



## MEETING MINUTES

IMPERIAL VALLEY CONTINUUM OF CARE COUNCIL

### EXECUTIVE BOARD EMERGENCY MEETING

April 3, 2020 at 3:00 P.M.

**Location:** Department of Social Services Cal-Works Building C  
2895 S. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, El Centro, CA 92243

Name	Executive Board	Present
Les Smith, General Manager, Desert Trails RV & Golf Resort	Chair	X
Vacant	Vice Chair	Vacant
Rosie Blankenship, Director, Imperial County, Public Administrator/AAA	Secretary	Via Call
Dr. Kathleen Lang, California Health & Wellness	Treasurer	Via Call
Robert M. Brown, Chief of Human Resources, Pioneers Memorial Hospital	Board Member	Absent
Vacant	Board Member	Vacant
Brian Johnson, Chief, El Centro Police Department	Board Member	Via Call
Andrea Kuhlen, Director, Imperial County Behavioral Health Services	Board Member	Via Call
Ernie Mariscal, Veterans Community Representative	Board Member	Via Call
Javier Moreno, Community Member	Board Member	X
Vacant	Board Member	Vacant
Veronica E. Rodriguez, Director, Imperial County Department of Social Services	Admin Entity Lead	X
Paula Llanas, Assistant Director, Imperial County Department of Social Services	Admin Entity Lead	X

**Guests:** Isaen Equihua, Department of Social Services; Esperanza Colio, Deputy CEO County of Imperial; Janette Angulo, Director of Imperial County Public Health Department.

- I. **Call to Order:** Meeting called to order by Chairman Les Smith at 3:05pm.
- II. **Roll Call:**
- III. **Approval of Agenda:** Approved (6-0).
- IV. **Approval of Minutes:** Minutes not approved, as this was an emergency meeting.
- V. **Public Comment:** None
- VI. **Discussion/Action Calendar**
  - A. Discussion/action regarding COVID-19 Emergency Homelessness Funding (\$528,713.63). (Attachment #1)  
Paula Llanas provided an overview of the funding recently awarded by the State to CoC-613, COVID-19 Emergency Homelessness Funding. Ms. Llanas explained in detail the purpose of the funding and efforts by the Administrative Entity (AE) to assess and identify funding priorities within the region, which included the release of a survey to homeless service providers and stakeholders. Ms. Llanas provided an overview of the survey results. She shared that "Isolation Capacity: Provide motel/hotel

rooms for unsheltered homeless who test positive for COVID -19 and require isolation” was the highest need identified by our stakeholders. She shared Housing and Urban Development (HUD) best practices related to isolation. Deputy CEO Esperanza Colio shared that the best approach, is to follow what the State recommends. Ms. Colio’s recommendation is to place homeless individuals into hotels, just as the results show. Ms. Llanas informed that the AE has been in communication with the State and explained flexibility with expenditures through CESH and HEAP funds. Flexibilities were created to support efforts in addressing the homeless population during the COVID-19 pandemic.

DSS Director, Veronica Rodriguez provided input pertaining to the four (4) priorities as identified by the survey for the COVID-19 Emergency funding. Ms. Rodriguez informed the Board, that if they decided to prioritize isolation rooms (hotels), then we also have to have sanitary supplies, wraparound services, and case management.

Isaen Equihua shared with the Board, the unsheltered homeless population according to 2019’s PIT Count. Which was 1,225 unsheltered homeless individuals. Mr. Equihua shared that a homeless service provider who recently conducted outreach to approximately 72 unsheltered homeless individuals, identified that 42 of them did not know of the existence of COVID-19. The agency also shared that approximately 7 to 8 of these homeless exhibited signs of illness.

Ms. Colio shared that we can utilize CESH and HEAP funding to temporarily house homeless individuals while the Board works on making a decision for COVID-19 funds.

Ms. Rodriguez clarified that the prioritization for hotels, has tied in wraparound services and sanitation requirements.

