



City and County of San Francisco  
SHELTER MONITORING COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES [DRAFT]

Wednesday, **October 16, 2024** | 10:00 AM  
Room 408, City Hall

**Present:** Vice Chair Britt Creech  
Secretary Angie David  
Committee Member Kaleese Street  
Committee Member Steven Clark  
Committee Member Zae Illo  
Committee Member Belinda Dobbs

Committee Member C-J Ross  
Committee Member Justice  
Committee Member Traci Watson  
**Excused:** Committee Member Muasau  
Committee Member Justice  
Chair Diana Almanza

All SMC meetings are public. Homeless and formerly homeless San Franciscans are encouraged to attend.  
**PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL BE TAKEN AFTER DISCUSSIONS & BEFORE VOTES/ACTIONS**

I. A. **CALL TO ORDER/LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT / AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS** 5 min  
Meeting began at 10:11 AM. There *was* a quorum.

B. **REVIEW OF PAST MINUTES** *DISCUSSION/ ACTION*  
**VICE CHAIR CREECH** 5 min  
Some menus have not been updated yet under the new MOW contract. However, the meals served each day do still have to be posted.

**Public comment:** None

**M/S/C: Dobbs/David/unanimous** - Aug Minutes approved; *approval of Sept Minutes tabled*

II. **OLD BUSINESS/REPORTS** *DISCUSSION/ ACTION*

A. **MEALS AND NUTRITION** *DISCUSSION/ ACTION*  
**VICE CHAIR CREECH** 20 min

The subcommittee is asking the Committee to ask HSH to gather and share information about the availability of a third meal.

**Public comment:** Aaron testified that at the RV shelter he resides at there is no lunch. His impression is that the shelter and/or food provider are over-billing for 80 guests instead of the true number of about 30. No utensils are provided. Giving one provider a monopoly is a bad way to go. The food is “horrible—even dogs and cats won’t touch it.” \$16/day/client is more than enough to provide decent food. The last provider’s offered more varied, better tasting food. Member Ross agrees based on her experience a problem exists in this area at other shelters. A better process is needed to provide feedback to the grantee. Member Illo pointed out that, given the tough fiscal environment, it would be helpful to know what percentage of participants are signed up at other food distribution programs. It would be good to minimize crossover and ensure that funding is used as designed. Patrick Buckalew clarified that the MOW contract refers to the *maximum* that they can receive; they only actually get reimbursed for meals provided. Clients can give feedback by (1) telling site leadership, or (2) via a quarterly survey. There are also bi-annual focus groups. Member Street requested the survey results.

Azeen ZiaEbrahimi pointed out that food “provided” but not eaten will be paid for, which is deceptive. Reviews and taste tests do not tell the full story. Member Ross pointed out that Section J of the MOW contract calls for a feedback process. She looks forward to hearing what the focus groups say. Again, direct communication from clients to grantees is important; otherwise, shelters can blame them (MOW) and the client is effectively stonewalled. Member Illo said he has some experience in this area and appreciates the challenges of running a very large food distribution program.

**Proposal:** *Ask HSH to survey shelters to find out what each one does vis-à-vis “lunch.”*  
**M/S/C: Street/Illo/unanimous**

**B. SHELTER STAFF TRAINING**

**DISCUSSION**

**VICE CHAIR CREECH**

*10 min*

At recent Subcommittee meetings, the 2004 Shelter Training Manual was reviewed. It was agreed the full Committee should be asked to approve a memo to be sent to HSH with some specific recommendations to encourage action.

**Member/Public Comment:** Azeen ZiaEbrahimi reminded the Committee that gender dysphoria is a recognized disability under ADA. The manual needs to set expectations; else training is meaningless. Aaron said the shelters are doing a bad job of complying with the ADA. They do not make sure an ADA officer is on duty on every shift. In fact, there is a lawsuit by HUD against the City. Those in wheelchairs and other disabled clients are not properly accommodated. His shelter is “flipping us the bird.” Member Ross added that it is important to develop clean pathways to increase compliance with the SOCs.

*Explanatory documents – Draft memo for HSH*

**Proposal:** *Approve to go out under the signature of the Chair.*

**M/S/C: Dobbs/Street/Unanimous**

**III. NEW BUSINESS/REPORTS**

**A. POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT**

**DISCUSSION/ACTION**

**SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR STREET**

*-15 min*

Topics were meals, harm reduction, and laundry. Rules only require that one staffer at each site needs to be trained in food handling, but in practice people make mistakes. Annual training is probably not enough. Funding may be an issue. Member David recommends mesh bags (like Bayview uses). Member Ross would encourage onsite washing. Member Street suggests reimbursing guests who use the local laundromat. Member Illo said that laundry is handled better in the wake of the pandemic, but many laundromats have closed. Dawn McKnight pointed out that washing is more challenging that might be realized. For example, clothing may be saturated with hard-to-remove substances, even feces.

