

**Silver Lake Neighborhood Council Homelessness Committee
3/9/2021 Meeting Minutes**

1. WELCOMING REMARKS

A. Call to order

Samantha Danner called committee to order at 6:35pm.

B. Self-Introductions of committee members and Guests

Samantha Danner- region 4 rep co-chairs thank everyone for coming

Mathew Fine – no response

Jane – Co-chair of SELAH Eagle Rock, also part of HTR committee, used to live in Silverlake for 20 years

Maebe - She/they; member of NC from region 5, has been involved in homelessness committee since joining SLNC

Arden – she/her/hers; at-large candidate for SLNC and excited to join this meeting

Neil – He/him; long time Silver Lake resident who is growing concerned with negative rhetoric about homelessness

Albert – he/him; NC candidate, part of Street Watch LA, concerned about increase in sweeps

Imran – SLNC Region 4 representative

Cheryl: working with SELAH to get street medic team to go to encampments

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: (5 minutes)

Albert – noticed many more sweeps in our neighborhood. There have been sanitation crews bringing bulldozers. They are supposed to just do spot cleaning. Important to monitor sweeps. Encourages people to join Street Watch to help.

Maebe – There has been effort at Echo Park Lake to turn it into a special enforcement zone (SECZ) by CD13, LAPD and a group called Friends of Echo Park Lake, trying to paint it as though they are helping unhoused people. If EPL turns into special enforcement zone, unhoused people who turn down offers of housing can be cited. Will send a letter circulating about this.

Jane – asks Albert where sweeps are happening? There is a similar situation in Eagle Rock. Also wants to see letter that Maebe just described.

Albert – there is encampment under 101 @ Hoover, another at Madison/Westpark/Middlebury, and another at Myra under Sunset.

Neil – offered to help witness sweeps.

Samantha motions to move to agenda item 5c because Andrew is present and can only stay for about 15 minutes; seconded by Imran (see discussion under 5c below)

3. PRESENTATIONS

A. Updates from any City/County representatives in attendance
None

4. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

A. Review and Adoption of February 9, 2021 meeting minutes [see attached]

Samantha motions, Imran seconds

No updates or changes requested.

VOTES: Yes: Samantha, Imran, Albert, Cheryl, Neil, Sarah; Absentions: Maebe,

Arden, Matthew; No: --

February minutes approved

5. MOTIONS & RESOLUTIONS

A. *Discussion and possible action* regarding Silver Lake community fridge. Fridge is operational; discussion topics to include volunteer organization around maintenance and food donation and other relevant topics as appropriate.

Volunteer sign-up form available here: <https://forms.gle/BQ8xQNVATRoFczSg7>

Samantha introduced motion, seconded by Maebe

Samantha - calendar is nearly ready to go. Many of this group like Sarah, Maebe, Albert and Imran have been interacting with fridge. There have been various issues with the fridge lately like people leaving a mess, so looking for suggestions on what to do.

Imran - any new issues since the fridge was moved?

Sarah – the fridge host seems fine, someone suggested we check in with her but the host was fine with the fridge. Issues can arise but the question is sharing the work about questions our host has. The Silver Lake Fridge Slack is active. The best thing to do might be posting on Slack.

Samantha – agrees with Sarah. Also noted that the World Central Kitchen at Dodger Stadium sometimes has extra meals but they are bulk meals, so we would need to repackaging them, and would need help to do that.

Imran – offered help

Maebe – Street Watch does a lot with meal distribution, sometimes have extra which could be shared with the fridge. Also, Echo Park has a fridge now at Aroma laundromat.

Albert – asked whether the SL fridge seems over or under-stocked because he is getting mixed messages.

Sarah – Context means something. It's not as high volume as East Hollywood, but things definitely get taken.

Maebe – has observed the same as Sarah and sees that food is being used and turned over.

Imran – is there any data on what people are taking from the fridge?

Sarah: Unrelated, but CM Raman's office is doing wellness checks. Sometimes people will take some excess food and distribute it to East Hollywood. La Community Fridge puts emphasis on not policing fridge so they haven't given data about what is most used.

B. *Discussion and possible action* regarding creation of a directory of volunteer opportunities with mutual aid and service organizations supporting the unhoused community

Samantha moves to table; Maebe seconds, unanimously in favor. Tabled until next month

C. [Danner] *Discussion and possible action regarding a mini homeless count of the Silver Lake area. Possible topics include timeline, volunteer management, supplies needed, partner organizations, etc.*

Samantha - the Central Hollywood NC recently completed a successful mini-count of Hollywood and East Hollywood, and the goal is to do a similar count in our area. Invited Andrew who does engagement with SELAH to discuss difficult routes or areas where we might need to give special attention.

Albert – participated in the CHNC count, which was modeled after the LAHSA count, but also conforms to CDC Covid safety guidelines. Each car had a driver and counter, and no one needs to leave their car. After counting, cars return to central location to submit count data to socially distant volunteer. Then the paperwork was reviewed and compiled by Louis (lead on CHNC count). He started prepping at 5-6, count was staggered starting at 7, and as people returned they submitted their count data. Data was entered by 10 pm. Overall it was very impressive.

