

SALT LAKE COUNTY Council of Governments (COG)

Thursday, 19 August 2021, Noon

Hybrid In-Person & WebEx – Electronic Meeting

NOTES

12:00 Public Meeting Begins

1. **Welcome – Mayor Kristie Overson**
2. **Previous Minutes Approval – Mayor Kristie Overson**
3. **Emergency Rental Assistance Program Dashboard Presentation – Lauren Littlefield, Salt Lake County Housing & Community Development**
4. **Homeless Shelters Subcommittee Report – Dan Dugan, Salt Lake City Council**
5. **Close Meeting – Mayor Kristie Overson**

In Attendance: Dan Dugan, Robert Hale, Kristie Overson, Kris Nichol, Aimee Winder newton, jake young, Lisa Hartman, Dina Blaes, Helen Peters, Sam Klem, Tauni Barker, Jordan Carroll, Carlton Christensen, Erika Fihaki, Ron Bigelow, Kyler Brower, Isaac Higham, Tiffany Marquez, Mike Peterson, Jason Motley, Bret Millburn, G.J. LaBonty, Harris Sondak, Katherine Fife, Ann Granato, Rob Dahle, Phil Martinez, Drew Quinn, Jennifer Dailey-Provost, Emily Burch, Lauren Littlefield, Jenny Wilson, Troy Walker, Cherie Wood, Mike Gallegos, Nathan Cherpeski, Laurie Hopkins, Rob Wesemann, Dawn Ramsey, Tim Tingey, Catherine Kanter, Kara Trevino, Erin Litvack, Gary Whatcott

1. **Welcome:** Mayor Overson welcomed the council and introductions were made. She announced that Emily is leaving the county and Erika will be providing Administrative Support. Dina Blaes will be the primary contact for COG going forward.
2. **Approval of May Minutes:** There were no minutes from the May meeting to approve, however the minutes from the January meeting still need approval. Motion to approve. Motion was seconded. There were none opposed. Minutes from the January COG were approved by unanimous vote.
3. **Emergency Rental Assistance Program Dashboard Presentation:** Lauren Littlefield gave a presentation of what the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) is and presented the ERAP dashboard to the council.

- a. **Q & A:** Jen Daily-Provost asked how we ensure that when landlords receive payment, they aren't passing late fees on to tenants who they have received funding for. Lauren explained that these funds cover all those expenses. Jen clarified she wants to know what policies are in place to ensure that landlords are tracking these payments as rent paid on time and so are not passing on any additional fees to the tenants. Lauren did not know what safeguards were in place for that with the State, who has oversight, but will find out and pass the information along to Jen.
- Mayor Peterson asked to clarify if this is a statewide program. Lauren explained it's a national program however Rent Relief Utah is our Statewide program.
- Mayor Overson asked if there is a way for her to see a further breakdown that the cities could look at. Lauren asked Jason if we could create a way for council members too look at that data on a deeper level. Jason provided a couple of different options that they can do.
- Mayor Overson asked if the application process is easy to understand and easy to navigate. Lauren explained they worked hard to make it as easy as possible. The most difficult part is the documentation required by the treasury (Landlord W-9, Income Verification, Full Lease, etc.). She further explained that there is a second iteration of this program called ERAP2 which has less stringent requirements. Lauren also explained that they have partnered with some community-based organizations which are doing outreach to provide education and application assistance. This has caused the application success rate to rise.
- Mayor Overson asked how this applies to mobile home communities where they own their home but are paying rent on the land or lot that their mobile home is on. Lauren said they would absolutely be able to apply. They would just have the same documentation requirements.
- Mayor Wilson asked if there is any data on individuals who own homes and requiring this assistance. She would like to better understand the need so that we can look at other potential funding sources to help with those who have fallen through the cracks. Lauren said that this program is not reflecting the difference between the need for mortgage assistance as opposed to rental assistance. Mortgage assistance was included in the funding originally, but that funding was only issued at a state level. Lauren also explained that the Department of Workforce Services is working on rolling out a portal for individuals to apply for mortgage assistance. Lauren asked Jason if there was any data collection that could help answer this question. Jason indicated that census data on the block level could show neighborhoods with high homeownership and low household income. Mike Gallegos commented that there are some national organizations such as the Aspen Institute and Brookings Institute which are tracking this data. He also advised that the allocation to the state for Mortgage assistance is \$55 Million and the portal should be rolled out in September. The Rental and Mortgage assistance is only available to households who have lost income due to Covid.

4. **Homeless Shelter Subcommittee Report:** Mayor Overson introduced Dan Dugan with the Salt Lake City Council. Dan explained the purpose of the subcommittee. The first meeting was held on August 9th wherein they went over the data related to homelessness in our region. Dan

turned the time over to Katherine Fife to give more information about the data related to housing need. Dan discussed the next steps that the subcommittee would like to take, splitting the need up among various cities.

- a. **Q & A:** A council member asked how this data is validated. How do we ensure that we aren't asking people to find more beds than we need? Katherine explained the data is based on historical data, however there are unknowns because of the pandemic. There was a follow-up to this question; There are non-profit orgs investing in long term housing. Are we taking those into consideration as we figure these numbers? The goal should be sustainable long-term housing with affordable rents with little government intervention.

Mayor Wilson commented that a couple of years ago, there was a great need for shelter space, but we were able to find temporary overflow shelters. There is still the need to have a temporary overflow shelter this winter. The county funds staffing and transportation for these types of shelters. This model has worked well, and we would like to expand it. There was further discussion about this and other approaches. The question was asked how they see services being available if individuals are scattered. How will they have access to services and transportation to help them get back on their feet. Dan didn't have a good answer for this difficult logistical question. The best plan is to work with cities to get creative about how they can ensure access to services.

5. **Close Meeting:** Mayor Overson asked the Salt Lake County Council to speak briefly about Welcoming Week which is upcoming in September. She advised the council when the next COG meeting will be. There was a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded. Motion passed.