

**Silver Lake Neighborhood Council Homelessness Committee
2/9/2021 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- committee co-chair, SLNC Region 1 rep, also involved in a few other groups, like SELAH. Goal of this committee is to talk about homelessness and connect with other outreach groups in our area.

Isabel – student from Occidental college taking notes for class

Neil – has lived in Silver Lake for ten years, recently hearing rhetoric he doesn't like and wanted to get involved

Imran – Committee co-chair, SLNC Region 4 rep

Carter – Director of Homelessness Initiatives at United Way and works with city and LAHSA

Albert – he/him, Organizer with street watch, volunteers with fridge

Kristen – Silver Lake resident 6-7 years, running for Silver Lake NC on Progressive Slate

Jane – lives in Eagle Rock but previously lived in Silver Lake for 25 years, co-chair of SELAH Eagle Rock

Megan – learned about committee through community fridge, also involved with Mutual Aid LA

2. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Imran - Sunset clinic donated tons of hand sanitizer to SLCC for Saturday showers, and donated over 60 toothbrushes to skid row outreach. Also happy to report he was able to get vaccinated through SELAH.

Albert – Small Revolutions webinar happening this Thursday at 6:30. Moderated by Maebe. Street watch is ramping up outreach on Thursdays and Sundays.

Samantha – Street Watch has meeting at same time as us so we may want to look into changing times.

Albert – serving as the liaison to Street Watch and will be reporting back.

3. PRESENTATIONS

A. Updates from any City/County representatives in attendance

None

4. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

A. Review and Adoption of January 12, 2021 meeting minutes [see attached]

Samantha introduces motion, Albert seconds.

No changes requested, Samantha moves to vote

Samantha, Imran, Albert, Jane, Kristen – yes

Carter, Isabelle, Megan and Neil – present, not voting

Jan 2021 minutes approved

5. MOTIONS & RESOLUTIONS: (60 minutes)

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 introduces motion, seconded by Jane

Samantha – Shares screen to show interest form and suggestions of volunteer roles. Challenge is to find out who is available and when. Hoping to set up a calendar alert and automatically email people to note that they have offered a volunteer time. Also open to suggestions from the group. If people don't want to take a regular shift, they can do other errands, like picking up other food. People could also just come by if they wanted to organize things.

Albert- Recently did a deep clean and suggested having some signage to help inform about best practices. He keeps seeing large bulk drop offs, like a massive bag of peppers, that is hard for people to take away. It would be helpful to be able to inform people about how things could be packaged; this would help with sanitation as well. Samantha – agrees with Albert that more guidance is needed. When she went to clean there were loose bagels everywhere and the fridge itself was a mess. Sarah Ullman, suggested putting up signage.

Imran – thinks a cleaning/scheduling reminder would be good.

Samantha – we should have a regular link in addition to QR code.

Megan – for Mutual Aid LA, we have been using produce from Food Forward, asks if she should fill out this form?

Samantha – Yes, it would be helpful to know where we are getting donations from

Albert – has had issues with cleaning on Tuesdays; when he came the fridge was already clean. He walks, so maybe if there is a way to have a very simple spread sheet so people aren't doubling up on effort. Asked whether cars pulling up is a nuisance?

Samantha- talks to owners and doesn't think it's a problem. She has set up a scheduling spread sheet. Doesn't want to hold anyone to a particular day but it is annoying when someone has brought cleaning supplies and there is nothing to do. Has seen other fridges that have cleaning supplies available on site. Suggests asking United Bread if we can store stuff there. She will talk to them tomorrow.

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

Samantha – this is already approved by the board. Has not been keeping track of what volunteer opportunities are available. Opens floor for discussion.

Jane – is this primarily for housed people to volunteer or for unhoused?

Samantha – it is for housed people to volunteer

Albert – what was approved at board?

Samantha – we had been approved to promote orgs through our website/socials. She was thinking about promoting this through our website, but it doesn't reach all of our stakeholders. Anyone have any thoughts on those communities and doing outreach?

Albert – built his own directory, which could be the starting point.

Samantha – maybe one of us could present this at joint meeting of Outreach committee?

