

Attending: Briony Doyle, Emily Wilson, Monisha Mustafa, Libby Dodd, Michael Priddy, Quint Kling, Mary Jane Mikuriya, Tony Kelly, Jean Bogiages

Absent: April Ellis, David Dumovsky, Daphne Magnawa, Steven Solomon, JR Eppler, Kate Eppler, Peter Belden

Guests: Ross Mirkarimi, SF Sheriff, Sam Dodge

The meeting opened at 6:10pm with Ross and Sam giving a short introduction of themselves and their role. Ross heads the sheriff department which employs about 1100, just a little less than the SF Police department. Ross believes they are an under-utilized asset that can help advance a treatment-driven accountable response for people who are homeless, mentally ill and or substance dependent. He is concerned that people need treatment after they are released.

Sam is the Deputy Policy Director at HOPE (Mayor's Housing Opportunity, Partnerships and Engagement). He has previous work experience in San Francisco working with the homeless in the Tenderloin and experience working on homeless issues in New York. He recently returned to SF, first working with DPW and now with HOPE.

Though the meeting was planned to focus on the seven questions,

1. What successful programs have you learned about that can be used here?
2. What plans are in place to provide housing, not shelters for the homeless population?
3. What plans are there to reduce spending that does not have results and increase spending on programs that work?
4. Involving the homeless population
5. How can we effect the cities politics to solve this problem?
6. How can the Police Department and Sheriff's Department become a positive part of the solution?
7. How can we, the people, move the cities work from managing to eliminating homelessness?

They were not directly answered, but were touched on in the conversation.

The Utah "Housing First" approach was discussed and Sam pointed out that this was a success addressing the 2000 chronic homeless folks in Salt Lake City, but there were still ~13,000 in Utah. The housing issue in SF is particularly problematic. It is generally accepted that the chronic homeless have a much better chance of recovery if they have a stable home to stay in. Since 1980, there has been a reduction in federal support for building low cost housing.

Sam noted that HomeBase has been hired to locate potential housing resources in the city. The committee noted that there are many vacant houses in the city and unused public buildings. The mayor has promised to add 500 units to the house in supply this year.

Caring for, treating the mentally ill is a big problem because of lack of facilities. It is also very difficult to move someone who is obviously mentally ill from the streets to care.

Ross indicated that he feels the Sheriff's department has the potential for doing more in the area of advancing treatment options for mentally ill, homeless or drug addicted people. He had proposed using the open jail resources and staff to help, but the response was against criminalizing or associating

homeless with jails. Another problem connected to the criminal system is that once a person has a warrant, or misdemeanor or felony on record they are not eligible for federally funded housing. They are only able to get in the master leased housing. Sex offenders and arsonists are particularly hard to house once they have served their time. Ross said that the Sheriff's Dept. has programs to help folks who have served their time and are released back into the community.

There was discussion about the public perception of the job the city is doing to solve the homeless problem. The face of the homeless seen by the neighborhoods that experience 85% of the population (Districts 6,10,9) is that they are drug addicted and refuse help. If the need is for more housing and services, there needs to be a plan that the public buys into that promises a result that has not been seen in the last 25 years.

As part of our discussion, Sam mentioned the Local Homeless Coordinating Board and the Strategic Plan Framework 2014-2019. This is the plan that is guiding the work of the San Francisco Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness that is referenced on the HOPE web page.

After a long discussion, the group discussed what they could do next. We asked Sam how we could help with the Navigation center and he said he'd think about it. Ross thought it would be a good idea to hold a town hall meeting to discuss the issues. Michael thought we should have a larger meeting with perhaps a panel discussion and a time for attendees to discuss. Briony talked about getting folks to tell their stories and filming them and sharing the videos. Jean mentioned that Bevan had asked us to invite the DA, Frank Carruba, to talk about the Neighborhood DA program. All agreed that we should continue to invite guests who will help us understand what is being done.

Notes submitted by Jean Bogiages