

**CLERKS RECORD OF THE MEETING
CITY COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2023
8:30 A.M.**

**COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ROOM
CITY HALL
8300 SANTA MONICA BLVD.
WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90069**

1. **A. CALL TO ORDER:** Councilmember Byers called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

B. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Councilmember Byers, Councilmember Heilman

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: Director of Human Services & Rent Stabilization Christof Schroeder, Strategic Initiatives Manager Corri Planck, Facilities and Field Services Division Manager Helen Collins, Project Development Administrator Alicen Bartle, City Clerk Melissa Crowder, Recording Secretary Alyssa T. Poblador.

- C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Meeting agenda for April 27, 2023.

Motion by Councilmember Heilman, seconded by Councilmember Byers, to approve the April 27, 2023 agenda.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

3. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None.

4. **NEW BUSINESS:**

4.A. HEALTHCARE IN ACTION PRESENTATION [L. ISENBERG, D. MURRAY]:

SUBJECT: The City Council Subcommittee on Homelessness will receive a presentation from Healthcare in Action, a 2022-23 newly contracted program, about services provided to West Hollywood community members.

Jessica Solaris, Director of Clinical Operations from Healthcare in Action (HIA) provided background information as outlined in the staff report dated April 27, 2023.

Healthcare in Action started with a video segment from USA Today to provide an idea of HIA mobile street team operations.

Ms. Solaris spoke about Mobile Street Medicine Crisis Response, the hours, and levels of care.

The City of West Hollywood contracts with Healthcare in Action (HIA) to respond to the needs of the City's unsheltered population (Mon-Sun, 7a-7p)

- HIA aims to arrive within 1 hour to render short term care
- Medical assessment
- Urgent medications
- Warm hand off to higher levels of care as needed, for example, a psychiatric facility
- For patients who consent, HIA can also provide more long-term care in primary care, substance abuse treatment, behavioral health, and housing navigation.

Most referrals are received via the telephone, and HIA just launched a messaging platform that has been working effectively.

Robert Finch, Physician Assistant with HIA, shared a story of a West Hollywood resident case study. The patient was successfully transferred to a recuperative care facility in March. His health has drastically improved due to the Team being able to provide spot wound care in conjunction with home health, and the patient's leg wounds have greatly improved. The patient is now receiving 3 meals a day and grateful to be indoors, he now is open to assistance with permanent housing.

Emma Tasini, Mental Health Specialist with HIA, shared another successful case study of a patient living with HIV and visual impairment. He was referred to mental health services with HIA, attended therapy for 5 months, and has lowered his depression scale. He has been connected to the LGBT Center and is currently in ADA-compliant permanent housing.

Ms. Solaris mentioned several partnerships that HIA is currently working with and noted TransLatin@ Coalition is also partnering with HIA. HIA continues to foster relationships through and with the City of West Hollywood.

Julianna Diggs, Peer Navigator, explained the day to day starting with daily check-ins by the team where they go over caseload and prioritization, split the team in half where half the team responds to existing patients and the other half responds to new patients. Some situations require de-escalation without law enforcement before being connected with housing and being inputted into the HMIS System (Homeless Management Information System). And of course, helping them with ongoing medical needs, HIV follow up, wound care follow-up, and all of it works more effectively with this multidisciplinary team.

Councilmember Byers inquired what a "warm handoff" looks like. Ms. Diggs responded. Their goal is not to be the patient's provider forever; HIA connects patients to housing and transitions them to a long-term provider

like Saban or Cedars Sinai. Ms. Tasini added that HIA will even go with them to their first appointment with their new primary care physician or new therapist.

Councilmember Byers also inquired about de-escalation particularly in West Hollywood and HIA explained the West Hollywood sheriffs have been open-minded with HIA coming in first.

Councilmember Heilman asked about the follow-up with people not in an encampment and what the strategy is. Mr. Finch responded. HIA staff will take in-depth social histories, where they go to regularly, and who their service providers are so they can follow them. One innovative aspect in collaboration with the national/international Street Medicine Institute is the use of GPS trackers via Cube GPS Trackers. This is offered to patients, it is not a requirement, and HIA emphasizes the data is not shared with anyone, just to locate them for social services and medical care. They found folks want the tracker if it connects them to services they need, and it has been a gamechanger and believes it is the way of the future. Councilmember Heilman commented that speaks to the trust patients have with the HIA team.

