

**LODI CITY COUNCIL  
SHIRTSLEEVE SESSION  
CARNEGIE FORUM, 305 WEST PINE STREET  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2015**

A. Roll Call by City Clerk

An Informal Informational Meeting ("Shirtsleeve" Session) of the Lodi City Council was held Tuesday, September 15, 2015, commencing at 7:01 a.m.

Present: Council Member Kuehne, Council Member Nakanishi, and Mayor Johnson

Absent: Council Member Mounce, and Mayor Pro Tempore Chandler

Also Present: City Manager Schwabauer, City Attorney Magdich, and City Clerk Ferraiolo

B. Topic(s)

B-1 Review the Report on Homelessness in Lodi from the Committee on Homelessness (CD)

John Ledbetter, Chairman of the Homeless Solutions Committee (HSC), provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Report on Homelessness in Lodi. Specific topics of discussion included purpose, beginnings, definition, homeless statistics, findings, recommended overall goal, short- and long-term strategies and actions, and next steps.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Mr. Ledbetter stated that he believed the percentage breakdown of homelessness, which were quoted at the initial meetings, are inaccurate because the findings came from another community. Mr. Ledbetter believed that the percentage of homeless who want help and are willing to work toward improvement is greater than the percentage of homeless who are chronic and unwilling to change their situations. It is the larger group that needs to be recognized and given assistance.

In response to Mayor Johnson, Mr. Ledbetter further clarified that the original information -- which purported that 20 percent of homeless are ready to improve their situations, 20 percent are unable to but would like to improve their situations, and 40 percent are unwilling -- is incorrect, and the percentage of those who truly want assistance is more accurately 50 percent.

Mayor Johnson suggested that a single, comprehensive resource guide should come from the County instead of the City. Mr. Ledbetter agreed that it should be produced at the County level, but the Committee feels that the Salvation Army offers something similar and has examples of other guides and that the Committee should originate this comprehensive handout to help the homeless locate needed services. Council Member Kuehne added that the Committee discovered that the community was unaware of the available services and there was no collaborative effort taking place between the service organizations. This comprehensive guide would connect the groups, community, and homeless and provide a method for those who want to help the homeless by providing information instead of money.

Council Member Nakanishi questioned what action Council will be taking on this subject matter at Wednesday's Council meeting and whether the proposal is to introduce an ordinance against panhandling. Mr. Schwabauer stated this report is a preview of the report that will be made Wednesday. He stated that Lodi has an ordinance on aggressive panhandling and pointed out that panhandling is Constitutionally protected and cannot be banned outright, but there are limits on aggressive panhandling and locations. He stated the Committee is not recommending actions that are unenforceable or that the City already has in place; instead, it is suggesting what the community can do together, along with utilizing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) resources. Mr. Ledbetter suggested that staff include a presentation at Wednesday's Council meeting outlining the rights of the homeless and what the Police Department can and cannot do with regard to enforcement.

Council Member Nakanishi applauded the Committee for preparing the report. He further expressed concern about financing many of the suggestions and about creating a haven that Lodi will become a magnet for the homeless, adding that this should be a coordinated effort with the County and State so that one community is not inundated. Mr. Schwabauer agreed, stating he was pleased to see the County increasing its support as a majority of services are in the County's jurisdiction and funded by County tax dollars. He stated that San Joaquin County Sheriff Steve Moore conducted a meeting with city representatives throughout the county to discuss the issue and will hold a follow-up meeting soon.

In response to Council Member Nakanishi, Mr. Ledbetter stated that a local church sponsored a homeless family with housing, connections to social services, and some financial support.

John Beckman, CEO of the Building Industry Association, commended the Committee on the production of the report and the many positive recommendations. He expressed concern with the long-term strategy that advocates for a county-wide inclusionary housing ordinance because it singles out the business industry and suggests they have a larger burden to bear in solving this issue. Mr. Beckman requested Council remove this one long-term strategy from the report.

Council Member Kuehne believed the strategy should not be removed and suggested building industry representatives work with the Committee to develop language that would still address low-income housing and be acceptable to the building industry. Mr. Ledbetter reminded Council that the request in the report, if approved, is to form two working groups, and he would be pleased if Mr. Beckman joined the group to further discuss this strategy.

Mayor Johnson agreed that no particular entity should be identified because this is a communitywide problem, but he was hesitant to eliminate portions from the report as this is only the beginning of a multi-step process.

Mr. Schwabauer explained that an inclusionary housing ordinance can include other strategies besides an impact fee to support construction of housing, which is the primary worry of the building industry, including a density bonus to build in higher density areas and waiver of impact fees to make the ordinance broader.

