In conformity with the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 (March 17, 2020) and due to concerns over COVID-19, this Los Angeles City Council committee meeting will be conducted telephonically.

The audio for this meeting is broadcast live on the internet at www.lacity.org/government/follow-meetings/council-committee-meetings. The live audio can also be heard at: (213) 621-CITY (Metro), (818) 904-9450 (Valley), (310) 471-CITY (Westside) and (310) 547-CITY (San Pedro Area).

Communication Access Real-Time Transcription (CART) services for this meeting are available through the Streamtext link: https://www.streamtext.net/player?event=LACITY

Members of the public who would like to offer public comment on the items listed on the agenda should call 1 669 254 5252 and use Meeting ID No. 160 593 1907 and then press #. Press # again when prompted for participant ID. Once admitted into the meeting, press *9 to request to speak.

Requests for reasonable modification or accommodation from individuals with disabilities, consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act can be made by contacting the City Clerk's Office at (213) 978-1133. For Telecommunication Relay Services for the hearing impaired, please see the information located at the end of this agenda.

SI REQUIERE TRADUCCION AL ESPANOL, COMUNIQUESE CON LA PERSONA INDICADA ARRIBA COMO LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT, POR LO MENOS CON 72 HORAS DE ANTICIPO.

Click here for agenda packets

Sign Language Interpreters, Communication Access Real-Time Transcription (CART), Assistive Listening Devices, or other auxiliary aids and/or services may be provided upon request. To ensure availability, you are advised to make your request at least 72 hours prior to the meeting/event you wish to attend. Due to difficulties in securing Sign Language Interpreters, five or more business days notice is strongly recommended. For additional information, please contact the Commission Executive Assistant listed above.
Roll Call

Approval of the Minutes from November 9, 2020.

Neighborhood Council Comments (pursuant to Ordinance No. 184243)

Neighborhood Council representatives will be afforded an opportunity to provide the Commission with its formal position on any matter listed on the agenda, provided it has been filed with the City Clerk in the form of a Community Impact Statement or written Resolution.

Public Comment

Comments by the public on agenda items and on all other matters within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission will be heard during the "Public Comments" period of the meeting. Members of the public who wish to speak on Agendized items shall be allowed to speak for up to two minutes per item, and one minute on Non-Agendized items, up to a total of five minutes per meeting. Given the logistical limitations of interconnecting two independent virtual meeting spaces, once every member of the public has been given the opportunity to be heard, further public comment will not be possible at this meeting.

ITEM NO. (1)

Comments by Councilmember Monica Rodriguez, District Seven, relative to the possibility of establishing an independent health department for the City of Los Angeles, to address the needs of residents; and possible Commission action.

ITEM NO. (2)

Comments by Council President Nury Martinez, District Six, relative to the possibility of establishing an independent health department for the City of Los Angeles, to address the needs of residents; and possible Commission action.

ITEM NO. (3)

Discussion and possible action on a draft letter from Commissioner Shannon relative to public testimony provided at the November 9, 2020 meeting, by advocates of and unhoused people.

ITEM NO. (4)

Items for future discussion.
Adjournment

Telecommunication Relay Services

Telephone communication is one of the most important forms of communication in society today. Due to advancements in technology, telephone devices have evolved with new services and capabilities. Individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, and individuals with a speech disability are following these trends and are rapidly migrating to more advanced telecommunications methods, both for peer-to-peer and third-party telecommunications relay service (TRS) communications.

Telecommunications Relay Service is a telephone service that allows persons with hearing or speech disabilities to place and receive telephone calls. TRS is available in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. territories for local and/or long distance calls. TRS providers - generally telephone companies - are compensated for the costs of providing TRS from either a state or a federal fund. There is no cost to the TRS user.

What forms of TRS are available? There are several forms of TRS, depending on the particular needs of the user and the equipment available: TRS includes: Text to Voice TIY-Based TRS; Speech-to-Speech Relay Service; Shared Non-English Language Relay Service; Captioned Telephone Relay Service; Internet Protocol Relay Service; and Video Relay Service. Please visit this site for detail descriptions, https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/telecommunications-relay-service-trs.

