providers.

Upon question, Mr. Lauffer responded that the organization's goal was to develop a larger 13,500 foot campus facility, providing multiple services on a four-acre site.

Rescue Mission, "Just As I Am Christian Ministry", Oceano - operates a thrift store and provides a women's residential facility; organization is comprised of seven local churches and is currently seeking to develop a one-acre site in Oceano located near an existing tow-truck yard for a "Five Cities Rescue Mission".

- Galen Thornton.

Brief discussion was held regarding the need to develop a permanent “campus-type” facility in the South County in order to provide multiple services, such as food, health care and counseling services, assistance with veteran’s affairs and social security issues, overnight shelter, transitional and permanent housing assistance, employment assistance, laundry and shower facilities, telephone access, and postal delivery service.

**b) Discussion Regarding County Task Force on “10-year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness”.**

Dana Lilley, Supervising Planner, San Luis Obispo County Department of Planning & Building, provided an overview of a countywide 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness, beginning with the formation of a Leadership Council to engage stakeholders in overseeing the development of a 10-year plan to maximize resources and deliver services to the homeless in the most cost-effective manner.

He stated that the primary focus of the Economic Opportunity Commission was providing services to the homeless. In contrast, the focus of the Homeless Services Coordinating Council, the lead agency established to develop the 10-year plan, was to focus its efforts on developing a homeless services plan to get individuals and families into temporary, transitional, and permanent housing, not just providing emergency overnight shelters. He reviewed the proposed organizational structure and meeting schedule of the Leadership Council, issues the Leadership Council would address, identified who should serve on this Council, and the tasks outlined for developing the 10-year plan. He distributed a list of agencies who had already made the commitment to serve on the Leadership Council, and announced that the first meeting was scheduled for Thursday, March 20, 2008 at 9:00 a.m.

Recess: Upon consensus of those present, the meeting recessed at 6:45 p.m.

Reconvene: At 6:56 p.m., the meeting was reconvened.

Order of the Day: Upon consensus of those present, the Order of the Day was revised to receive public comments.

**PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

Grover Beach Mayor Shoals invited comments from those in the audience who wished to be heard on this matter.

- A. Adam Hill, Grover Beach, commended the local government agencies for initiating and participating in this joint meeting, and spoke in support of collaborative efforts towards finding a permanent multi-purpose facility to serve the homeless.
- B. Henry E. King, who identified himself as homeless, spoke briefly regarding how he had been employed for 34 years before losing his job at Hewlett-Packard in the early 90s, and becoming homeless shortly thereafter. He cited examples of various homeless shelters along the coast from Ventura, California to Oregon. Upon question, he observed that the best-run facility was located in Santa Rosa, California, by Director Nick Baker of Catholic Charities. He described the facility as having a sufficient number of staff members present, and praised the program for organizing homeless clients into day labor pools, hiring the homeless to perform cleaning and meal preparation duties at the facility, and for providing a food pantry and laundry facilities.

He spoke in support of assisting the South County People’s Kitchen program with locating a permanent facility, and requested that the Cities/County work towards providing South County shelter services for families as well as individuals, a winter shelter facility, and a day center with storage lockers and bathrooms.

- C. Grover Beach Mayor Shoals introduced former Grover Beach Council Member and current Lucia Mar School Board Member Dee Santos. School Board Member Santos thanked all those present for attending the meeting and cited examples of the adverse effects of homelessness on seniors and children.

There were no further public comments received.

Order of the Day: At this time, the Order of the Day resumed as posted.

**c) Identification of Goals.**

Brief discussion by elected officials was held regarding the following:

- all agencies committing to working collaboratively towards the development of an action plan to serve the immediate needs of the homeless;
- all agencies committing to concurrently work on the development of a countywide 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness;
- expediting the identification of a permanent location for the South County People's Kitchen program;
- identifying the amount of property needed, potential site, and public-private partnership opportunities to fund, operate, and sustain a campus facility to provide multiple services for the homeless and people in transition;
- partnering with self-help housing programs to negotiate, acquire, and finance the construction of a campus facility for the homeless;
- creating a fund-raising action committee to create more affordable housing opportunities;
- during the process of amending General Plans in the future, all agencies being mindful to identify locations to allow the development of homeless shelters;
- providing public transportation for individuals and families to access service providers;
- inviting a representative from the San Luis Obispo County Women's Shelter to give a presentation on its program and services at the next joint workshop;
- inviting a Cal Poly representative to show a recent video production project that focused on the topic, "Who do homeless people look like?";
- identifying the size and scope of the homeless situation in the South County;
- elected officials having a first-hand look at programs that provide services to the homeless, and visiting successful multi-service facilities such as ECHO in Atascadero and the Good Samaritan Center in Santa Maria; and
- various differences between a community services district and charter or general law city for issues regarding planning, zoning or financing matters.

**d) Next Steps.**

Grover Beach Mayor Shoals then summarized the general consensus of those present as follows:

- 1) Another joint meeting would be scheduled in April or May, after the 10-Year Plan Leadership Council had conducted its first meeting;
- 2) A parallel collaborative effort would be conducted with agencies: (a) working with the County's 10-year Plan Leadership Council to identify sites, roles and responsibilities, and available resources; and (b) identifying a permanent site, preferably at least one acre, for the South County People's Kitchen; and
- 3) The San Luis Obispo County Women's Shelter would be invited to the next joint meeting to provide a presentation on its program, facilities, and services.

To conclude the meeting, a video was shown that was produced in October 2005 by the San Luis Obispo County Homeless Council, entitled "*Will We See Them - the Homeless in San Luis Obispo County*".

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the City Councils or Community Services District, Grover Beach Mayor Shoals adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

CITY OF GROVER BEACH

/s/ JOHN P. SHOALS, MAYOR

Attest:

/s/ DONNA L. McMAHON, CITY CLERK  
(Approved at CC Mtg 6/2/08)