

MEETING MINUTES

Our City, Our Home Oversight Committee

February 23, 2023

9:33 AM – 11:34 AM

Committee Members

Nina Catalano

Michelle Cunningham-Denning

Julia D'Antonio

Jennifer Friedenbach

Julie Leadbetter

Shanell Williams

This meeting was held by WebEx pursuant to the Governor's Executive Orders and Mayoral Emergency Proclamations suspending and modifying requirements for in-person meetings. During the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) emergency, the Our City, Our Home Oversight Committee (OCOH) will convene remotely until the Committee is legally authorized to meet in person.

Note: The Our City, Our Home Oversight Committee meetings are live streamed at SFGovTV.org. The agenda, video recording, audio recording, and caption notes are posted at:

https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=209.

Supporting materials including presentations and reports are posted at:

<https://sf.gov/meeting/february-23-2023/our-city-our-home-oversight-committee-regular-meeting>

1) **Call to Order**

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 9:33AM.

Roll Call:

Member Catalano: Present

Member Cunningham-Denning: Absent

Vice Chair D'Antonio: Absent

Member Friedenbach: Present

Member Leadbetter: Absent

Chair Williams: Present

The meeting does not have quorum and will not take actions. The meeting's content will include informational presentations, question & answer, and public comment.

We acknowledge that we are on the unceded ancestral homeland of the Ramaytush Ohlone, who are the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula. As the indigenous stewards of this land and in accordance with their traditions, the Ramaytush Ohlone have never ceded, lost nor forgotten their responsibilities as the caretakers of this place, as well as for all peoples who reside in their traditional territory. As guests, we recognize that we benefit from living and working on their traditional homeland. We wish to pay our respects by acknowledging the ancestors, elders and relatives of the Ramaytush Community and by affirming their sovereign rights as First Peoples

2) ***Opportunity for the public to comment on any matters within the Committee's jurisdiction that are not on the agenda.***

There were no public comments on this agenda item.

3) Discussion Item

Summary of the legal rules governing remote access to public meetings after March 1, 2023, with discussion and possible action by the Committee.

Deputy City Attorney Jon Givner said that since March of 2020, public bodies have been prohibited from meeting in person as part of the Mayor's declaration of a state of emergency due to the COVID pandemic. As of February 28th, the Mayor's emergency orders will terminate. Beginning March 1st, the OCOH Oversight Committee will meet in person. Members of the Committee will have to be in person to participate, count toward quorum, and vote with two exceptions.

Members with disabilities that make it impossible to attend meetings in person at City Hall can submit a reasonable accommodation request to the Department of Human Resources (DHR). Similarly, members on parental leave can participate remotely for a limited amount of time.

Members of the public will be able to attend the meetings in person and make public comments in person. Members of the public with disabilities can request a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act and give remote public comment.

Chair Williams asked about guidance for allowing remote public comment. Deputy City Attorney Givner said that committees may decide to allow remote public comment but are not required to do so.

Member Friedenbach asked whether the Committee has to take the same approach as the Board of Supervisors? Deputy Director Givner said that it is possible that the Board would pass an ordinance, but at this point, the Committee can decide how it wants to approach remote public comment.

Member Friedenbach said that in-person meetings are often more accessible for unhoused people.

Chair Williams said that the OCOH Oversight Committee has room 416 at City Hall for its meetings. She encouraged making public participation as accessible as possible.

Chair Williams asked Deputy City Attorney Givner to restate for clarity the exceptions for members to in person communication. These are (1) a disability that requires reasonable accommodation approved by DHR and (2) parental leave. There is no exception for COVID.

There were no public comments on this agenda item.

4) Action Item:

Approval, with possible modification, of the meeting minutes from January 26, 2023.

This agenda item was tabled to the March 23, 2023, meeting because a quorum of members was not present to vote.

5) Discussion Item

Presentation of the six-month report on OCOH Fund spending and program implementation with discussion and possible action by the Committee.

Jessica Shimmin, OCOH Policy Analyst in the Controller's Office presented the [Our City, Our Home Fund Six-Month Report, Fiscal Year 2022-2023](#), which is available on the Committee's website. This mid-year financial reporting includes information about the budget as well as actual and projected year end spending.

Member Friedenbach noted that the balance of reserved funding in FY22-23 is greater than the amount appropriated in the budget, even though this was the first-year funds were reserved. Ms. Shimmin said that in some cases departments have added to the amounts reserved to shore up against shortfalls.

