

**HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**September 17, 2008**

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The Coachella Valley Association of Governments' (CVAG) Homelessness Committee meeting was called to order on Wednesday, September 17, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. by Chair Lupe Ramos Watson, at CVAG offices, 73-710 Fred Waring Drive, Conference Room 119, Palm Desert, California 92260.

A roll call of the voting members and ex-officios were conducted and it was determined that a quorum of voting members was present.

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mayor Lupe Ramos Watson (*Chair*)  
Mayor Kathy DeRosa (*alt.*)  
Councilmember Karl Baker  
Councilmember Patrick Mullany (*Vice Chair*)  
Mayor Jean Benson  
Mayor Pro Tem Ginny Foat  
Councilmember Alan Seman  
Leticia DeLara, Legislative Assistant

**AGENCY**

City of Indio  
City of Cathedral City  
City of Desert Hot Springs  
City of Indian Wells  
City of Palm Desert  
City of Palm Springs  
City of Rancho Mirage  
County of Riverside

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Councilmember Chuck Vasquez  
Councilmember Jesse Villarreal  
Mayor Pro Tem Lee Osborne

City of Cathedral City  
City of Coachella  
City of La Quinta

**MEMBER SEATS VACANT - NOT COUNTED FOR QUORUM**

City of Blythe  
Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians  
Cabazon Band of Mission Indians  
Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT**

Kathy McAdara, Executive Director  
Le McAdara, Case Manger  
Chuck Johnson, Program Manager/Region D  
Dale Cook, Community Development Admin./Region D  
Linda Barrack, Dir. Riverside County Programs/Region D

SafeHouse of the Desert  
The Well in the Desert  
Episcopal Community Services  
City of Palm Springs  
Jewish Family Service of San Diego

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Darla Burkett, Executive Director  
Dan Bass, Executive Director  
Jeffrey Kramer, Chief Financial Officer

Coachella Valley Rescue Mission  
Jewish Family Service of the Desert  
Shelter from the Storm

## **OTHERS PRESENT**

Brenda Caldera  
Claudia Galvez, Field Rep.  
Frankie Riddle, Senior Management Analyst  
Gloria Gomez, Founder  
Janet Hough, Planning Manager  
Jessica Meza, Regional Coordinator  
Jim Hicks  
John Wolohan, Executive Director  
Judy Shea, CEO Sober Age Center  
Linda Hodge, Housing Specialist  
Lothar Vasholz, Chairman of Advisory Board  
Rebecca Brown  
Robert Ampriz, Recreation Supervisor  
Tessa Vann  
Vincent Yzaguirre, Director of Real Estate

Include Me, Inc.  
Senator Denise Ducheny's Office  
City of Palm Desert  
Martha's Village and Kitchen  
CAP Riverside  
Catholic Charities  
Palm Springs Homeless Task Force  
Martha's Village and Kitchen  
DHS Community Task Force  
City of Rancho Mirage  
Salvation Army  
Olive Crest  
City of La Quinta  
Olive Crest  
County of Riverside

## **SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT**

Dr. Ron Stewart, Homeless Projects  
Maria Marquez, Mental Health Manager  
John Wohlmuth, Executive Director  
Aurora Wilson, Director of Community Resources  
Amanda Keil, Management Analyst  
Valarie Franklin, Program Assistant

County of Riverside (DPSS)  
County of Riverside  
CVAG  
CVAG  
CVAG  
CVAG

### **2. FINALIZATION OF AGENDA / ADDITIONS & REVISIONS - None.**

### **3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Judy Shea provided a comment to the Committee regarding the Sober Age Center.

### **4. HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE MEMBER AND DIRECTOR COMMENT**

Several committee members and ex-officios provided general comments.

