

CITY OF OCEANSIDE

AD-HOC COMMITTEE EXAMINES SOLUTIONS TO HOMELESSNESS

On October 17, 2018, the Oceanside City Council voted unanimously to declare a Shelter Crisis. This declaration was necessary to establish eligibility to seek an allocation of funds through the State of California's Homeless Emergency Aid Program. In response to the City Council's declaration, and consistent with its mission and bylaws, on November 27, 2018, the Oceanside Housing Commission created an ad-hoc committee to examine the causes of homelessness and develop and recommend sustainable solutions to address homelessness in our community.

Among others, the ad-hoc committee is comprised of four Housing Commission members: Commissioner Michelle Gomez (who serves as chairperson of the ad-hoc committee), Commissioner Linda Walshaw (who serves as the Housing Commission's vice chairperson), Commissioner Eileen Costa and Commissioner Rafe Trickey. These Housing Commissioners are joined on the ad-hoc committee by Economic Development Commission member Ward O'Doherty, Jordy Sparks (representing the Oceanside Unified School District), Alisha Eftekhari (representing Behavioral Health Services in the North Coastal Region), Piedad Garcia (representing the County of San Diego) and a formerly homeless community member.

The ad-hoc committee has been tasked with examining the causes of homelessness, collecting input, developing recommendations to address homelessness and presenting a report to the Housing Commission in July of this year.

Examining Causes and Identifying Solutions

The committee's first task is to begin identifying and examining the causes of (and possible solutions for) homelessness, including: economic distress, substance abuse and mental illness, physical and sexual abuse and human trafficking, inadequate services for veterans, and dislocation related to sexual and gender identity. In addition to engaging appropriate experts, each ad-hoc committee member is being tasked with leading the examination of one or more causes and solutions areas.

Through early January 2019, the committee has held two organizational meetings and will host its first full public hearing on Wednesday, January 30, 2019, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm, in City Council Chambers. The first hearing will focus on the current state of homelessness in our region and provide time for members of the public to share concerns and suggestions for addressing homelessness in the City of Oceanside. The committee plans to hold additional hearings in February, March, April, May and June of 2019, to examine the full range of causes of and possible solutions for homelessness.

Committed to Transparency and Openness

With an issue as important as homelessness, one of the committee's goals is to remain as open and transparent as possible. The committee created a Web page on the City's website that lists

its members, provides a list of meeting dates and times, and links to various resources. So the work of the committee may be observed, all meetings of the ad-hoc committee are open to the public.

Recommendations for Action

It is the hope of the committee that its recommendations to the Housing Commission will be adopted and sent forward to the City Council for review and implementation. As the work of the ad hoc committee progresses, public input is welcomed. The committee email address is available so that citizens' ideas will be registered and considered as the committee conducts its examination and develops recommendations. Oceanside citizens may email all the members of the committee at one address: homelessnessadhoc@ci.oceanside.ca.us.

For more information on the committee and to view the calendar of meetings, please visit <https://www.ci.oceanside.ca.us/services/comms/hc.asp>.