Don't hang up! Some people hang up on TRS calls because they think the CA is a telemarketer. If you hear, "Hello. This is the relay service . . ." when you pick up the phone, please don't hang up! You are about to talk, through a TRS provider, to a person who is deaf, hard-of-hearing, or has a speech disability.

For more information about FCC programs to promote access to telecommunications services for people with disabilities, visit the FCC's Disability Rights Office website.
December 14, 2020

Dear Council Member:

On November 9, 2020 the Los Angeles City Health Commission held a public hearing on homelessness per the request of the Los Angeles City Council.

National and local stakeholders, advocates and members of the unhoused community living on the streets of Los Angeles provided testimony based on observations, expertise and lived experience. As the City Council is in an on-going process of making decisions on how to address issues related to the City’s unhoused community, we believe it would be of benefit to your office to delineate testimony from the hearing to inform future decisions on these issues.

The following is a synopsis of some of the observations and issues brought to the attention of the City Health Commissions during the hearing:

**Conditions on the Street and Shelters**

- We heard from a formerly unhoused woman, who is been a practicing attorney now for 22 years. She described life on the street as a constant terror. She lived in her car until it was towed for too many parking tickets. She delineated issues with the shelter system, including being sexually assaulted by a shelter staff member and her belongings stolen in a dormitory type shelter. She was also sexually assaulted while living on the street. She explained that she lived in survival mode asking where can I eat, where can I sleep? Conditions on the street made her unable to attend meetings or go to doctor appointments. She explained that after a judge provided her with a motel voucher, in a place where she could lock the door and have privacy, she felt safe and was able to eventually get a job and become housing stable.

- We heard testimony from a Veteran who is unhoused and lives within 100 feet of a bridge shelter in Van Nuys. She testified that because of sweeps imposed on her area, she was working on her tent and was held up at gunpoint. When her dog bit the assailant, the dog was taken away. She testified that staff from the bridge near where she lives have never come out to offer help, not even water. She stated that she doesn’t want to live on a cubicle. The shelter searches people, has cameras, will not let her bring in food and would force her to give some of her things away.

- Another member of the unhoused community testified that there are no bathrooms provided where she lives and that what little resources she has are taken in the sweeps. She mentioned that her soap was taken from her. She stated that they took away everything she needed for her saneness. She stated that everything she couldn’t carry was taken.

- An advocate testified that sweeps were leaving people traumatized. That important documents have been confiscated such as birth certificates and identification were being taken during sweeps in Special Enforcement Cleaning Zones. She testified that Centers for Disease Control regulations state that if you cannot move someone into individual housing that they should not be moved. She testified that she was with a senior who was unhoused and could not get his cooler. She asked the police officer present what would happen if the senior went across the
line to get his cooler and the officer stated he would arrest the senior. She mentioned that on hot days advocates who provide water and that on cold days advocates provide blankets.

- We heard from an attorney from an advocacy group who stated that members of the unhoused community were getting criminal records and having licenses suspended due to sweeps. She mentioned that there is no legal requirement to have a buffer zone around bridge shelters.

**SOLUTIONS:**

- We heard from a Board Member at Natl. Coalition for the Homeless who expressed the need for a federal bill to end homelessness by providing grants to cities so they can build housing. The City Council should lobby congressional representatives for federal investments in housing.

- We heard testimony from Sam Tsemberis, a psychologist at the forefront of the Housing First movement. He stated the primary and most urgent service from the perspective of those living on the street is housing. He stated that being on the street, you can’t think and are in a constant fight or flight mode. Once someone gets into housing, they have time to think. He testified that while we have a few examples of Housing First, such as the county’s Housing for Health program, we don’t have it on a macro-level. He stated we have a homeless industrial complex including outreach, shelter and transitional housing – all of these programs we pay a lot of money for but that don’t get the unhoused community anywhere. They are about preparing people for housing that never comes. He stated that if someone can survive on the street, they can survive in housing. During COVID, homeless industrial complex had to shift their He stated that countries that have ended homelessness have a coordinated plan at the federal, state, and municipal level that are focused on ending homelessness by providing affordable housing and put the services in afterwards.