Gigi Whitley—Deputy Director of Finance with the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH)—said that the current year budget shortfall nearly wipes out all the reserve savings from last year. HSH began adding to the reserves using one-time savings. As examples, the reimbursement of Homekey funds and gaining some state grant funds for shelter programs have both created savings. These additional reserves are not part of the expenditure plan, which will be presented to the Committee as part of the balancing plan. Deputy Director Whitley stressed that the Department has not made cuts to the expenditure plan or slowed implementation.

Member Friedenbach said she would like the mid-year financial report to include service utilization data. She said that humanizing the spending is important. Ms. Shimmin (Controller's Office) said that utilization information, demographics, and outcomes are a feature of the annual report that wasn't feasible at mid-year.

Director of Administration and Operations for Mental Health SF at the Department of Public Health (DPH), Kelly Kirkpatrick, provided an [implementation update on OCOH funded mental health investments using the slides linked here](#). Some highlights include the opening of more than 160 new residential care and treatment beds, the expansion of the Office of Coordinated Care and Case Management to better serve people who are transitioning between institutional settings, new clinical services in permanent housing, expanded Transition Aged Youth and Transgender mental health services, and extended hours at the Behavioral Health Access Center.

Member Friedenbach thanked Director Kirkpatrick for the update. She said that she is concerned about the balance between crisis services and ongoing care. For unhoused people, there is value in continuity, having a person who will help navigate the system. Member Friedenbach said that she is glad to see increased follow up with people using Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES). Director Kirkpatrick (DPH) agreed that the purpose of the Office of Coordinated Care is to provide a greater continuity of care for people experiencing homelessness. She said that the program is not yet fully implemented, though the vision and intention is to provide a consistent, steady source of support in moving through the mental health system.

Member Catalano asked about what proportion of staff positions are civil service vs. community-based service providers. She also asked whether there is an opportunity to make staffing recommendations to an expanded set of partners such as philanthropy, higher education partners, and the state? Director Kirkpatrick (DPH) said that she does not know the breakdown of civil service and community-based staff positions, although this will be a component of the Controller's Office report.

Member Friedenbach said she is concerned about the restructuring of street crisis services to rely more heavily on paramedics. She said that the inclusion of paramedics has been expensive and not

responsive to community-identified needs. Member Friedenbach asked if OCOH funding is going to the Fire Department as part of these changes? Director Kirkpatrick (DPH) said that the Street Crisis Response Teams are funded with about \$12m of OCOH funding, including the Fire Department EMTs as well as follow up teams mentioned earlier. The reorganization of SCRT will enable behavioral health clinicians to dedicate their time to client work, strengthening continuity, follow up, and linkages after an acute crisis event.

Member Catalano said she was not clear on the nature of the restructuring. Director Kirkpatrick said that the Street Crisis Response Team vehicles will now consist of a community paramedic, an EMT, and a peer counselor or outreach worker to provide the initial street crisis response. Behavioral health clinicians will provide follow up support to the patient over a longer period of time than the immediate crisis stabilization.

Member Catalano asked what proportion of the Mental Health SF budget comes from the OCOH Fund? Director Kirkpatrick said that OCOH contributes about \$60m to Mental Health SF, which is also funded through the SF General Fund, state funding sources, and CalAIM.

Chair Williams thanked Director Kirkpatrick for her presentation.

Chief Deputy Director Noelle Simmons of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) provided an [implementation update on OCOH funded permanent housing, shelter & hygiene, and homelessness prevention programs using the slides linked here.](#)

Some highlights in the permanent housing portfolio include acquiring 6 new sites (625 units of permanent housing) including 200 of those units are for families with children, investments in the quality of support services in permanent supportive housing, 500 adult Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool (FHSP) are in contract, and more than 517 households have moved into housing using an Emergency Housing Voucher.

Some highlights in the Shelter and Hygiene portfolio include plans for two additional cabin sites, re-inflation of the Navigation Centers, the launch of Urgent Accommodation Vouchers (aka hotel vouchers) is underway, and the City is negotiating to purchase the Oasis Family Shelter.

Some highlights in the Homelessness Prevention portfolio include opening a new Access Point for veterans, a new access point for justice involved persons, launching the direct cash transfer pilot for youth in April, SF Emergency Rental Assistance Program assisted 2,800 households, and tenants in all of the City's PSH now pay no more than 30% of their income in rent.

