

Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Summary August 6, 2020

Committee Members Present: Ronald Coe, Christy Craig, A’Esha Goins, Lavonne Lewis, Octavio Posada, Fayyaz Raja, Wendell Williams

Committee Members Absent: Nancy Brune, Esther Langston, Taurus Duncan, Sanje Sedera, Gerald Mackin, Cherina Kleven, Rhiannonn Foreman

Clark County Staff Present: Randy Reinoso, Kristin Cooper, Gina Olivares, Sara Carrizal

- **Call to Order**
 - By Wendell Williams at 11:33 a.m.
- **Introduction of All Members**
- **Public Comment**
 - None
- **Approval of June 2020 Meeting Summary**
 - With seven CAC members in attendance, we did not have a quorum to vote/approve the June Meeting Summary
- **Department COVID-19 Update**
 - Kristin Cooper: I am one of two assistant directors, Randy is the other one. I can talk about the CARES Housing Assistance Program, also known as CHAP. We have a recovery support function (RSF4) through the Multi Agency Coordination Center or MACC. The group is made up of all the different jurisdictions, and advocates for homeless and housing. The group has been meeting to come up with what is needed in the community as we are heading into recovery. Now, we are still in the emergency and never really came out of it; and as we all know it got really bad in July. We are working on both the emergency and recovery side. Recovery side part of what we knew was needed in the community was rental assistance because so many people have been out of work or furloughed or in some cases experiencing permanent job loss. RSF4 said we need to get a program out to the community. Clark County Social Service set aside \$15 million, for a total of \$30 million. The initial push is \$15 million for our nonprofit community agencies that were already apart of the rental assistance community that has experience with doing this. We got those out and that program is up and running and being inundated with calls as you can imagine because there are thousands of people that need help. We are going to be burning through this money really quickly. We started the program on July 20th officially and we have 9,000 inquiries that have already come through which is last week’s number. I am sure this week’s number will be more. We have about 5,000 people that have put in applications. As you can imagine, it takes some time to go through and work those so there is back log as you can imagine, and the organizations are doing the best that they can. The City of Henderson has stepped up by providing additional staff members to help at Hope Link, which is in Henderson to help with the applications to get the funds out. Clark County Social Service is also looking to provide help to the organizations that have high numbers. We are working on transferring applications to the agencies that are not overwhelmed as the big ones like Hope Link, Help of Southern Nevada, and Neighborhood Housing Services of Southern Nevada. They have received large amounts compared to the smaller agencies like Emergency Aid of Boulder City. And on top of all of this, we don’t have 14 agencies we have 13 agencies because one agency had to shut down due to a COVID outbreak amongst their staff. It is not perfect but we are in the process of getting the

county set up to do the same program for the other \$15 million that we have set aside for this program. We are setting up a portal through IBM and looking at a September start date.

- Gina: The first week of September is our goal for launching the portal, which is basically a website. We'll also do public outreach so citizens know where to go for the assistance.
- Wendell: Questions or comments?
 - Christy: How does this money overlap with those that are in group homes that are there as a result of mental illness or intellectual disability. Is there any overlap?
 - Kristin: No, there is no overlap. This is for people who are renting an apartment or have a mortgage and actually includes utilities. Because the group homes usually are paid through a different way, the person is on Social Security Disability and the major portion of their funding goes to housing and they have a little bit for personal items and that kind of thing. That is my understanding. Randy do you have a different understanding?
 - Randy: That is also my understanding.
 - Kristin: Are you finding that is a need in the community? That people aren't able to pay for their group home
 - Christy: It's a combination of not paying for group housing, but it is that they are also closing. There are no alternatives and they are trying to find single-living assisted SLA's. I am on a couple committees where housing in particular with group housing for people with intellectual disabilities and mental illness is a massive problem. We keep people in jail because we do not have housing for them, which is awful.
 - Kristin: We probably need to have a conversation offline about this to find out more and see where we can assist, if we can.
 - Christy: That would be great.
 - Randy: Would you like someone on our end to reach out to you to coordinate a time to discuss this?
 - Christy: I would like to talk to my committee members that are more involved with those courts that are trying to place people, shoot me an email and I will reach out to them to find a date that we can all talk.
 - Randy: Ok.
- Kristin: There is a question in the chat, how is the information about CHAP being shared within the community? There has been a press release by the State and the County. The state has provided \$20 million to do this program that we will be adding either to the community partners or through the County depending on where we are as we move forward. 2-1-1 is our big referral agency and they have seen a huge increase in calls for this program in particular and then we sent this out through the commissioners and through a variety of the nonprofits, which have sent this out in their newsletter. We have a one page flyer one in Spanish and one in English. Gina will send out the flyer and you can have whoever you think can post it to get the word out. We did not do a broader campaign like bus wraps because we knew we would get a lot of applications and we need to work through the applications. We want to work through these clients first and then expand our reach.

