

Advisory Committee on Implementation of Rules of Removing Unsanctioned Homeless Encampments  
September 12, 2017, 6 PM to 8 PM  
Boards and Commissions Room L280, City Hall

Co-Chairs: Colleen Echohawk and Patricia McInturff

## **Agenda/Notes**

### **Welcome/Introductions (Colleen and Patricia)**

**Committee Members/Staff Present:** Colleen Echohawk, Patricia McInturff, Sheila Sebron, Juan Cotto, Jimmy Hurd, Erin Goodman, Flo Beaumon, Mark Lloyd, Harold Odom, George Scarola, Chris Potter, Robert Stowers, August Darke-Erickson, Eric Zerr, Emily Nolan, Kayota Grant, Kelli Hurly

**Committee Members/Staff Absent:** Council Member Sally Bagshaw, Charlie Costanzo, Leslie Smith, Quynh Pham, Michael Neguse, Jason Johnson, Ken Snipes

Patricia/Colleen – Welcome everyone and acknowledged there were a lot of big changes that happened today. They reminded the committee that the group appointed jointly by the Mayor and the City Council will stay together through this change and the next mayor's appointment. The Committee is chartered through 2018.

### **Updates (Chris, Eric)**

#### **- Spokane Street Encampment Cleanup**

The City is currently engaged in a clean-up under the Spokane street viaduct. The site was posted three weeks ago notifying that clean up would happen this week. Outreach has been taking place over the last three weeks. Monday/Today more urgency for folks to move as the clean-up started today. There were about 50 people at the initial assessment, less than 20 yesterday, and high teens today....10-11 shelter referrals were made today. Union Gospel Mission (UGM) has also been doing outreach and referrals.

Q – How many people were originally at the site.

A – Over 100 campers.

Comment - There were a few protesters today and 2 were arrested today for not moving out of the designated work area. There is common ground on feelings towards best serving the campers.

Q – Does the Navigation Team physically go with people to the shelter?

A – 75% of the time the Navigation Team is doing the transport to the shelter/referral spot.

Q – Is there a way to share the UGM Data?

A – Yes, we are getting the data – Jackie is compiling all the data.

Q – Do people ask for another spot to camp?

A – We let them know the city doesn't sanction outside camping, and we do refer to sanctioned encampments. Our goal is housing first, and talk about what type of housing they are looking for and what is available.

Q – How much space is available at the Navigation Center, 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian, UGM?

A – By 8:30am we know how much space is available to us for the day. Currently there are 0-5 at the Navigation Center, and 50-60 at 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian. UGM could be cots, mats, depends on what they have open.

Q/C – The protesters were out of the way - I am not sure that the action taken was called for. Where do the people go that you first identified at the site? There are trust issues with people in uniform. I would rather see more social workers involved. I am talking with people to understand why people don't take referrals and what would work better to get people into housing. The Navigation Team should not be in uniform.

A – Some people took referrals, others we don't know where they go.

- **Federal Hearing on Encampment Cleanups**

The City has been sued on behalf of several people (and organizations) who are unsheltered for violating their constitutional rights. The central claims are around notice of clean-ups, and seizing possessions. Oral arguments happened last Thursday. The Judge asked a lot of questions on both sides. The Judge is out of town, and we are not expecting a ruling until at least the week of the 18<sup>th</sup>.

- **Office of Civil Rights work**

The Office of Civil Rights does not have a report yet on the current clean-up work. Staff are going out on cleanups, and collecting information on what they are seeing. They will be writing semiannual reports, and plan on presenting to this committee in Oct.

**Public Comment**

Q – Are the 50 Operation Nightwatch (ON) beds at 1<sup>st</sup> Presbyterian dedicated to them long term?

A - The 50 beds are for ON until another space is located and they move.

Q – How do you document bed vs. chair as being counted for an overnight guest (UGM)?

The city should empower shelters to use more space, providers are hesitant to use more space due to contract restrictions.

A – The City does not count chairs as beds.

Q – How do you determine what is abandoned vs left for trash. Specific incident – A camper was told it was ok to move things across the street, and then had staff go through their things.

A – No one was told they could move things across the street. In this specific situation the Navigation Team packed 24 bins of belongings, informed the person that the belongings could be stored/delivered. The camper asked for belongings back, everything was given back and remained in bags. The camper was allowed to stay and move their belongings. We will offered storage again.

