

TRACY HOMELESSNESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

February 17, 2022, 7:00 p.m.

Tracy City Hall, 333 Civic Center Plaza, Tracy

1. CALL TO ORDER – Council Member Arriola called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM
2. ROLL CALL – Roll call found Council Members Arriola and Davis present.
3. ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE – Ms. Pombo asked if there will be and endorses the accommodation for tents, parking lots, and storage at the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility. She asked if the committee has considered the plans and funding needed in order to accommodate that.
4. REGULAR AGENDA

4A. ADOPTION OF OCTOBER 21, 2021 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

ACTION: Motion was made by Council Member Davis and seconded by Council Member Arriola to adopt the October 21, 2021, regular meeting minutes. Motion found all in favor; passed and so ordered.

4B. UPDATE ON TEMPORARY SEASONAL WARMING CENTER

Vanessa Carrera, Assistant to the City Manager, and Ilene McIntire, Senior Civil Engineer, provided the staff report.

Bubba Paris, Executive Director of Tracy Community Connections Center (TCCC) stated that he is honored and takes pride in the partnerships built within the community to fund and provide services.

Gavin Strickland, Program Director for TCCC, provided an update on the resources that TCCC provides at the temporary warming center. He also read a letter from a guest named George who is now employed and working towards permanent housing.

Bubba Paris shared that TCCC is committed to being good stewards of the funding, trust and opportunity afforded by the city.

Council Member Arriola thanked TCCC on the life-saving work that they are doing.

Alice English stated that a group from the community went to the warming center to visit to see how things are going. She shared that she was pleasantly surprised on how clean and organized the facility was.

Mayor Nancy Young stated that she was commenting as a member of the community and that she is thrilled that the warming center is up and running and thanked TCCC for making a difference.

4C. TEMPORARY EMERGENCY HOUSING FACILITY CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Vanessa Carrera, Assistant to the City Manager, provided the staff report.

Council Member Davis asked if the City will search for multiple operators or a single operator for the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility, that provides comprehensive services that include substance abuse and mental health services.

Assistant City Manager, Midori Lichtwardt, stated that the City is casting a wide net to find operators that can provide those services, even if it requires multiple operators.

Council Member Davis asked about outdoor opportunities for those that prefer to live in tents or in their cars, and if there is an opportunity in Phase 1 to provide those services.

Assistant City Manager, Midori Lichtwardt, stated that there will be a large parking lot, but there needs to be a program in place. The City will work with the service provider to provide a parking program, but the priority is to make sure that the facility is open.

Council Member Davis shared that the goal is to assist the unsheltered but to also reclaim the parks. She hopes to also have a parking lot program within the operator's scope of work for those that are unsheltered but prefer to stay in their vehicles.

Assistant City Manager, Midori Lichtwardt, stated that there is much work to be done and shared that the RFP will be issued prior to the start of construction. The proposals will be reviewed and negotiated, and outreach will begin once a provider is selected. Relationships and trust is needed between the provider and Tracy's unsheltered community.

Jamie Medina stated that his staff knows about 90% of the unsheltered individuals and that they are already putting information out there regarding the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility. He stated that some seem to be receptive but that the understanding needs to be there that some of these individuals have been in that situation for quite a while.

Council Member Davis stated that she envisions something like a KOA, with the diversity to have a shelter space, tent, and parking areas.

Ana Contreras, Code Enforcement Manager, stated that her team is asking the unsheltered population to please keep an open mind. She acknowledged that for some the thought of change can be scary but hopes that once the facility is in place people will be more receptive to it.

Assistant City Manager, Midori Lichtwardt, addressed Ms. Pombo's question regarding storage. Stating that in Phase 1 of the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility there will be areas for storage indoor and outdoor along with lockers available.

Council Member Arriola asked if the environmental noticing period for the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility needed to be completed before issuing the RFP for site operator(s). He also asked if there are two new positions assigned to the City's Housing and Homeless Services Division. Midori Lichtwardt clarified that there are two positions a Manager and an Administrative Technician position. Recruitment is expected to be starting within a week and is expected to stay open for at least a month.

Council Member Arriola shared his disappointment in the delays related to the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility. He stated that expectations need to be managed and transparency is a must. He shared that he continues to challenge staff to get this done as quickly as possible and inquired about the National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) processes within the County.

Vanessa Carrera clarified the process and who the point of contact is at the County. Council Member Arriola asked if there is a point of contact at the Federal level and asked if all issues have been sorted out.

Council Member Arriola also asked about the 30-to-60-day process. Midori Lichtwardt clarified that the process he was asking about was in regard to landscaping. Ilene Macintire stated that permits were just submitted for all the things that are required for above the ground.

Cynthia Camacho with Good Samaritan Community asked if there would be time limits for the individuals to stay at the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility, if there would be assigned areas for each individual, and will there be a way to identify the individuals through ID or Driver's License.

Midori Lichtwardt clarified that there would be assigned areas in the facility. As far as the identification process is concerned, that would be a process established by the facility operator.

