



Central Hollywood Neighborhood Council

HOMELESSNESS COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING

Monday, August 2, 2021, 7:00 p.m.

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89005784761>

Phone: 669 900 6833

Webinar ID: 890 0578 4761

[Supplemental materials](#)

ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO ACTION, INCLUDING A VOTE TO SUBMIT A COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT.

1. CALL TO ORDER -- 7.01

2. ROLL CALL P A

Louis Abramson	X	
Eman Al-Hassan		X
Nyesha Brown-Love		7.05

3. PUBLIC COMMENT on non-agenda items

Comments from the public on non-agenda items within the Committee's subject matter jurisdiction. (Up to two minutes per speaker.)

4. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

a) Approval of [July](#) minutes. (2 min)

- Tabled

b) Declaration of intent. (2 min)

- [Abramson gives declaration]

5. ACTION ITEMS, including discussion and possible action items

a) Presentation by [Urban Alchemy](#) CEO Dr. Lena Miller, Psy.D., and COO Bayron Wilson re: the nature of and their participation in the [CIRCLE unarmed crisis response](#) system (Crisis and Incident Response Through Community-Led Engagement) to be piloted in Hollywood. (35 min) James Hegler -- director of operations + Project Roomkey (PRK) involvement also participating.

- Abramson -- What is the history of your organization?

- Miller -- Started 2018, spun-off of [Hunters Point Family](#), begun 25 years earlier and worked with young people + families living in public housing. Focused on education, mental health, workforce development. Urban Alchemy (UA) started due to San Francisco's call for pit stops [hand washing + toilet facilities], which reduced 911 and 311 calls. Asked to take-on the Tenderloin Clean program, then BART elevators. Saw good results in places operating. Operation grew when COVID hit, to staff PRK + Safe Sleeping locations. UA works at the intersection of mental health + addiction + poverty issues. "We started in LA...have been running Pit Stops here [for some time]. Office in LA + robust programming. Toilets + showers + street cleaning, staffing tiny homes, safe sleep villages, safety and service [i.e., CIRCLE]."
 - Role in COVID was slightly different between SF and LA. Safe sleeping in LA started a few months ago; May 2020 in SF.
- Abramson -- What are your current programs/projects in LA?
 - Miller: Safe Sleeping village (E. Hollywood/Rampart Village), Tiny Homes (NoHo), + outreach.
- Abramson -- What will the CIRCLE pilot program be, when will it turn on, and how will our stakeholders be able to use it?
 - Wilson: Already activated. Engaging in Venice and Hollywood. Now learning about people [experiencing homelessness] here and their needs. Mr. Hegler oversees CIRCLE program and engagement team.
 - Hegler: we're building relationships, meeting guests [people experiencing homelessness]; focusing on COVID vaccinations right now, providing water, food. Attempting to connect with housing if necessary, but principally listening to clients to build a lasting relationship.
 - Miller: when a disturbance arises, knowing a person and having a positive association is key. We try to bring 10s down to 8s, then 7s, then 5s, etc., using patience, talking, real connection.
- Abramson -- What is the role of or your perspective on lived experience?
 - Miller: We prioritize hiring former long-term offenders because their understanding of human beings is unique.
 - Wilson: We have a uniquely high emotional intelligence and know the difference between someone feeling unsafe and uncomfortable. We understand of the effects of trauma. The magic is in being able to relate to acute situations; mental health episodes, listening + patience.
 - Hegler: Our outreach workers have built empathy through actual interactions with real people.
- Abramson -- What will interventions consist of?
 - Miller: we have been doing street medicine for past 3 years. 600 resuscitations. It'll be a supervisor + 3 practitioners (trained in deescalation + above medical interventions). Can move into situations without fear because we see difference between people screaming and screaming because they're a threat. [Our team members] are not psychologists, but trained to enable their skills to be useful in the situation.
- Abramson -- What will the role be for other community service providers?