Q – Do you always store items? How can someone get their items back? Do they need the have ID to get items back?

A – We always leave signage, there are multiple ways to connect with storage. We can help get new ID. You don't need ID to get items back. Knowing when and where items were taken from helps us to reconnect people with their belongings. We also call out unique items – this helps us to get items back to people. Photos of all items are taken, so people can describe their belonging.

Q – How many items have been reclaimed.

A – We don't have the current number, but we do keep items for up to 70 days. We have held property for up to 6 months (knew the person was getting into housing).

### **Navigation Team Overview (Eric, August)**

#### **See presentation attachment**

- We have multiple service providers engaged with us.
- 1:1 connections are important, we are looking for the best way to build relationships.
- In addition to the 8 Officers and 8 Outreach workers, we have Field Coordinators that serve many functions, one of which is the initial site assessment (litter pick up, clean-up).
- The team meets 1<sup>st</sup> thing in the morning to go over the plans for the day, and gets a list of open referrals.

Q – What is the shelter vs. encampment placement.

A – Not sure what the breakdown is, but can get that information.

- We are running at about 65% referral rate for shelter and case management.

Q - Do you have your own report card?

A – Not a formal one, but we are evolving how we do the work, and what information we collect. The MOU with the Office of Civil Rights is also a way to make sure we are following the rules.

- We need to apply the racial equity toolkit to this work. We are working towards applying it to the work.

Comment – I am disappointment that the tool is not being used, and we should be applying it.

Comment – There is not always the best match between the camp and the persons need (low barrier vs. no tolerance).

Q – How do you filter people to the camps?

A – We try to make the best match around usage. Sometimes there are mismatches – we get feedback from the camps, it helps to make better placements.

Comment – Is there a way to fine tune the camps, and have something in the middle.

Comment(s) – Jackie is awesome, he is doing a great job. The whole team is doing a great job.

Q – How many of the people being referred do we have data on – do they stay, what services are they getting?

A – We are working on getting data about services, placements, are they getting “served”. We have more people sticking, than we are losing. People are getting acculturated to being inside and don’t want to go back to the streets.

### **Proposal/Discussion on Data to Review (Chris)**

#### **See attached presentation**

- What data do we have, what do you want, and how/when do you want to see it?
- We do a lot of journaling or note collecting of what we see at sites. We don’t have a lot that is easy to pull out in a quantitative way. We also have a lot of caveats – we keep learning about things that would be good to collect/track. As we go, we are finding that we have data that could be used in a better way (complaint vs compliant tool). We are also compiling data from multiple sources.
- We will have more data at the end of September, and will be ready to present at the meeting in October.

Q – Can we confirm that the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is being used?

A - Yes it is being used, and we are having issues getting data out of HMIS.

Q – What dates does the data cover.

A – There are different dates for different data points, depending on where pieces of the work started, and when the new Encampment Rules became effective.

Q – How do I use the data to inform my job on the committee? How do we confirm that the protocols are being followed?

Comment – Our role is to ensure that City policy is being followed---it is an auditor role. We can’t just take the reports that are presented to us by City staff as 100% accurate/true. We need to find a reasonable way to evaluate and verify the work staff are doing. Comment – We need to be clear about our role vs. SOCR, we don’t want to duplicate the work. I am struggling with what we are going to look at to make sure the rules/polices are being followed.

Comment(s) from staff – The committee members are more than welcome to come and see an encampment cleanup. SOCR is out there kicking the tires, you are the more global view.

Q – How do we reach out to people who are critical of the process, or who are effected by the work.

Comments – We need to keep our focus on compliance with policy, we don't want to bring people here to complain, we don't have the answers. I am not sure we should be going out in the field.

Comments – We are not here to make sure there is more housing or to evaluate the current options or capacity for shelter. We are also not here to evaluate the work of the non-profits that contract with the city to provide services.

Part of the committee work should be to help us fully implement MDAR – Ex. Parks, there should be no camping in parks.

Comments – How are we looking at success – do we count placements, but what happens when they “blow out” of the shelters/encampments. (This may be out of our scope, but it could be useful for us).

### **Wrap Up/Next Steps**

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 6-8pm.