



City of San Marcos

630 East Hopkins
San Marcos, TX 78666

Meeting Minutes City Council

Monday, October 4, 2021

3:00 PM

City Council Chambers/Virtual

This meeting was held using conferencing software due to COVID-19 rules.

I. Call To Order

With a quorum present, the work session of the San Marcos City Council was called to order by Mayor Hughson at 3:01 p.m. Monday, October 4, 2021. This meeting was held in-person and online

II. Roll Call

Present: 7 - Mayor Pro Tem Melissa Derrick, Mayor Jane Hughson, Council Member Maxfield Baker, Council Member Saul Gonzales, Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Shane Scott, Council Member Alyssa Garza and Council Member Mark Gleason

PRESENTATIONS

1. Receive a staff presentation and hold discussion regarding various models that may be implemented in San Marcos to make the most effective use of available funding to assist residents experiencing homelessness and those in danger of becoming homeless through transitional housing and support services, and provide direction to staff.

Bert Lumbreras, City Manager, provided a brief introduction. He stated homelessness is an area that has taken on such an importance that City Council included it as an area of focus at the Visioning session at the beginning of this year. He mentioned that we have seen significant groundwork in the formation of a Local Homeless Coalition with key partners and advocates as well as using best practices like coordinated entry and use of a Homeless Management Information System coming from the Texas Homeless Network. He stated all of this has come through a collaborative approach where the City is an active participant and instrumental in helping to lay important groundwork. He mentioned individuals experience homelessness through many different factors so it is important that our approach be multi-faceted. Mr. Lumbreras stated beyond our approach and certainly before we can consider how best to fund certain initiatives we must take the right steps. Mr. Lumbreras stated it is important we agree on the right vision and model before considering where best we can invest limited and precious

funding. By doing so, we can then determine where we have the biggest needs and how we can have the greatest impact on helping our unhoused neighbors achieve a better quality of life. He stated the presentation and discussion covers model-based solutions to prevent individuals from falling into homelessness, as well as assist those who already find themselves in this situation. He mentioned how the \$400K in American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding that was recently allocated towards this area could be utilized to support a whole community approach.

Mr. Lumbreras stated the staff's recommendations is to establish a partnership with the Local Homeless Coalition and other stakeholders, select a model program that can tailor to suit our needs, and postpone allotment of the designated funding until after the Homeless Needs assessment has been conducted.

Director of Public Safety, Chase Stapp, provided the presentation, he stated homelessness is a whole community problem that requires a whole community approach. He noted that council approved the Interlocal Agreement with Texas State University for a comprehensive needs assessment We will need an evaluation of current city funding related to the Human Services Advisory Board (HSAB) funding and other sources. We will also consider how Austin changed their funding model to require collaboration among service agencies. .

Mr. Stapp asked Mr. Lumbreras to provide his experience in working with homelessness in Austin. Mr. Lumbreras stated the alignment of various sources of funding was to achieve specific outcomes. He stated working in Community Services that included human services and other funding considerations for social services was about \$14M. He stated contracts or funding was not outcome based but the process was changed. He stated staff met with coalition members to discuss the best outcome approach. He mentioned this process was about a year and a half process that set goals. Discussion was held among staff and coalition members and when the right model and the right approach was decided then it was presented to council and was formally adopted. The organizations were given a year notice notifying them when the funding and outcome based approach would take effect.

Mr. Stapp mentioned the Human Services funding the City provides annual. He continued with noting the data sources which are the Local Homeless coalition, an upcoming needs assessment report and key staff from the library, code enforcement and police that interact with the homeless neighbors.

Mr. Stapp provided three models, outlined below:

Camp Esperanza located in Austin

- **Project of The Other Ones Foundation**
- **Began with paid services to clean abandoned campsite followed by a mobile hygiene clinic**
- **7 acre TXDoT site allocated by the state for use**
- **Needs assessment**
- **Stable funding established through monthly magazine**
- **Combination of City funding, philanthropy from multiple foundations and organizations and steady income from the magazine.**
- **Now have computer lab, mail service, showers and laundry and 50 climate-controlled units combined with support network of services on site.**

Consultant Mandy Chapman Semple - First began in Houston and opening a second one in Dallas

- **Common component is consultant Mandy Chapman Semple - special assistant to Houston Mayor**
 - **Contributed to 60% reduction in homelessness in Houston**
- **Now partnering with Dallas, Dallas County and several large NGOs (non-governmental orgs) to operationalize \$72m in funding.**
 - **\$50 million of the funding provided by Dallas and Dallas Co, remainder by 8 major foundations**
- **The model she supports is housing first followed by support services**
- **Largest identified challenges were funding and housing stock**
 - **Built and used relationships with apartment locators to cut down on bias some landlords may have toward houseless residents**

Built for Zero

- **“Built for Zero is a movement of more than 80 cities and counties working to solve homelessness, one population at a time.”**
- **Goal is to achieve “Functional Zero” standard - 14 cities have succeeded including one in Texas - City of Abilene.**
 - **Requires measurable and sustainable significant reduction in veteran and/or chronic homelessness. Evaluated annually for the progress to be sustained.**
 - **Robust data collection is a prerequisite - creation of a “by name list.”**
- **Involves fundamental shift in 5 areas:**
 - **Who is at the table, how they define success, how the community understands the problem, how we spend our resources, and what do we believe is possible?**
- **Utilizes an integrated, data-driven, community-level approach to address broken support systems and focus funding in the right areas**

Mr. Stapp provided the staff recommendations to develop high level vision for a draft model in partnership with the Local Homeless Coalition and bring back to Council a resolution of support. He stated given the current circumstances found in the community, staff believes a model resembling the Built for Zero campaign could be successful in San Marcos. Staff recommends we consider waiting until after the needs assessment is complete before allocating the \$400k in funding.