### **5. CORRESPONDENCE - None.**

### **6. MEETING MINUTES**

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MARY JEAN BENSON, CITY OF PALM DESERT, AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER PATRICK MULLANY, CITY OF INDIAN WELLS, TO APPROVE THE MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 21<sup>ST</sup>, JUNE 18<sup>TH</sup> AND JULY 16<sup>TH</sup>. MOTION CARRIED WITH THE CITY OF CATHEDRAL CITY, PALM SPRINGS, AND THE COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE ABSTAINING.**

**7. OUTCOME OF SEPTEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup> TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE WORKSHOP**

Staff reported that in preparation for the joint meeting to be held on September 29<sup>th</sup>, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) held two workshops. At the July 11<sup>th</sup> workshop, TAC rejected the proposed CVAG membership funding formula (using assessed valuation and population) and recommended that CVAG staff create additional formulas as options. TAC recommended that the following factors be considered: population; jobs/unemployment rates; and credit for cities with emergency shelters within and adjacent to their jurisdictions. At the September 12<sup>th</sup> workshop, a total of six formulas were presented: three basic formulas with three variations., Option 2A selected by TAC uses employment, population and standardized credit to determine the contribution. The nine Coachella Valley cities, the County and the Agua Caliente Tribe were present. Three cities voted no: Indio, Desert Hot Springs and Cathedral City. With regards to their no vote, several issues surfaced: Indio: Although the credit was created by TAC to address the burdens to cities such as Indio with more than 100 emergency shelter beds, the 25% credit was insufficient; Desert Hot Springs: Parolees in the city's boundaries remain a high priority and need to be addressed first before considering the homeless issues; Cathedral City: The use of the credit creates a benefit for the City of Palm Springs but does not apply to Cathedral City forcing their contribution to be the highest

Following a lengthy discussion the Homelessness Committee's concerns included ownership of homelessness as a valleywide issue; using fundraising or ability to "write or raise" to help offset the jurisdictions contribution; there may be a jurisdiction that can only pay a portion of the contribution (no matter which formula) or does not have the ability to pay any amount of their contribution and finally concern regarding use of the credit. The Committee also recommendation that an alternative formula be considered using "an across the board" method equally dividing the total remaining operations of \$1 million by the nine cities and the Agua Caliente Tribe; with each party taking into consideration the ability to "write or raise" their contribution. TAC should also be prepared to formally discuss what they are able to commit for fiscal year 2009-10.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MARY PRO TEM GINNY FOAT, CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, AND SECONDED BY MAYOR KATHY DE ROSA, CITY OF CATHEDRAL CITY, THAT AN ALTERNATIVE FORMULA BE CONSIDERED USING AN "ACROSS THE BOARD" METHOD EQUALLY DIVIDING THE TOTAL REMAINING OPERATIONS OF \$1,023,805 BY THE NINE CITIES AND THE AGUA CALIENTE TRIBE; WITH EACH PARTY TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THE ABILITY TO "RIGHT OR RAISE" THEIR CONTRIBUTION. AND THAT TAC SHOULD ALSO BE PREPARED TO FORMALLY DISCUSS WHAT THEY ARE ABLE TO COMMIT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009-10.**

**A ROLL CALL VOTE WAS TAKEN:**

<b>CITY OF CATHEDRAL CITY</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>CITY OF COACHELLA</b>	<b>NOT PRESENT</b>
<b>CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>CITY OF INDIAN WELLS</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>CITY OF INDIO</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>CITY OF LA QUINTA</b>	<b>NOT PRESENT</b>
<b>CITY OF PALM DESERT</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>CITY OF PALM SPRINGS</b>	<b>YES</b>

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**8. DEVELOPMENT OF LEGISLATION SIMILAR TO AB 2097**

Staff reported that Assembly Bill 2097, authored by Assemblyman Joe Coto (San Jose), opened the use of redevelopment funds for permanent housing for the homeless (persons or families with extremely low incomes) and for related supportive services to redevelopment agencies in Santa Clara County.

