

Homeless Plan Advocacy Groups Meeting #2

December 4, 2017

Intros

Skylar welcomed everyone and stated: City is in no way telling anyone to stop the feeding program. The City has no authority to do that.

Susan – City is starting formal strategic planning process for addressing homelessness. Will accept grant at 12/11/2017 Council meeting. Explained next steps:

- Establish core stakeholder group of no more than 20ish people. Membership defined by County (grant) includes – Fire, Sheriff, St. Joseph Center, Planning, City Council, Chamber of Commerce. Expects one rep from CART, SOS, Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church, St. Aidan's, MTFH, and Malibu Synagogue. Susan will send message to request suggested representatives for appointment. Stakeholders are reps/voice for their organization.
- In-depth interviews with 5 people – one or two from faith community.
- All others will have opportunities to provide input, including online citywide survey – all voices need to be heard, all rights respected.
- Interviews will probably start after holidays. Planning process will take about 7 months.
- Three stakeholder group meetings – probably 3-4 hours each (flexibility).
- Consultant is MIG – experience with homeless and social service issues.
- Conversation will include how we will support regional effort & County initiatives. Decide which initiatives Malibu can support.
- Strategy for 3-5 years with goals and objectives – track progress. Plan can be adjusted along the way.
- County provided template to promote coordinated plan countywide to address problem regionally

Susan will send email with one week to respond with nominees for stakeholder group and interview group – will go out shortly after this meeting.

Sandy Liddell re: Homeless meals – Thanksgiving Dinner for day laborers, approximately 200-300 people. Stopped Wednesday dinners. Thought they were asked to consider giving up dinners due to community concern about safety and crime rate.

?? – It was “very clear” City was ‘suggesting/asking’ at last meeting that dinners should be stopped. No problems from Nursery School. Shocked at NIMBYism from community. Through dinners, several people have gotten jobs, housing.

Day after meeting, attendees went back to Pastor Liddell – reported that Councilmembers asked them to stop dinners. (Councilmember Mullen – “Thanksgiving should be grand finale.”)

Skylar – hopes faith community will consider different or roving location. Staff discussed with County about building on Civic Center Way. County adamantly opposed to using that facility – haven't seen that type of program be successful elsewhere. What are different things we can do now to avoid similar complaints from the community?

Kay Gabbard – What about City Hall?

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Skylar – City Hall not an option. Can't commit regular evening – many meetings scheduled on various evenings. First homeless-related murder happened last week – stolen vehicle crashed and killed innocent man. Stuart Ranch Road not lit.

?? – Suggest using City Hall on a Saturday afternoon when fewer people are working in this building and nearby buildings, and lighting not an issue.

Skylar – lunch could be considered. Afternoon should work beautifully.

Reva – one concern that came out of County Supervisor's office ... City and County facilities are not set up with County Health Department for storing and serving food.

Skylar – can check on possibility if food is already prepared. Also, consider food truck.

Skylar – pros and cons to 'congregation' – moving locations would be better by alleviating many regular concerns in various neighborhoods.

Greg Hughes – dinners originated at Malibu Pres with success. Problem – no bus stop, so they walked through neighborhoods to get there. Malibu Pres still participates with SOS.

Paul Elder – problem with changing locations weekly is keeping up with homeless.

Skylar – can something be in place to identify who is coming?

?? – difficult to notify.

Reggie, SOS – we know many 'regulars' but not newcomers. Is there a way to identify the problem people so they can no longer be uninvited or unwelcome?

Philip – people coming from out of town on Wednesday stay in Malibu when they know another meal is coming on Thursday. Suggest separating the days.

?? & Burt – One dinner reduces the number of those staying overnight.

Burt – do we (homeless servers) want to be in business of helping Malibu's homeless or beyond? If we say we want to predominantly serve Malibu, we need to determine how best approach it. Suggest one meal plus assistance from Sheriff & The People Concern ... complaints would go down.

Reggie – Take 'break weeks.' Cut dinners for a few weeks when numbers reach certain rate.

??? – Once word got out to SM/Venice, many coming for several years.

Jim Royal – word of mouth and easier transportation = more people.