Jeffrey Kirst also spoke against the inclusionary housing element in the report, stating that high fees make it less economically viable to build new low-income housing. He suggested other options be considered, such as donation of facilities, renovation of older facilities, and the purchase of the last portion of Salvation Army for construction of housing. Mr. Kirst stated that the high cost of housing is not the root cause of homelessness; it is also unemployment and mental health issues. He stated he would be happy to participate in the Committee meetings.

Dennis Bennett expressed disappointment in the lack of business community representatives on the Committee and also spoke against the inclusionary housing ordinance strategy in the report. He stated that new housing cannot be constructed for low-income residents, even if the land were free, because of the high cost and fees to build. He believed a collaboration with the City to renovate buildings, fee waivers, donations, and broad-based community construction are the best methods to house the homeless. He added that new apartment complexes will draw people out of the older facilities, making those available for lower-income individuals. Mr. Bennett added that a community fundraising effort, much like what was done to build Hutchins Street Square and the Boys and Girls Club, would be beneficial. He too requested that the language regarding inclusionary housing be removed from the report.

Council Member Nakanishi suggested pulling this item from Wednesday's Regular Council meeting to give the stakeholders an opportunity to discuss the matter and develop a mutually-agreeable strategy to include in the report.

Mayor Johnson cautioned that pushing this item back to the October Regular City Council meeting may slow the momentum this process has generated thus far.

Council Member Kuehne stated he would like to see the Committee and building industry representatives meet to resolve this difference and he would defer to the Mayor as to whether or not the item goes forward at the Regular Council meeting. He further expressed appreciation to the Committee for its hard work and efforts in producing a thorough document.

Mr. Ledbetter stated the Committee is open to meeting with the building industry to improve upon the report. He added that this discussion has been on-going since last fall, and he was disappointed in the lack of participation from the business community up to this point.

In response to Myrna Wetzel, Mr. Ledbetter stated that the report contains a detailed breakdown of the homeless by age. Ms. Wetzel questioned the status of the senior housing development near Roget Park, to which Mr. Schwabauer responded that the developer, Eden Housing, is still attempting to secure funding assistance, which is necessary in order to make the project affordable. He expressed hope that Eden Housing would be successful in this year's round of funding.

Pat Patrick, CEO of the Lodi District Chamber of Commerce, applauded the Committee for its report and stated that the strategy of gathering information about the homeless was key to ascertaining how many homeless are truly Lodi residents who were once employed and living in Lodi. He stressed there needs to be a balance in helping Lodi residents and assisting others to return to their communities. Mr. Patrick stated that the business and industrial communities need skilled workers and there are education and training programs for the 18- to 24-year old population. He agreed that the homeless have rights, but there are methods of working within the system to address certain aspects, such as prohibiting feeding in parks and holding items from shopping carts when confiscating personal property.

Mike Carouba stated he believed the report contained more encouragement than enforcement, and there was an outcry to resolve a problem that an estimated 100 to 200 homeless people place on the city. He stated he was disappointed to see a lack of participation on the Committee level from the business industry and other disciplines. He suggested local businesses with shopping carts discuss a shopping cart retention program. He further suggested that, with the many City needs such as the browned-out fire engine, Lodi Lake nature area reclamation, and pension obligations, any funding the City obtained would likely be spent on those priorities over the homeless situation. Mr. Carouba believed this is an issue of heart and is more directed toward non-profit organizations and churches. He believed that some portion of CDBG funding could be applied toward the effort and that inclusionary housing is ineffective and picks on one particular industry.

Captain Martin Ross with the Lodi Salvation Army stated that the Committee worked diligently on this effort and that it was important to have the Lodi Community Foundation be a part of the Committee as a neutral organization. Captain Ross reported that an unnamed church will be sponsoring a family that came out of the Salvation Army rehabilitation program with housing for one year. He challenged others in the faith community to consider sponsoring housing for someone, stating that the Salvation Army would screen the applicants. Captain Ross stated that Salvation Army is a contributing partner in this solution by sending clean-up crews to certain areas, hosting homeless fairs, and offering job corps and will continue to collaborate with other entities to develop an answer.

Dennis Bennett stated the business industry is willing to work with the Committee to develop alternative or softer language regarding inclusionary housing and requested carrying the item over to a future meeting.

In response to Mayor Johnson, it was confirmed that the full report is on the City's website.

C. Comments by Public on Non-Agenda Items

None.

D. Adjournment

No action was taken by the City Council. The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 a.m.

ATTEST:

Jennifer M. Ferraiolo  
City Clerk