In follow-up to direction by the Homelessness Committee at its July meeting, CVAG sent a letter of support for AB 2097. At the request of the Homelessness Committee, the letter also requested that Assemblyman Coto consider expanding the geographic area in his legislation to include the CVAG member jurisdictions.

Given that the Bill had gone to the State Senate side, CVAG staff contacted Pat Cooper, Assistant to State Senator Denise Ducheny. Ms. Cooper stated that the Bill would not likely pass if other cities or areas were added. The letter of support was presented to CVAG's Executive Committee at its July 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, where Ms. Cooper was in attendance. Ms. Cooper reported on the legislation and announced that Senator Ducheny would be willing to consider originating similar legislation that would be designed for the Coachella Valley region. The Executive Committee took action that the Bill's progress be monitored and that further consideration be given in the future.

Since that time, AB 2097 has passed through both the State Assembly and the State Senate and is now on the Governor's desk awaiting signature.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCILMEMBER KARL BAKER, CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS, AND SECONDED BY MARY PRO TEM GINNY FOAT, CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CONSIDER A PROPOSAL TO SENATOR DUCHENY'S OFFICE FOR A BILL THAT WOULD ALLOW CITIES TO USE 5% OF THE 20% RDA SET-ASIDE FUNDS FOR ANY HOMELESS HOUSING SERVICES, AND TO BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE OUTSIDE OF YOUR JURISDICTION . MOTION CARRIED.**

**9. VEHICLE LEASE AGREEMENT FOR SOS PROGRAM**

Staff report that back in January 2008, CVAG's Executive Committee approved a lease agreement between CVAG and Jewish Family Service of San Diego for a 24 passenger bus for the Coachella Valley Services and Overnight Shelter (SOS) Program. The bus was obtained from the SunLine Transit Agency and has enabled the SOS Program to expand the number of clients that access the Program. Following approval of the agreement, staff discovered some wording errors in the agreement. Rather than send out the agreement for signature, it was held back in order to clarify and make the minor changes. Unfortunately, the agreement became buried and was not discovered until last month. Given the amount of time past, staff, with the help of CVAG legal counsel, has cleaned up the language, and added further language to clarify the term of the agreement.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MARY PRO TEM GINNY FOAT, CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER KARL BAKER, CITY OF DESERT HOT SPRINGS, TO RECOMMEND THAT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE APPROVE THE REVISED LEASE AGREEMENT BETWEEN CVAG AND JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES, SAN DIEGO FOR THE SERVICES AND OVERNIGHT SHELTER (SOS) PROGRAM. MOTION CARRIED.**

**10. JARC GRANT APPLICATION FOR BUS PASS PROGRAM**

Staff reported that under the direction of the Homelessness Committee to pursue funds to continue the Bus Pass Program from SunLine Transit Agency, staff has attended several SunLine Board meetings, it was recommended by SunLine that rather than seek funds from SunLine Transit Agency, that CVAG apply to the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) for funds to purchase bus passes for the homeless. The grant application process for these funds is coordinated through the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and the funds originate from the Federal Transit Agency.

At the SunLine Transit Board meeting on May 28th, CVAG staff expressed concern that in review of the JARC application requirements and through conversation with RCTC's consultant for the JARC grant process, these federal funds could not be used for bus passes. CVAG staff was persuaded to move forward with the application. Staff spent many hours completing the application within the short time remaining to submit the grant including driving to Riverside to attend JARC application meetings. CVAG has been recommended to receive approximately \$63,000 over a two year period. However, RCTC received clarification from the Federal Transit Agency (FTA) that the funds cannot be used for bus passes. Given this, RCTC recommends that CVAG use its local funds from the cities to purchase bus passes. RCTC also recommends that CVAG use the JARC funds for a transportation program that staff would need to create using local taxis, human service providers such as Desert Health Car, the RCTC van pool program or mileage reimbursement, possibly in collaboration with the TRIP Program.