Jane – In Eagle Rock they post a lot of fliers and leave them with some of the businesses, and it does work to spread the word about various things.

Samantha- will make note to contact Outreach about volunteer directory.

C. [Andrade] *Discussion and possible action to host presentation(s) from local service and outreach organizations*

Samantha motions, Albert seconds

Albert – This was to get other outreach people from Street Watch, SELAH, etc. to come and present about their work.

Samantha – that seems like a great idea, maybe not every month, but fairly regular.

Will ask our DONE rep if Street Watch which is political can present. If Street Watch is not allowed maybe SELAH could present. Not sure if we have to take action.

Albert – if it's just for presentation to a committee it doesn't need action.

Samantha – Street Watch meetings are at the same time as ours so that may be an issue sometimes.

D. [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 motions, Albert seconds

Samantha – this came up based on my involvement with SELAH. LAHSA has declined to do homeless count in 2021. This is a concern as we are expecting more people to become homeless due to Covid hardship. Hands off to Louis who is running a similar count for Hollywood.

Louis – When we heard LAHSA was not going to pursue a count, Central Hollywood NC thought this was not right. They decided to do it themselves. It can be done by car, two or three people do visual inspections and count tents, etc. The heavy work goes into how many people live in tent. All of the basics can be done by volunteers with non-intense training. They decided to do a count on Feb. 25. They will meet at 7 at one of the service providers' locations in their area, each group gets a clipboard and does two census tracts. They made the census tract maps. They will send volunteers to drive around and count. It will all go into a web form that will dump data into a spread sheet. They are going to count both Hollywood and East Hollywood. It's about 40 census tracts and their Eventbrite has already signed up 36 teams. Offered help with all of it and noted that the hardest part is taking screenshots of the census tracts, as usually LAHSA does this.

Jane –in Eagle Rock, we do a count every week, Just wondering if there's an ongoing count, that happens more than once a year.

Louis – SELAH is doing that as well. He's found that the counts are pretty stable week to week, so it's not really necessary to count more than monthly. LAHSA may transition to an ongoing count but it's not clear yet.

Neil – there was an editorial in the NY Times about no one knowing how many unhoused people there are. In other parts of the country they track people by name which they found to be more accurate.

Louis – There is an org called Economic Round Table that analyzes the LAHSA counts. They concluded that using composite data from various shelters and individual orgs would contribute to a better count but that doesn't happen here. In New York they have actors who pose as unhoused people and they wear beacons to check whether volunteers are counting accurately; they found that people are pretty bad at counting. But the reason to count is less to know a precise number and more to know if the programs are working. The counts we do are probably good to within 10%, there is room for improvement but it's still decent given the structure of homelessness in LA.

Carter – Community Solutions is the group referenced in the NYT article. It's a great org but they don't work in LA county. It's also not software, it's a group that helps other orgs validate their data. There are conversations about involving them here. One big caveat is that NY is better at counting because most unhoused people there are sheltered and they are already in a system where they can track people by name over time. Homelessness here is 73% unsheltered. It would be good to hear best practices on neighborhood count. He has previously participated in a count at 4 am, but that would be hard with volunteers. He is in support of Silver Lake doing this but what would Silver Lake use this for? How do we leverage it?

Samantha – this wouldn't be a recurring count. It would just be for 2021 so we wouldn't miss a full year of data. We know that we will have data from shelters, but it's also important to understand vehicular and unsheltered homelessness. If we miss a whole year, especially during Covid, this is a way to counter the complete loss of longitudinal data.

Louis – the count has been abused in the past but it's still important for us to have this data. Stakeholder always want to know how many people are homeless in their area. We have discovered this problem is better understood with how many people are on the street. It doesn't make sense when giant trauma has occurred and there isn't some way to count.

Carter – want to see the count go even further

Albert – thanks Louis for the presentation, excited to learn more.

Louis – offers anyone to email him for more info: labramson.chnc@gmail.com

Jane – this is important to stakeholders and to monitor how folks progress. The local info is very important.