A discussion was held related to El Centro PD having PPE equipment for outreach. Per Chief Johnson they do have a funding source, but there is a challenge with the supply chains. Chief Johnson estimates, that based on his Department’s experience, 90% of unsheltered homeless who are offered shelter, will not want it.

Imperial County Public Health (ICPH) Director, Janette Angulo shared that there needs to be assessments. ICPHD has disbursed more than 7,000 hard copies of information to hard to reach areas and staff is conducting outreach.

Chief Johnson inquired regarding the hotels that have committed. Ms. Llanas responded that she has reached out to many local hotels, and she has only received a response from one hotel owner. There were further discussion regarding the number of rooms that the respective hotel would lease and the number of rooms (36) being a high number.

Ms. Rodriguez shared that we currently do not have any isolation rooms. She provided estimate costs for 36 rooms with a rate of \$65 per room for 90 days. Essentially, half of the funds (\$250,000) would be utilized for hotel rooms. Chief Johnson provided input that we do not need 36 hotel rooms for housing homeless, as they may not all self-quarantine. Rosalina Blankenship concurred with Chief Johnson.

Ms. Rodriguez reminded everyone of the recent guidelines that the State has identified for CESH and HEAP funding expenditures.

Discussion was held regarding the realistic number of rooms needed. Chief Johnson and Ms. Blankenship responded that 10 rooms for at least 90 days would be realistic.

Ms. Rodriguez shared that we can refer the elderly homeless to Imperial County Public Administrator. Ms. Blankenship confirmed that was correct.

Chief Johnson recommended the fairgrounds would be good to shelter homeless, akin to what other Counties are doing. Ms. Blankenship conveyed that need for PPE equipment.

Dr. Lang made a motion to accept the results of the survey, however, we will move forward into researching other options. The Board had further discussion related to the motion. Chief Johnson suggested we hold off on this motion to housing up to 20 hotel beds and looking at options. Dr. Lang withdrew from her proposed motion.

Direction was given to the Administrative Entity to

1. Proceed to try and find a facility that can isolate 10 rooms for 10 people who need isolation;
2. Find PPE for staff, including mobile hand washing and cleaning stations;
3. Move forward hoping to utilize the rest of the rooms within the 36 rooms at the Travelodge for additional homeless in need of immediate emergency shelter.

Mrs. Blankenship suggested the Board set aside \$20,000 for emergency funds from April 3, 2020 until Wednesday April 8, 2020 (next possible meeting).

Dr. Lang discussed insurance costs relating to damages to hotel. It was agreed that the AE would look into reimbursement costs for insurance, involving damages to hotel. The AE will work on obtaining this information from HR and County Counsel once we start working on the future contract for the COVID-19 funding. Veronica and Esperanza will follow upon this.

Motion by Javier Moreno to set aside \$25,000 in the event that between today and next Board Meeting (April 8, 2020), homeless individuals who meet the following criteria are housed via hotel/motel vouchers:

1. Homeless and or at risk of homelessness individuals who test positive for COVID-19 who do not require hospitalization but need isolation;
2. Homeless and or at risk of homelessness individuals requiring social distancing as a precautionary measure, particularly for high-risk groups such as individuals 65 or over with certain underlying health conditions (respiratory, compromised immunities, chronic diseases);
3. Homeless and or at risk of homelessness individuals exposed to COVID-19 who do not require hospitalization but are in need of isolation;
4. Homeless individuals whose living situation makes them unable to adhere to the mandated social distancing guidelines.

This motion was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chief Johnson, (Approved 5-1), Rosie Blankenship abstained.

**B. Administrative Entity updates – related to COVID-19**

All updates from the administrative Entity were postponed until the next meeting.

1. 2018 California Emergency Solutions and Housing (CESH):
2. 2019 California Emergency Solutions and Housing (CESH):
3. 2019 Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP):
4. Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention Program (HHAP):

**VII. Board Member Announcement:**

**VIII. Meeting Adjournment 5:15pm**

**Next Meeting Wednesday, April 8, 2020 TBA**