Council Member Garza spoke about broken support systems and the importance of partnerships including government entities. She asked how would success be measured with other entities? Council Member Garza expressed concern with the rating from the Texas Housers organization and how San Marcos is one of the least successful in rental assistance programs. She would like to know how San Marcos is filling gaps to support other entities regarding programs funded through pandemic relief funds. Mr. Stapp stated we have partnerships with Hays County and the challenges include the level of homelessness and they are different in smaller cities. He stated in terms of programs in place to prevent homelessness during the pandemic, there was a partnership with the County, BR3T organization and rental assistance programs and the money has been depleted which means the money is being used in the community.

Mayor Pro Tem Derrick noted that while Camp Esperanza is a relatively new program, they are enthusiastic and working very hard and are working toward success. We would need to find the super-advocate in order to make this work.

Council Member Baker expressed concern with settling with one model when other models can provide different benefits. Mr. Baker stated some of the challenges for homeless individuals. He stated it is hard for the unhoused to apply for programs and get an identification because they do not have a mailing address. He mentioned organizations receiving funds should allow homeless people to use a mailing address. He asked Police Chief Standridge about the Built for Zero campaign and the differences in population from Abilene to San Marcos. Chief Standridge stated they thought homeless people came to Abilene because of the program but the findings, through the needs assessments, was that most were city residents and mostly were women in domestic abuse situations. He stated they had a little luck involving the County but the city worked with local non-profit organizations to accomplish Built for Zero. He stated they began with the veteran population and then with families which was consistent with the Built for Zero paradigm. Chief stated Abilene

had 300+ homeless according to their Point in Time (PIT) count and San Marcos has around 109+.

Mr. Lumbreras stated Built for Zero depends on the willingness of the community working together. He mentioned in Austin going from traditional funding to outcome based, it emphasized collaboration on working together with different organizations to come up with the best approach and solutions to get to the outcome base approach.

Mr. Stapp stated the completion of the time frame for the needs assessment will be 6 months and we are one month into the assessment.

Council Member Garza wants to ensure we prioritize the concerns of people being impacted when creating the model.

Mayor Pro Tem Derrick expressed concern with addressing future agenda items regarding homelessness and fear of being arrested. She expressed concern that the unhoused neighbors may leave San Marcos and this might affect results of the needs assessment.

Chief Standridge stated the police engages with the homeless neighbors everyday. He provided statistics related to service calls occurring at homeless camps and Southside Community Center. He mentioned these statistics to let Council know that when the Police Department is involved, they are going there because of these calls for service.

Council Member Garza would like to have a professional who has worked directly with the homeless in order to receive data and to understand broader issues during a work session meeting. Mr. Stapp stated they will be providing the results of the needs assessment during a future work session.

Shanna O'Brien, Environmental Health and Safety Manager, stated Code Compliance has not gone out to these encampments to frighten people, but because numerous calls have been received from property owners for assistance. She stated the concerns property owners have is that the problem is growing and there are issues with trash and they are reaching out for additional resources and solutions. Staff are in camps frequently and have not heard of people leaving because they are scared of the police. She mentioned staff is working with the property owners and they are not urging the City to kick people off the property, they only want to find out what they can do. It has been a challenge due to no resources in the City. She stated organizations

have no resources at the moment. She has reached out to San Antonio and Austin but some homeless don't want to leave San Marcos.

Upon completion of discussion, Council consensus was to move forward with staff recommendations, as outlined below:

- Develop high level vision for a draft model in partnership with the Local Homeless Coalition – bring back to Council for resolution of support
- Given the current circumstances found in our community, staff believes a model resembling the Built for Zero campaign could be successful in San Marcos.
- Consider waiting until after the needs assessment is complete before allocating the \$400k in funding

EXECUTIVE SESSION

2. Executive Session in accordance with the following:

A. Section §551.071 of the Texas Government Code: Consultation with Attorney: - To receive legal counsel regarding the pending wastewater discharge application dockets; the application of HK Real Estate Development, LLC for proposed permit for new TPDES Permit No. Q0015784001; TCEQ Docket No. 2021-0053-MWD; SOAH Docket No. 582-21-1893

B. Sec. §551.071 of the Texas Government Code: Consultation with Attorney: To receive legal counsel regarding state law preemption of city ordinances regulating the sale or use of single-use packages and containers

C. Sec. §551.074 of the Texas Government Code: Personnel Matters: to discuss the City Manager Search Process

A motion was made by Council Member Gleason, seconded by Council Member Baker, to enter into Executive Session at 4:10 p.m. The motion carried by the following vote:

For: 6 - Mayor Pro Tem Derrick, Mayor Hughson, Council Member Baker, Council Member Gonzales, Council Member Garza and Council Member Gleason

Against: 0

Absent: 1 - Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Scott

III. Adjournment.

Executive Session was concluded at 5:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Council Member Baker, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Derrick, to adjourn the work session of the City Council on Monday, October 4, 2021 at 5:31 pm. The motion carried by the following vote:

For: 6 - Mayor Pro Tem Derrick, Mayor Hughson, Council Member Baker, Council Member Gonzales, Council Member Garza and Council Member Gleason

Against: 0

Absent: 1 - Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Scott

Tammy K. Cook, Interim City Clerk

Jane Hughson, Mayor