Subcommittee Chair Street advised staff to put out a request for speakers, but that they should provide draft comments, to ensure they fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee.

**Public Comment:** Azeen ZiaEbrahimi wants to make sure we recall that “Guard Cards” are also important, but pay needs to reflect the education, skills, and experience of clients. Aaron stated that laundry is a problem where he resides. Clients cannot be certain that what is turned in to be washed will be returned. Charges are excessive, e.g., “\$50 for a blanket.”

**B. HARM REDUCTION**

**DISCUSSION**

**SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS**

*10 min*

The subcommittee thinks an expert should be found to present to the full Committee. Best

practices have changed. Member Illo expressed some caution that providers might be worried about liability. Insurance costs increase when it becomes known that overdose reversal is something the insured is expected to undertake with any regularity. It is important that we be aware of this. Vice Chair Creech lamented that this might disincentivize the good work being done to reduce harm. “Shelters do not enable risky behavior. Harm reduction is being attacked for political reasons.” Member Street would be very open to inviting a speaker.

**Public Comment:** Patrick Buckalew told the Committee that harm reduction saves many lives every year. Deaths were down in FY23-24, especially at the congregate shelters.

**Proposal:** *Shall a speaker be found and brought in to a future meeting to elucidate?*

**M/S/C: Street/Illo/Unanimous** – The Committee will ask a subject-matter expert to present.

#### C. LAUNDRY AT SHELTERS

#### DISCUSSION

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

5 min

Clients need and deserve access to dependable laundry options.

**Proposal:** *Shall HSH be asked to survey sites re laundry processes being used?*

**M/S/C: Street/Illo/Unanimous**

#### D. DEPT OF HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

HSH

10 min

HSH Program Manager Buckalew reported sites remain more or less full, which has been HSH’s long-standing goal. Member Ross asked if the Homeward Bound program impacted the statistics and whether Dolores is the only walk-in shelter for women. See Admin Code §20.403. HSH stated that the Homeward Bound and Isolation & Quarantine spaces are not counted. Patrick Buckalew will look into obtaining information on this to share. Member Illo asked about beds set aside for emergency police referrals. There is some information made available daily to the police about empty beds that can be assigned at the last minute.

**Public Comment:** Azeen ZiaEbrahimi spoke of “domestic and global gender apartheid.” Also, many issues arise due to coordinated entry staff not being culturally competent. People game the system to get into shelters they are not best fit for, e.g., Taimon Booten. DPH might be able to assist in screening clients to address this problem. Caller Aaron believes “Glide hands out meth pipes.” He thinks this is a bad idea. His requests to Bayview Hunters Point Foundation to have AA and NA help guests where he stays went unheeded. Urban Alchemy is inefficient and do not provide assistance required under the ADA. Their employees lack necessary skills. Members Dobbs and Ross opined that his allegations were out of line.

#### E. STAFF REPORT

#### DISCUSSION

STAFF

10 min

Staff reported there were six formal complaints in September. Eight different SOC’s were allegedly violated. SOC #1 was alleged to have been violated 7 times. No responses were late.

**Public Comment:** Staffer Marion McFarlin stated that an effort is being made to get shelters to be more uniform and clear in the way they respond. Member Ross asked to be placed on the agenda in November to go over her complaint proposals. Member Illo mentioned that case managers have a role. Member Street clarified Member Ross is working on a separate path for complaint form submittal, i.e., there is already one for internal grievances; the new box would be for SMC complaints to be dropped off in at the shelters, bypassing on-site staff. Member David pointed out that any change could be socialized at “townhall” meetings. Members and staff can and should attend these.

IV. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

DISCUSSION

5 min

Aaron encouraged Members to attend town halls. He thinks that the RV park should be monitored by a body like the SMC rather than just the program manager (Angelica Varella). Food surveys should not be picked up by the grantee: this is a recipe for corruption or at least a conflict of interest. Also, the laundromat option should be made available. Azeen ZiaEbrahimi said that the recent mayoral debate was not encouraging. “Bureaucratic nepotism” and misleading metrics lead to compliance failures not coming to light, as well as to missed opportunities to incentivize improved cultural competency in decisionmakers.

ADJOURNMENT

*Meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM*

Action Item	Assigned To
Put QR codes in existing SMC flyers to take clients to the online complaint form, SOC list, and monthly meeting pages.	Staff
Begin noting how many unique complainants are included in compliant counts, so that if one individual skews the statistics this will be noted.	Staff
Draft approved emails and memos to HSH	Staff
Provide SMC with MOW survey results	HSH

To obtain copies of the agenda, minutes, or other documents, please contact staff at [shelter.monitoring@sfgov.org](mailto:shelter.monitoring@sfgov.org) or (628) 652-8080.