- Miller: They are necessary. We build and have relationships with just about everyone.
- Love -- Describe the Tenderloin clean program and can we bring it to Hollywood.
 - Wilson -- it's the same program we run on Skid Row.
 - Miller -- would be happy to expand it in Hollywood. Was featured on front page of the *LA Times* 2 months ago.
- Love -- if people want to help, how could they?
 - Wilson -- it's not for volunteers. We focus on the areas other organizations chose not to do b/c of danger. We have a 16-person team that understands the difference between treasure and trash. We start at 4:00 AM.
 - Miller -- it's a lot of needles, public health areas, waste; not a volunteering opportunity.
 - Wilson -- can give you a tour at 5:00A?
 - Abramson + Love -- we'd take you up on that.
- Love -- What are the challenges re: tiny homes?
 - Miller -- we pass out food, clean the bathrooms, do wellness checks (full operations). Tiny Homes + Safe Sleep Village came as a response to Echo Park (options for places for people to go). Tiny Homes is an evolution: provides heat+air conditioning, places to put up pictures, keep pets, bring possessions, partners. No curfews, but there's 72 hour limit so as not to waste the bed.
- Natalie Yaru [stakeholder] -- Any idea of which resources/shelters you might be connecting with when you start?
 - Hegler -- Whoever's willing to work with us!
 - Miller -- reaching out to other orgs now for 1-on-1s with leaders.
- Yaru -- are locals on staff?
 - Hegler -- our supervisor.
- Yaru -- will calls be reported to LAPD or are they triaged to you, directly?
 - Miller -- The mayor's office is developing the system so appropriate calls come directly to us as opposed to the police. We're not deployed to people waving around a firearm---that's for LAPD---but other than that the whole point is so that the police are not called. We don't have a special connection with the police.
- John [*Knock LA*] -- Question re: Venice Beach -- Rec & Parks currently goes out every night with LAPD. What is the role of Urban Alchemy + CIRCLE project in Venice once the park is closed?
 - Miller -- our job is not to ask homeless people to move on---that's the Park Rangers + LAPD---but to respond to incidents. We'd respond to people in distress or passed-out.
- Britney Weissman [Hollywood 4WRD] -- How in real time do you connect a client to a more robust, e.g., mental health system -- other levels of care or service -- after your engagement?
 - Wilson -- first we have to build a relationship with the provider. We'll be active 24/7, so if it's after-hours we'll follow-up ASAP. We pride ourselves in documentation and follow-up.

- Miller -- this is a new program. We don't have all the answers yet. We have the expertise and the skills but there's still a way to go. Our value-add is the de-escalation. If we win the contract, a place for people to start to come down is attached to that (e.g., sobering centers).
- Josh Hoffman [The Center in Hollywood] -- Re: current work engaging people experiencing homelessness, which providers have UA been regularly been partnering with and what does that partnership look like?
 - Miller -- Showers + Pit Stops was with 5 Keys Charter, Project Roomkey was with SRO. We work with PATH to find housing, LAHSA, and St. Joseph's Center.
- Jackie Vorhauer [The Center in Hollywood] -- Would your work interface with the pilot w/ Didi Hersch to address mental health needs (i.e., the 9-8-8 mandate)?
 - Miller -- unclear.
- Aditi Shakkarwar [Hollywood resident] -- Do people have to be sober to be in Tiny Homes? Also, re: Echo Park Lake, does UA have an opinion or policy re: replicating in other locations?
 - Wilson -- As to (1), no sobriety requirement, just nonviolent. As to (2), no comment, we're easy to put a target on but we're committed to the work. We helped a lot of people get into housing; our team handled it well.
 - Miller -- We were at Echo Park Lake for 3 months prior to the closure. 75 people, 150 tents, we housed 208 people. Not one person was left behind. Work speaks for itself.

b) Review of the [Hollywood 2.0](#) mental health system redesign---an evolution of the [TRIESTE](#) proposal---to be piloted in Hollywood. (15 min)

- [Abramson -- reviews H2.0 PDF + TRIESTE innovations.]
- Weissman -- join a conversation with Dr. Sherin on 8.17 so your voices can be heard.

6. COMMENTS by Committee Members

Committee members may provide a brief statement of activities or request an item to be placed on a future agenda.

7. ADJOURNMENT -- 8.08 PM

The public is requested to fill out a "Speaker Card" to address the committee on any item of the agenda prior to the committee taking action on an item. Comments from the public on Agenda items will be heard only when the respective item is being considered. Comments from the public on other matters not appearing on the Agenda that is within the Committee's subject matter jurisdiction will be heard during the Public Comment period. Public comment is limited to 2 minutes per speaker, unless waived by the presiding officer of the Committee. Agenda is posted for public review at the CHNC website (www.chnc.org), at the main posting location as required by law: Hollywood Neighborhood City Hall, 6501 Fountain Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90028. In compliance with Government Code section 54957.5, non-exempt writings that are distributed to a majority or all of the Committee in advance of a meeting, may be viewed at the scheduled meeting. In addition, if you would like a copy of these non-exempt writings prior to a meeting, please contact Louis Abramson (labramson.chnc@gmail.com).

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