- Kristin: Octavio what are some of the challenges the program has been experiencing and how can we help? Really, it has been staffing up to get the work done. Ms. Lewis you are running a program, what are some challenges you have been facing that you can share with the group.
 - Lavonne: We are running tremendous back log. Just being able to answer all the phone calls and emails are overwhelming. We are also looking at the payments we have to make. In some cases, some people have not paid any rent back through March.
Will there be additional funds allocated to those that have the program before the end of the year so we can continue if we run out of money? We are running a tremendous back log; I'm just waiting to get the numbers for this week. Last week we had over 160 people that we have not been able to respond to 75 applications on that day that they are working on. It is enormous in terms of the number of people that need assistance. But we are working through it.
 - Kristin: That's great, thank you very much. So you can see there are a lot of challenges out there. How can you help? I am not really too sure. Other than good thoughts sent out way. Randy can you think of any way?
 - Randy: Come down and help decision these cases. We appreciate the support of the CAC and the nonprofits. We have some amazing partnerships in the community like Ms. Lewis. As Kristin mentioned, our workers have jumped in while we wait for the new system to be in place in September to help our nonprofit partners. For now, we'll roll up our sleeves to get this taken care of alongside our nonprofit partners. This is community wide effort and we expected an avalanche. We saw what was happening in other jurisdictions so we weren't surprised to be inundated. Any ideas that we have not thought of are encouraged and welcomed as well.
- A'esha: I have a question, have we begun to pay people out? Because I am currently working with Make It Work Nevada, and we have been calling our universes and explaining the availability of CHAP, but I realized people have not received payment or if they have been approved. What is the timeline?
 - Kristin: It can be several weeks for everything to be completed, depending on agencies of course. It may be faster for one agency to another. But it would be 2-3 weeks before they get their application approved and the money going out. I got an email stating Hope Link got \$125,000 over the last three weeks. So It is going out, and think about the increments \$1,000-\$3,000; so different amounts depending on the situation. Yes, Ms. Lewis is right it is larger amounts, and yes, we will be adding to it and it will be available.
- A'esha: One more question, I realized CHAP covers utilities. Is there a preference of paying utilities over rent? Or will you just look case by case.
 - Kristin: It's case by case, but yes in most cases it is both.
- Christy: you are going to give us a copy of the flyer.
 - Kristin: Yes, we are going to get you a copy of both the Spanish and English flyer.
- Kristin: Is it alright Mr. Williams for me to move COVID Homeless response?
- Wendell: Yes please.
- Kristin: So part of the issue we have had with COVID-19 is that we have shelters that have to reduce their capacity, for example Catholic Charities from 500 a night to 250 to implement social distancing

within the shelter. So you have people that would normally be sheltered at night, but now don't have a place to go. So we stood up 323 units at two hotels who have worked with us. We have support services that go with that and are housing high risk homeless people who are 65+ and/or people who have underlying conditions that make them highly vulnerable to poor outcomes if they got COVID; so people with lung issues, heart conditions, diabetes. We are housing them in these locations, and while we thought it would be for three months, it looks like the need will extend beyond December 30, which is when our CARES funding expires. We are looking at a variety of solutions in the community. Already, we do not have enough affordable housing in the community to meet the needs.