As the Council continues to explore solutions to end homelessness, we hope that you will include, in your consideration, the information provided by our unhoused community with lived experience as well as advocates, stakeholders and members of the medical community.

The City of Los Angeles Health Commission will endeavor to provide current information that can help guide the Los Angeles City Council in reducing the trauma and health related concerns of our unhoused community.

Please note, the Los Angeles City Health Commission has made concrete recommendations in its annual report delineating solutions for providing housing and alleviating the suffering of people living on the streets.

Sincerely,

City of Los Angeles Health Commission

Commissioners:

(Please add Commissioner Names)
Los Angeles City Health Commission Minutes

Monday, November 9, 2020

JOHN FERRARO COUNCIL CHAMBER ROOM 340, CITY HALL, 200 NORTH SPRING STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 - 6:00 PM

Roll Call

Meeting started at 6:03 p.m.

Members Present: Estradas, Grimmig, Hisserich, Kato, Khalfani, Lemus, Mandel, Ossey, Shannon, and Sirota (10); Absent: Avila and Whittington (2); Vacant: Council Districts 6, 7, and 12 (3)

Approval of the Minutes from October 19, 2020.

Minutes from the October 19, 2020 meeting were approved.

Motion: Kato - Sirota

Ayes: Hisserich, Kato, Khalfani, Lemus, Mandel, Ossey, Shannon, and Sirota (8); Abstentions: Estradas and Grimmig (2); Absent: Avila and Whittington (2)

ITEM NO. (1)

Presentation by Leepi Shimkhada and Susan Spinelli, Housing for Health, Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, on the Countywide food program operated in partnership with the World Central Kitchen and the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank as a targeted response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of sheltering in place for people living on the streets, and on those formerly homeless and in permanent supportive housing; and possible Commission action.

Ms. Shimkhada and Ms. Spinelli discussed the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services' partnership with the World Central Kitchen to provide fresh and healthy meals to individuals and families living in permanent supportive housing, and to people living on the streets and in encampments; and responded to questions from the Commissioners.

Members Present: Estradas, Grimmig, Hisserich, Kato, Khalfani, Lemus, Mandel, Ossey, Shannon, and Sirota (10); Absent: Avila and Whittington (2)

ITEM NO. (2)

Presentation by Dipa Shah, Director of the Nutrition and Physical Activity
Program, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, and Alison Frazzini, Deputy Director of the Los Angeles County Food Security Branch, on improving healthy food access and addressing food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic; and possible Commission action.

Ms. Shah discussed food insecurity trends in Los Angeles County, and the coordinated approach by the Department of Public Health to address this issue and obesity; Ms. Frazzini discussed the County's efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic; and both responded to questions from Commissioners.

Testimony was provided by people experiencing homelessness, and by individuals and organizations who work with this population.

The Commissioners approved the drafting of a letter to the Los Angeles City Council regarding the matters raised in the public testimony on Item No. 2. Said letter to be sent on behalf of certain individual Commissioners, not acting within their capacity as Commissioners, but on behalf of themselves as individuals. In addition, said letter could not be written by more than five individuals, and could be introduced in the next meeting of the Commission for discussion and action.

Motion: Shannon - Sirota

Ayes: Estradas, Grimmig, Hisserich, Kato, Khalfani, Lemus, Mandel, Ossey, Shannon, and Sirota (10); Absent: Avila and Whittington (2)

ITEM NO. (3)

Items for future discussion.

Commission President Mandel reminded Commissioners to submit any items for future discussion to the Commission Interns.

Members Present: Estradas, Grimmig, Hisserich, Kato, Khalfani, Lemus, Mandel, Ossey, Shannon, and Sirota (10); Absent: Avila and Whittington (2)

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Motion: Kato - Ossey

Ayes: Estradas, Grimmig, Hisserich, Kato, Khalfani, Lemus, Mandel, Ossey, Shannon, and Sirota (10); Absent: Avila and Whittington (2)
Dear Council Member:

On November 9, 2020 the Los Angeles City Health Commission held a public hearing on homelessness per the request of the Los Angeles City Council.