This was not CVAG's original intent in filing the grant application. To create and then coordinate such a program will require hours of staff time. This would be in addition to the number of hours currently spent by CVAG staff coordinating the current bus pass program. Staff requests direction from the Homelessness Committee whether CVAG should accept the funds. Should CVAG accept the JARC funds staff will need to follow the RCTC recommendation as stated in the FTA guidelines and create a program. This will call for coordination with local taxis; coordination and scheduling with the Desert Health Car Program out of JFK Memorial. The Transportation Reimbursement Information Project (TRIP) is coordinated by the County's Office on Aging Department and reimburses mileage expenses to volunteer drivers who assist seniors with various errands. Currently, there is a balance of approximately \$6,080 remaining with the Bus Pass Program from the contributions made by the cities. While the Program averaged approximately \$2600 per month, the number of bus passes distributed will be reduced starting in October in order to extend the Program through the end of December. Staff currently spends approximately seven to ten hours each month coordinating the Bus Pass Program.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY MARY PRO TEM GINNY FOAT, CITY OF PALM SPRINGS, AND SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER PATRICK MULLANY, CITY OF INDIAN WELLS, TO ACCEPT THE FUNDS AND DIRECT CVAG STAFF TO WORK WITH RCTC**

**STAFF TO WORK THROUGH THE ISSUES. MOTION CARRIED.**

**11. COUNTY MARKETING CAMPAIGN**

Ron Stewart, Manager, County Homeless Services Division, provided an update on the County's Marketing Plan for the County's Homeless Strategic Plan and Services to the Homeless.

**12. PROGRAM PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

Staff reported that the Program Planning Subcommittee has met twice since the last Homelessness Committee update. At the recommendation of the Homelessness Committee at its July meeting, the Subcommittee met in August to discuss updating the Strategic Plan. Potential changes will be fully addressed at a full Committee meeting in either October or November. In the meantime, CVAG staff will be meeting with John Wolohan of Martha's Village and Kitchen and Darla Burkett of Coachella Valley Rescue Mission to discuss how the current needs are being met in the East Valley, how the future plans of both agencies will affect the East Valley, and what gaps are still expected to remain. Information from this meeting will help in updating the Strategic Plan in regards to the Eastern Coachella Valley.

At its September meeting, the Subcommittee was presented with information from Vince Yzaguirre, Deputy Director of Riverside County's Facilities Management Department. The Subcommittee provided feedback to County staff regarding basic design needs, including layout of the shelter beds, number of lockers and mailboxes, etc. A few schematics of the design of the MSC will be provided to the Program Planning Subcommittee to allow the service providers to provide additional feedback regarding flow of the building, safety issues, etc. Schematics will also be presented to the full Committee in the following months. The County is currently working on identifying an architect both for the Multi-Service Center (MSC) and for the Safe-Haven and Full Service Partnership.

A list of the furnishings, including quantities and costs, for the MSC is nearly complete and is expected to be reviewed a final time by the Subcommittee in October. A list of unanswered questions needed for the Request for Proposal (RFP) for an operator will be sent to the Subcommittee members from County and CVAG staff in advance of the October meeting, to ensure that all questions are answered. This will allow the RFP to be sent out as soon as possible following the approval by the Executive Committee at the Joint Meeting on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

**13. ATTENDANCE RECORD**

The attendance record was included in the full agenda packet.

**14. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**14.1 DONATIONS ACCEPTED**

If Committee Members would like to make a donation (no large items please) to the homeless overnight shelter providers, they are asked to feel free to bring that with them to the monthly Homelessness Committee meetings.

#### **14.2 NEXT MEETING OF THE HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE**

The next scheduled Homelessness Committee Meeting is for the third Wednesday, October 15th, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in CVAG's conference room 119.

#### **15. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Valarie Franklin, Program Assistant  
Department of Community Resources (DCR)  
Coachella Valley Association of Governments