Councilmember Heilman inquired about mental health services and following up to ensure that patients take their medication. Mr. Finch responded that HIA does not initiate psychiatric holds, and partner with LASD if such holds are necessary. HIA offers long term oral psychiatric medication and recognized the difficulty of keeping track of medication while on the street, so offer long-acting injectable medication which works well. Mr. Finch emphasized that HIA initiates and monitors HIV care and weekly med drops, that medication is very expensive and if the patient loses that they are out of luck for 3-4 weeks due to insurance companies. HIA also offers gender-affirming hormone therapy for trans patients and are certified to provide medication for opiate, methamphetamine, and cocaine use disorder as well as alcohol use disorder. HIA contracts with psychiatrists and do rounds with them for schizophrenia treatment.

Councilmember Heilman further inquired if any of the City's contractors go to patient's homes to double check on medication. Ms. Planck replied that Housing Works is the agency that works with formerly unhoused folks for case management and oversee wrap around health care.

Councilmember Heilman referred to the partner agencies slide and queried if HIA partners with the LA County Department of Mental Health. Ms. Tasini responded about the difficulty despite the legal responsibility due to staff shortage.

RECOMMENDATION: Receive and discuss.

5. ITEMS FROM SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS: None.

6. ITEMS FROM STAFF

- **Holloway Interim Housing Program Update**

Facilities and Field Services Division Manager Helen Collins shared the City has closed escrow on the Holloway property. She expanded on the HomeKey project, tenant provider Ascencia, the architect, and moving forward with work with plumbing, tenting the facility, etc. Ms. Collins commented that the City expects to be done in July with design documents to rehabilitate the building and make it ADA-compliant. The timeline is to be completed in January 2024, and the challenge will be with Southern California Edison (SCE) and getting power to the building, since the wiring is circa 1950s. She is thinking of going out to bid sooner like with abatement and seismic to get creative but biggest hurdle will be SCE. April 2024 is the timeline goal for occupation of the space.

Ms. Planck shared that the SCE government affairs team and planners were brought in for an internal staff meeting to discuss expediting the process. Ms. Planck's staff met with the Chamber's Homelessness Committee to give an update, and the architecture team met with Ascencia staff to discuss design program operation planning. The City is also working with the Pollack Group for ongoing accurate communication about the site.

- **Los Angeles County Homeless Initiative Community Engagement**

Strategic Initiatives Manager Corri Planck commented that the City continues to engage with the LA County Homeless Initiative and have a conditional award for them for operations on the site as part of the City and COG's shelter improvement program. They have provided a pro bono offer of an architect and design team for support and expertise in trauma-informed design.

Director of Human Services & Rent Stabilization Christof Schroeder added it's an aggressive timeline and we must comply so we can maintain the funding secured. To ensure that happens, the City has coordinated an intracity team with representatives from most of the city departments working with the City Manager as this being a priority project.

Councilmember Heilman asked about Holloway and how many beds and what kind of services are provided. Ms. Planck responded there are 23 doors; 20 rooms for client services/interim housing, three junior suites and the lobby will be used for staff and service provision. There will be the same services that Ascencia currently provides like case management, financial education, job training, job search assistance, housing navigation, access to health care and mental health care linkages. Hoping to add healing arts programs, writing programs, recovery programs, yoga, art grants, and that's what Mr. Schroeder meant by every department of the City will be involved. No commercial kitchen on site so meals will be brought in and looking for partnerships there and creating common areas for people to have meals in community.

Councilmember Heilman asked if there is anything City Council can do to help with meeting the aggressive timeline, and Ms. Collins replied that its SCE and switchgear challenges from 48-52 weeks to get power in the building. Mr. Schroeder added when there's questions about the project, please refer them to Strategic Initiatives, because there is some misunderstanding in the community of what the project is and what its goals

are. Lastly, Ms. Planck added if the Council needs resources for social media, newsletters, etc to share with constituents, the City can provide that. There's a lot of information on the website, such as www.weho.org/holloway and www.weho.org/homeless.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

8. ADJOURNMENT: The City Council Subcommittee on Homelessness adjourned at 9:16 a.m. to its next regular meeting which will be held on Thursday, June 22, 2023 at 8:30 A.M. in the Community Conference Room, City Hall, 8300 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood CA 90069.



Alyssa T. Poblador, Recording Secretary

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