National and local stakeholders, advocates and members of the unhoused community living on the streets of Los Angeles provided testimony based on observations, expertise and lived experience. As the City Council is in an on-going process of making decisions on how to address issues related to the City’s unhoused community, we believe it would be of benefit to your office to delineate testimony from the hearing to inform future decisions on these issues.

The following is a synopsis of some of the observations and issues brought to the attention of the City Health Commissions during the hearing:

**Conditions on the Street and Shelters**

- We heard from a formerly unhoused woman, who is been a practicing attorney now for 22 years. She described life on the street as a constant terror. She lived in her car until it was towed for too many parking tickets. She delineated issues with the shelter system, including being sexually assaulted by a shelter staff member and her belongings stolen in a dormitory type shelter. She was also sexually assaulted while living on the street. She explained that she lived in survival mode asking where can I eat, where can I sleep? Conditions on the street made her unable to attend meetings or go to doctor appointments. She explained that after a judge provided her with a motel voucher, in a place where she could lock the door and have privacy, she felt safe and was able to eventually get a job and become housing stable.

- We heard testimony from a Veteran who is unhoused and lives within 100 feet of a bridge shelter in Van Nuys. She testified that because of sweeps imposed on her area, she was working on her tent and was held up at gunpoint. When her dog bit the assailant, the dog was taken away. She testified that staff from the bridge near where she lives have never come out to offer help, not even water. She stated that she doesn’t want to live on a cubicle. The shelter searches people, has cameras, will not let her bring in food and would force her to give some of her things away.

- Another member of the unhoused community testified that there are no bathrooms provided where she lives and that what little resources she has are taken in the sweeps. She mentioned that her soap was taken from her. She stated that they took away everything she needed for her saneness. She stated that everything she couldn’t carry was taken.

- An advocate testified that sweeps were leaving people traumatized. That important documents have been confiscated such as birth certificates and identification were being taken during sweeps in Special Enforcement Cleaning Zones. She testified that Centers for Disease Control regulations state that if you cannot move someone into individual housing that they should not be moved. She testified that she was with a senior who was unhoused and could not get his cooler. She asked the police officer present what would happen if the senior went across the
line to get his cooler and the officer stated he would arrest the senior. She mentioned that on hot days advocates who provide water and that on cold days advocates provide blankets.

- We heard from an attorney from an advocacy group who stated that members of the unhoused community were getting criminal records and having licenses suspended due to sweeps. She mentioned that there is no legal requirement to have a buffer zone around bridge shelters.

SOLUTIONS:

- We heard from a Board Member at Natl. Coalition for the Homeless who expressed the need for a federal bill to end homelessness by providing grants to cities so they can build housing. The City Council should lobby congressional representatives for federal investments in housing.
- We heard testimony from Sam Tsemberis, a psychologist at the forefront of the Housing First movement. He stated the primary and most urgent service from the perspective of those living on the street is housing. He stated that being on the street, you can’t think and are in a constant fight or flight mode. Once someone gets into housing, they have time to think. He testified that while we have a few examples of Housing First, such as the county’s Housing for Health program, we don’t have it on a macro-level. He stated we have a homeless industrial complex including outreach, shelter and transitional housing – all of these programs we pay a lot of money for but that don’t get the unhoused community anywhere. They are about preparing people for housing that never comes. He stated that if someone can survive on the street, they can survive in housing. During COVID, homeless industrial complex had to shift their He stated that countries that have ended homelessness have a coordinated plan at the federal, state, and municipal level that are focused on ending homelessness by providing affordable housing and put the services in afterwards.

As the Council continues to explore solutions to end homelessness, we hope that you will include, in your consideration, the information provided by our unhoused community with lived experience as well as advocates, stakeholders and members of the medical community.

The City of Los Angeles Health Commission will endeavor to provide current information that can help guide the Los Angeles City Council in reducing the trauma and health related concerns of our unhoused community.

Please note, the Los Angeles City Health Commission has made concrete recommendations in its annual report delineating solutions for providing housing and alleviating the suffering of people living on the streets.

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