Samantha – glad to hear it went well. Also wanted to bring up counting other areas outside of Silver Lake as there are only 7 census tracts in SL. We would likely have enough volunteers to cover more areas, like Los Feliz or Atwater. Asks Andrew which areas would be most important or difficult to count.

Andrew – Through outreach with SELAH done with Nick Brown, they know many of the bigger spots, and could draw a map. Would need to be careful counting some areas like Silver Lake Blvd. under 101.

Samantha – thinks it would be necessary to have some more professional outreach teams go to certain areas on foot. Want some redundancy in data to make sure we are getting accurate counts. If we did Atwater, the LA River bike path is not accessible by car and would require additional effort. The more areas we expand to the more complicated it gets. Suggests getting a sense of the volunteer energy first and then expanding. We would like to try to get this done ASAP but March would be very challenging. Also need to decide who to work with in terms of professional organizations.

Andrew – needs to leave the meeting but can help with maps.

Maebe – really supports this idea but has a few questions. Where exactly do we want to hit, every street and every alley, or the hot spots? Follow up questions - if we go beyond Silver Lake, do we get other NCs involved?

Samantha – as SLNC signed on already, we can use that sponsorship to pull off the count without waiting on other NCs. Additionally, thinks we can do the count for free. We wouldn't want to go count other NCs without at least talking to members of other boards, but don't need to wait for their approval for something that won't require funding. We want to count everywhere; but we would have more experienced teams do areas that are hard to count. Our volunteers would do basically the same thing as the LAHSA count. You watch a training video and you get worksheet, and you don't need to get out of the car because you're doing a visual check of area.

Albert – a week prior to the CHNC count they hosted daily trainings. Volunteers also had to submit waivers. The smaller the scope the more achievable it is. It will take a lot of work. The count was also done on a Thursday night, so base of operation had to be well lit.

Jane – has participated in two LAHSA counts. Met at 8, had 3 people in each car. It was a little difficult to see. May be better to go during the day, but replicating the count is a great idea. However this time there won't be many support services.

Samantha – we would send more experienced outreach workers out separately.

Maebe – the counts are conducted at night because people are more likely to stay in place at night. It does present issues with visibility, but here's positives and negatives about doing it in a different way from how it's been done.

Samantha – In data analysis you want to replicate the conditions as closely as possible for longitudinal data. For example, a count on a summer afternoon might look different from one on a winter night. We want to do our best to keep the conditions as similar as possible to typical LAHSA counts.

Jane – we noticed right before counts last year that there were a lot of sweeps. In some ways it is better that community groups are doing the count.

Samantha – any other suggestions? We should talk logistics.

Maebe – this is super ambitious; suggests to have a subcommittee or ad hoc committee.

Samantha – We could have a working group. Would people be interested in meeting separately? This likely wouldn't be under the NC banner. Just want to make sure board was okay with this, but since we are not asking for money from the NC it shouldn't be an issue.

Maebe – my concern is Brown Act violations.

Sarah – As long as there are not 5 or more board members, we can move ball forward.

Albert – would like to schedule time to talk to Louis, to see how he navigated it. Can offer administrative help for the effort.

Samantha – Will ask Louis to come back and talk to working group. If an additional meeting is scheduled, I will notify the board and this committee's mailing list.

Samantha makes motion to form working group for Mini-count; Albert seconds.

Vote: yes: Samantha, Imran, Albert, Cheryl, Maebe, Arden, Neil, Sarah; no: N/A
abstain: Matthew. Motion passes.

**D. [Cassorla/Demian] *Discussion and possible action* to send to the SLNC
Governing Board a CIS in support of Council File in support of CF 21-0113,
Project Roomkey Expansion / Interim Non-Congregate Shelters / Homeless
Housing / Master Lease / Hotels, Motels, and Vacant Apartment Units /
Authority to Commandeer / Public Health Emergency**

Samantha - We've talked about Roomkey before. The program wasn't really effective, but now that there is change in the Federal administration, FEMA is able to reimburse cities for 100% of emergency shelter expenses. Want to expand program to people that are not just 65 and older.

Neil - All for all hands-on deck solutions.

Samantha – CM Raman and Bonin checked with the City Attorney and confirmed the Mayor has the power to commandeer hotels. This may also be worth supporting.

VOTE: Yes: Samantha, Imran, Cheryl, Albert, Arden, Maebe, Neil, Sarah;

Abstentions: Matthew; motion passes.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

7. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: (5 minutes)

Imran – Suggests presentation on how to advocate for unhoused people without forcing them into any offer of shelter. Would love to hear from outreach worker or other expert on that topic.

Neil - support that idea and wants to hear more about non-coercive solutions

Samantha – on this topic, suggests a podcast called 99% Invisible, with a series called “According to Need” about unhoused people in the Bay Area. It covers why people don’t always want to accept shelter offers. Email Samantha with suggestions about who could present on this topic.

Sarah – notes that on the LA Community Fridge Slack channel, most people just check in when they drop off food. Since August 2020, over 3000 people have checked in.

Neil: Interested in potentially doing an art project and has reached out to CD4 office to help. They have connected with LAHSA and SELAH to help. There is increasing animosity toward homelessness.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Samantha moves to adjourn at 8:09pm