Skylar – can groups develop a solution together to address the problem? These are short term, day-to-day issues. City focusing on long-term, e.g., housing.

Burt – Media will always say 'rich folk in Malibu deny poor and needy.' Bad news trumps good news. Is mission predominantly to feed homeless in Malibu or greater area? Suggest – churches each contribute

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modest amount toward security. Could allay concerns of community. 29 Malibu homeless now housed (14 months) 16 in temporary housing with vouchers. At that rate (3-year contract with TPC) = 36 of 180 (official count) or 20% in 3 years will have permanent housing and double that with temporary housing.

??? – dinners present an opportunity for gaining trust. We need more social workers. Dinners help City get people off the streets.

??? – 7 people last year placed in housing.

Reggie – Ask people reporting homeless on their property – see faces. Is there somewhere the City can offer for the dinners? Skylar – no.

??? – Bluffs Park parking lot? (Landon Center capacity too small).

Skylar – when nothing is scheduled, could be possible temporarily. Church facility would be better option. Problem – Bluffs looks like beautiful campsite. Malibu Road residents will have concerns.

Lisa Cislo – Fear of walking along Zuma Beach is overreaction. More people are upset about dinners ending than homelessness itself.

Reva – complaints to the City are fairly even.

Skylar – we need to do something different to improve the situation. What has been done is good, but hasn't reduced the numbers. Re: Food truck – would consider asking City to provide funding support. Could also be more flexible. Santa Monica scrapped regular feedings at City Hall and churches – probably related to location in residential areas.

Greg Hughes – could we do food truck at County property? Skylar – problem is also construction on SMC campus project there is ready to start.

??? – Previously offered lunches near labor exchange – shut down.

Lt. Royal – many are skeptical about 'bad guys.' Statistics – 900 is not overreaction. Dep Treinen will confirm many are tragic stories, but many are not. June 2012 kidnap & sexual assault on Malibu Rd – life saved by 2 good Samaritans. June 2016 transient from Malibu stalked young woman at gas station, clocked her (serious injury). Last week, car stolen by Venice transient, killed innocent man in Malibu. Not all incidents made public.

Reggie – groups need to know who they are so they can deny them dinner/services.

Royal – can't say for sure if any of these criminals had been at the dinners. Sheriff's Dept supports dinners, but any incentive that brings a large amount of people at one time increases probability that some of them may be on best behavior at dinner, but not when they leave.

Reggie – scale back tone and demeanor. Talk about solution moving forward rather than harping on bad.

Royal – can't produce 'problem children'

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Skylar – Sheriff's data says problem is getting worse, groups say they're getting more people. Homeless population goes up/down = homeless complaints go up/down.

Maggie – can Skylar contact friend with a food truck. Skylar – he funds operation 3 days/week in LA.

Liddell – Church Board has to make decision.

Burt – would those feeding establish goal to have dinner for Malibu homeless?

Kay – never had more than 75 people at dinner. Half have been coming 3 years. What would cutoff number be? Homelessness is growing epidemic – why would we expect it to be different here?

Skylar – goal should be to take more people off the street. Having regular feeding programs in residential neighborhoods doesn't work elsewhere, why would we expect it to work here?

??? – Positive aspects are tremendous. It's not just about feeding – dinner provides atmosphere of social interaction that lays groundwork for trust & openness. Need to work closer with LASD & mental health Dept – repeatedly told professionals work 9-5 and past abuse of overtime makes it impossible for them to attend dinners.

Burt – agrees with all of that. Do we as community want to primarily concentrate on finding housing for 180 in Malibu or support broader area?

??? – if no dinner next night, most out-of-towners take bus back to Santa Monica or Venice.

Reggie – no way to separate local vs. out of town.

??? – started providing intake at dinner. Where are you from? Do you have a place to stay?

Burt – assuming you want to serve greater area, can you provide transportation to take them back?

??? – There will always be a handful that may stay, but most do return.

Jim Royal – Sheriffs support feeding. Real public safety problem that may or may not be related. Volume of calls to Station has increased – calls are not all from the same people. Deputy morale is affected.