Arch Bakerink is grateful that the city is creating a new position but was surprised at how narrow it is. He stated that he was hoping that the new position would also encompass affordable housing. Council Member Arriola clarified that the Management position will eventually encompass that role as well.

Bill Stewart asked what the Housing Authority is contributing.

Midori Lichtwardt explained that the Housing Authority is a separate entity that does provide some support to the community but is independent of the City of Tracy and is funded by federal and state monies.

Bubba Paris from TCCC applauds the City's progressive action but is disappointed in the timeline and how long the project had taken and shared his thoughts on what a provider for the Temporary Emergency Housing Shelter should look like.

Council Member Arriola thanked Mr. Paris for what TCCC has done up to date and asked staff if the intention is to have one operator or multiple operators to run the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility. Midori Lichtwardt stated that the City is trying to be as flexible as possible in order to ensure that the needs of the community are met.

Janice Johnson asked what will prevent this shelter becoming a “mecca” for people outside of Tracy to come to Tracy.

Midori Lichtwardt stated that as of today there is nothing in place to prevent that especially since County funds are being used to support the project. Council Member Arriola shared that the funds were requested by multiple cities, including Manteca and Lodi, and the intention is to serve the residents of Tracy and the hope is people go to shelters in their own community.

Council Member Davis shared that it is critical to have a service provider that will have the experience to be able to “talk someone down” or diffuse the situation if a person comes in intoxicated or high.

Bill Stewart asked how this is different from the Housing Authority. Council Member Arriola clarified that he believes that the Housing Authority is there to assist with low-income housing and not homelessness. Council Member Arriola clarified that the City of Tracy has no say over the Housing Authority but works in coordination with the Housing Authority so that efforts can be paralleled and not duplicated.

Arch Bakerink shared his experience with the McHenry House and the community concerns that were shared during the time of its inception. He stated that if run properly, these organizations do not become a community problem.

Midori Lichtwardt stated that the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility is just one component to a multi-prong effort to address homelessness. She shared that it does not mean that El Pescadero Park will be cleaned up immediately. Having shelter beds will mean there are more tools available to Tracy PD and Code Enforcement to enforce the no camping and no sleeping ordinances in the parks. She also shared an overview of the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility and potential plan for future development.

Alice English asked what the acreage is for the potential of future tiny homes. Midori Lichtwardt clarified that she has no Council authority in regard to determine what will be put in that empty space.

4D. UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CITY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN TO END AND PREVENT HOMELESSNESS

Vanessa Carrera, Assistant to the City Manager, and Ilene McIntire, Senior Civil Engineer, provided the staff report.

Wayne Templeton, Tracy Community Connection Center shared that the purpose of the PIT (Point-In-Time) count is to not just count those that are without proper shelter. He shared that most people have a default perspective on homelessness, and some homeless people have behavioral, mental or substance abuse problems. The unsheltered are also individuals who are considered the “working poor” or young people who have aged out of the foster care system. The PIT count helps identify who needs what services.

Ana Contreras, Code Enforcement Manager, provided information regarding Caltrans proposed fencing in specific locations in Tracy and provided some background information.

Bubba Paris shared that TCCC is willing to allocate \$2,000 a month towards hotel vouchers as a tool that Code Enforcement can use to provide homeless families with temporary shelter. TCCC would be willing to do case management.

Midori Lichtwardt shared that there are many jurisdictions that the city must take into account. She explained that some of these partnerships include the County, Union Pacific Railroad and Cal Trans. She shared that Public Works Director, Don Scholl has been working with Caltrans to coordinate cleanups on Caltrans property, including encroachment permissions and reimbursements to the City.

ACTION: Motion was made by Council Member Arriola and seconded by Council Member Davis to receive the update on the implementation of the City Council Strategic Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness. Motion found all in favor; passed and so ordered.

5. STAFF ITEMS –

No Staff Items

6. COMMITTEE ITEMS AND COMMENTS –

Council Member Davis thanked everyone present and Mr. Paris. She also shared how Mr. Paris was true to his word when he stated that he had an open-door policy. She shared her experience at the PIT Count event and shared how it was an eye-opening experience.

ACTION: Motion was made by Council Member Arriola to receive an update on transportation services for the homeless and a plan to transition the unsheltered into the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility. The motion was seconded by Council Member Davis. Motion found all in favor, passed and so ordered.

ACTION: Motion was made by Council Member Arriola to receive an update on the possibility of tiny homes as part of Phase 3 of the Temporary Emergency Housing Facility project. The motion was seconded by Council Member Davis. Motion found all in favor, passed and so ordered.

7. ADJOURNMENT – Time: 8:56 p.m.

ACTION: Motion was made by Council Member Davis and seconded by Council Member Arriola to adjourn. Motion found all in favor; passed and so ordered.

The agenda was posted at City Hall on February 16, 2022. The above are action minutes.

Chairperson

ATTEST:

Deputy City Clerk