Samantha – thanks Louis. Need to figure out how to proceed. Should send it to the board for approval, get enough volunteers. If anyone on the committee wants to help, be in touch.

Carter – offers to help

Imran – how many people do we need?

Louis – need someone navigating and someone counting. Have twice as many groups as the number of tracts so we can send multiple people to tracks to compare; should have two-person teams.

Samantha – Wants to recruit Street Watch, SELAH, United Way, and other outreach people. Between those groups we should be able to manage. Also need to discuss timeline. Ideally, we don't want to do our count too far from the Hollywood count. Possibly mid to late march. So potentially we can do a weekday in Third week of March, maybe the 18th or 19th? Any thoughts on dates?

Samantha motions to bring this to board, Carter seconds

Roll call vote:

Samantha, Imran, Carter, Kristen, Albert, Jane, Megan and Neil – yes

Louis, Mary Beth – present, not voting

Motion passes

E. [Demian] *Discussion and possible action* to send to the SLNC Governing Board a CIS in support of Council File 21-0031, CARE+ CLEANUPS / COVID-19 CRISIS / HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS / CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC) GUIDELINES [see attached draft CIS]

Samantha motions, Jane seconds

Samantha – this was drafted by Jane so will ask her to introduce it.

Jane – this motion was drafted by Council members Raman and Bonin. When Covid hit, Care+ sweeps did improve but they are still traumatic. Encampment residents need to have reliable trash pickup and shouldn't have to tear down their tents every time.

The motion is asking for clearer protocols. These cleanups need to be regularly scheduled. The area where trash is left would be designated, community partners let people know what they are doing, provide mobile showers and other sanitation, etc. Also we should be asking unhoused folks if they want to volunteer to clean, possibly hiring them. This should all happen without LAPD present, as the intrusiveness and trauma often come from LAPD.

Samantha – Silver Lake NC has supported similar anti-sweep motions before. It seems like a no brainer.

Jane – in addition to opposing sweeps it offers more positive solutions.

Albert – states his full support for this motion.

Voice vote taken; support for the CIS is unanimous

F. [Demian] *Discussion and possible action* to send to the SLNC Governing Board a CIS in support of Council File 21-0052, 2025 HOMELESS HOUSING GOAL / 25,000 NEW HOUSING UNITS / HOMELESS SERVICES SYSTEM ANALYSIS [see attached draft CIS]

Motioned by Samantha, seconded by Carter

Jane – this is the center piece of Kevin de Leon's agenda. He put forth several motions collectively called "A way home" and he is setting goal of 25k affordable units by 2025. This is asking for all kinds of rapid rehousing, tiny homes etc. to be built. Trying to make this a "North star" for reducing homelessness.

Carter – fully supports the goal. United Way is in direct communication with the councilmember. He opposes using HHH as funding, and doesn't want to pull money out of resources helping other unhoused people, but generally supports the idea.

Jane – notes that the plan is to do adaptive reuse which is faster and cheaper.

Samantha- suggests adding language incorporating the fact that new Federal and State funding sources are coming online to pay for affordable housing.

Carter – agrees with that suggestion

Jane – is taking notes to amend the motion.

Samantha – specifies updating this to add "using existing structures," also suggests adding some interim goals because 2025 is a long time to wait for people who are unhoused now, but not sure how to incorporate it.

Jane – how about an emergency clause?

Samantha – agrees

Carter – Has been suggesting to the council member that there should be compensation if funds are pulled from one project to support another.

Jane – there is going to be a report back

Imran – wants to hear more about funding allocation

Jane – will provide Ron Galperin’s report

Voice vote

Passes unanimously

G. [Blakemore] *Discussion and possible action* to recommend to the SLNC Governing Board a virtual event or series of events, possibly through partnership with existing event series, to debunk myths around homelessness. Discussion to consider possible topics, partnership strategies, and outreach venues.

Samantha- SELAH is doing virtual event, so this item may be taken care of by that.

Neil- I’m ok with holding off on this item for now.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

7. REQUESTS/MOTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None; Samantha notes that anything for future agendas can be emailed to Samantha or Imran.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Samantha adjourned the meeting at 8:17pm