Sandy – We've been doing dinners 3½ years. Last few months, getting exceedingly large number of complaints. Last meeting of this group presented purported negative results. If they start again and anything happens, it will all be hinged in public eye as being the result of the dinner. As a result, they're now in a position they can't resume serving dinner. Church was also misquoted in news story. Need another solution – new and different.

Reva – would be best if what happens in these meetings stays in the meeting, not in the media.

??? – respect LASD and the numbers presented.

Jim Royal – also true of society in general. Media misrepresentation on both sides.

Sandy – don't have a good solution yet.

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Skylar – that's why we're doing the strategic plan.

??? – is there a place to resume serving meals?

Sandy – agreeable to one meal a week, where? Could be lunch, could gather money for security. Cannot guarantee there won't be any problems. Location is critical.

??? – In Thousand Oaks, they screen with names

Lisa – security very expensive. \$300/4 hours. Location should rotate, but it doesn't have to be different every week.

Skylar – suggest announce at end of each meal where & when the next one will be.

Sandy – Can we use Legacy Park

Skylar – for distribution only – no facilities.

Burt – Can we use City Hall for Saturday lunch if food is not prepared here?

Skylar – We'd have to look at the calendar.

??? – City Hall would be great place where people could have conversation.

Skylar – could take it to Council.

Reva – a lot of challenges to using City Hall. Concerns – people come here and see amenities (bathrooms, showers) – one person was living several weeks in City Hall; multiple encampments in area; homeless may return regularly (as occurs in many City Halls, Civic Centers, etc.). Remember, City Hall is open all day, often until late at night. Includes children's programs. Incredibly concerned, some frightened City staff following emails received after news story following last meeting. Must balance needs of residents, staff, homeless. Need to consider potential consequences.

Skylar – We like not having security guards at City Hall.

Burt – Suggest one dinner a week at different church each week. Get a couple of buses from each end of town – pick up at designated time, after dinner return to pick-up location.

Skylar – focus on fundraising for shelter.

Philip – Shelter not a good idea. City is doing really well – Santa Monica has a much more serious problem. Do everything you can to not bring out of towners. Shelters, low income housing – brings more. Homelessness has a bad connotation. Some with mental illness are very good people who went through terrible ordeals or trauma. Core group in Malibu usually push out the problem children. Drug use by homeless brings in drug dealers. Dangerous people usually end up leaving.

Reva – City acknowledges and genuinely appreciates all the components that help.

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Skylar – Will there be a holiday meal?

Paul Elder – SOS always provides holiday meal. Last year, at back side of library.

Reggie – if any group finds a location, is City OK with them pursuing?

Skylar – yes.

Lisa – could City help with security?

Skylar – yes.

Reggie – working on funding for security.

Skylar – Supports and is in favor of community policing. Sheriff providing security could help them get to know more of the population.

Royal – LASD would keep the peace, be deterrent. Would not identify who could or could not be allowed to participate.

Susan – goal is to minimize impacts (trash, cigarette butts, etc.). After it's over, have people (servers and/or homeless) clean the area. Most callers complain about impacts on their life. Will decrease people's perception.

Skylar – invited everyone to attend and speak at December 11 Council meeting.

Carol – if we solve the County issues, could City Hall work?

Reva – It's the Council's decision.

Paul Elder – Anyone with complaint, disagreement with what has been discussed? Speak now!

??? – are we meeting again?

Skylar – probably next meeting will be after holidays (mid-January). Please contact Skylar, Reva, Susan with questions, suggestions, concerns. Hope faith community begins discussion to come up with ideas as a whole. Suggest – not twice a week at same location; spearhead organization to try to have an idea of who is coming.

Reggie – appreciate opportunity, tone, and demeanor. Going forward will be better collaboration.

Jim Royal – cautious about using LASD as security. Not a great look – those being helped are often intimidated by Sheriffs. If bus continues to bring people in, cannot force people back on bus.

Skylar – Use sheriff on as needed basis.

??? – last two dinners very good experience. Called LASD and they just made extra passes.

Greg Hughes – one meal, during the day, rotating location are all good ideas. Goal must be getting them housed. Removing services might increase problems