Member Friedenbach thanked Chief Deputy Director Simmons for the presentation. Member Friedenbach asked about utilization of Rapid Re-Housing program and suggested that under-utilization of the program may be a good reason to re-program RRH funding. Member Friedenbach asked about the number of flex pool subsidies for transgender people. Chief Deputy Director Simmons said that 50 have been released with plans for an additional 100 in the coming year.

Member Friedenbach asked if HSH has explored locating the cabins at the existing safe sleep site in the Mission. Chief Deputy Director Simmons said the City has a site (16th and Mission) in mind that is bigger and can accommodate more cabins.

Member Friedenbach asked to discuss at a future meeting whether there will be savings on rent once the Oasis site is purchased? Chief Deputy Director Simmons agreed to a future presentation.

Director of Community Development at the Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development (MOHCD), Brian Cheu, provided an [implementation update on the OCOH funded](#)

[prevention and permanent housing investments that are administered by MOHCD](#). Some highlights include 1,100 households receiving eviction legal support, 84 households served with an ongoing shallow rental subsidy, and by the end of the year MOHCD expects full enrollment of the deep rental subsidy program that helps 41 families living in SROs to obtain and sustain appropriately sized housing.

Member Catalano asked for more information about \$17m of funding in the Eviction Prevention program type that is projected to be spent by year end but has not yet been spent or encumbered. Director Cheu said that the department has been thinking about how to target specific high-risk groups through innovative approaches to contracting, for instance, there isn't currently a Black-led provider. But MOHCD has been cautious about putting out these contracts until there is more certainty about the Fund stability.

Member Friedenbach asked about the success rate of the right to counsel program? Director Cheu said [the most recent study of tenant right to counsel](#) showed a high success rate with full-scope legal services, particularly among Black and African American participants. Member Friedenbach said that preventing homelessness is one of the biggest challenges, as the PIT count showed 4 people entering homelessness for every 1 moving into permanent housing.

Member Friedenbach noted that the alternative dispute services existed before the Our City, Our Home Fund and asked how the OCOH funding is being used? Director Cheu said OCOH funding expanded the program to target households most at risk of literal homelessness and did not supplant funding.

Member Friedenbach asked Director Cheu for his thoughts on evictions from PSH. He said that MOHCD is working with HSH to implement a strong housing stabilization framework to minimize evictions from PSH. He noted that there is next to nothing left to offer people who do not or cannot stabilize in permanent supportive housing. So, MOHCD and HSH are working together closely on identifying areas where additional support may make a difference. As an example, in some cases an enhanced rent payee services may provide that little bit of extra support that keeps someone housed and out of eviction.

Francisco Da Costa made a public comment. The caller reminded everybody to read the Housing Element and figure out how to add 82,000 brand new housing units. He pointed to high vacancies in the financial district. He asked the Committee to do a needs assessment on quality-of-life issues. Why is there so much homelessness in San Francisco today?

6) Discussion/Possible Action Item

Opportunity to propose future agenda items with discussion and possible action by the Committee.

Member Friedenbach raised two topics for future agendas: more details on Homelessness Prevention success rates and on the Workforce development resources available, particularly those connected to RRH.

Member Catalano asked to better understand the scope of impact assessment across the Fund investments.

Chair Williams asked for an update on the Data Working Group and Strategic Planning initiatives. Jessica Shimmin, OCOH Policy Analyst in the Controller's Office said that in March the Committee will receive an update related to HSH's City-Wide Strategic Plan.

Chair Williams also asked for an opportunity to hear and update from the Office of Racial Equity

about any work they're doing around homelessness.

Francisco Da Costa made a public comment. The caller expressed amazement that few callers participate in public comment, given the importance of the topic. He suggested outreach.

7) **Adjourn**

The Chair requested a motion to adjourn. Member Friedenbach moved to adjourn the meeting. Member Catalano seconded the motion to adjourn.

Roll Call:

Member Catalano: Yes

Member Cunningham-Denning: Absent

Vice Chair D'Antonio: Absent

Member Friedenbach: Yes

Member Leadbetter: Absent

Chair Williams: Yes

The meeting adjourned at 11:34AM.

Committee staff and members can be reached at OCOH.CON@sfgov.org