I also want to let you know that we do have the non-congregate going on. It is under the emergency side of the response, and CHAP is on the recovery side. And we also have an application for basic needs which closes next Friday. We are already starting to work up contracts with organizations for homeless services, food and nutrition, food delivery, and there was minimum asks on this: \$100,000 because we do not have the capacity to put out \$20,000-30,000 in grants unfortunately. I am working on that capacity right now but part of the problem is these funds only go through December 30. So we need these organizations to spend before December 30. Congress, with the Heroes Act, are trying to extend the deadline on the CARES Act funding by 90 days. Child care is also a huge issue. We have received seven applications for companies to provide service, which is great because it is desperately needed, particularly as parents go back to work. School starts in another three weeks, and parents are going to need an after-school place; as well, if kids aren't going back to school, parents will need a place for their kids to go during the day. We are trying to stand up those programs as well.

- Randy: We are now providing assistance to the SNHD with call tracing. We are also making contact with Spanish-speakers because we have a lot of online-client facing staff that are bilingual. We currently have nine employees that are strictly doing call tracing for the district. They had 2 ½ days of intense training and then they had on-the-job training for their first week. This is the end of their second week of doing it on their own. At this point in time, they have made 3,100 phone contacts with people in the community, informing them that they have been exposed to someone who is potentially COVID positive and providing references that they need. The expectation is we will be doing this through the end of the year. We will be evaluating on a month-to-month basis depending on the needs of the community and on the demand on the department because we do expect to be full throttle in providing financial assistance to those that are impacted by COVID in the beginning of September.
- Kristin: While all this has been going on, we have been doing out doing our regular programs. Step up, Long Term Care, and a lot of it is being doing remotely by our staff. They have been extraordinary and stepped up. We have come up with new processes and efficiencies. They have been impressive and I am really proud of our staff.
- Randy: I agree, we have been doing a lot of things that we didn't think or expect we would be able to do remotely. You hear this all the time now, a lot of work can be done remotely. We are learning it has been more effective, and we have seen some remarkable stuff. People have been innovative in their thinking because they have been put in a situation where they can kind of forced to and we have seen some remarkable. We are still seeing our clients, and we are providing them masks as well. We are not allowing clients to come into the office for now. We will slowly phase in parts of our business. For the time being, we are serving clients by phone calls, mail boxes, drop boxes at every office, and forms available online.
- Lavonne: You mentioned child care. Is there is an application for that to get funding for child care, after school operations or day time operations?
 - Kristin: You can go back to add the Basic Needs Application.

- Lavonne: We are considering that because kids will not go back to school and we have in the past had an after school program primarily for our employees; but some places are allowing they bring their kids to work during the day because they won't be in school. Maybe we can expand that to a number of children, in a COVID proper environment. I'll look at that.
 - Wendell: Anyone else?
 - Lavonne: Next is public comment.
 - Wendell: Before public comment, and in reference to the department update, I have said it before and I will say it again, CCSS continues to be on the cutting edge of providing assistance. We have great partners. You continue to do great work in the community. In spite of the uncertainty with COVID, you continue to do great work in the community.
 - Kristin: We appreciate that acknowledgment. Got a great team of people.
 - Lavonne: I don't know if it is public comment, but we should thank the County for all that they have been doing in getting the money out to the community and attempting to provide all the resources that they can to help everyone at this time. Thank you very much Randy and Kristin, we really appreciate everything you and your staff are doing.
 - Randy: Thank you. We appreciate you.
 - Kristin: Yes, Thank you!
- **Public Comment**
 - None
- **Adjournment**
 - By Wendell Lewis at 12:03 p.m.

The next CAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 1, 2020 at 11:30 a.m. via Webex.