

1. **A. CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Bublak called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.
PRESENT: Councilmembers Becky Arellano, Nicole Larson (*via teleconference*), Andrew Nosrati, Gil Esquer, and Mayor Amy Bublak.
ABSENT: None

B. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Mayor Bublak announced that Councilmember Larson is participating via teleconference at 14353 Rosecrans Avenue, #3, La Mirada, CA 90638. Councilmember Larson confirmed her location.

2. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Mayor Bublak opened public participation.

The following members of the public spoke:

Traci Lee
Robert Allen
Liz Padilla
Jason Freitas
DJ Fransen

Mayor Bublak inquired if any member of the public at the teleconference location wanted to comment. No one spoke.

3. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST AND DISQUALIFICATIONS: None

4. WORKSHOP SESSION

Review and discussion of Workgroup progress reports and recommendations to address vagrancy and homelessness issues in Turlock.

- a) Opening Remarks by Mayor and City Manager
- b) Review of Workgroup progress reports and recommendations:
 - a. Homelessness Prevention / Jobs (*Councilmember Esquer*)
 - b. Bathrooms and Businesses (*Councilmember Arellano*)
 - c. Community Engagement (*Councilmember Larson*)
 - d. Housing (*Councilmember Nosrati*)
- c) Direction by Council of items for City staff review and placement on subsequent Council agendas

Mayor Bublak provided background information regarding previous collaboration that occurred regarding homelessness issues, creation of the four workgroups, and recommended the Council work to quantify who/how many people need help in hopes to develop a strategic plan.

City Manager Robert C. Lawton spoke regarding members of Council being fully engaged and his belief that whatever policy direction is provided that it will be informed and in consensus.

Councilmember Esquer provided an overview of the Homelessness Prevention / Jobs Workgroup efforts including a recent meeting held on April 5, 2019, scheduling future meetings on an as-needed basis based on progress, and committee goals to identify the different groups that need assistance and help people get off the street.

Councilmember Arellano provided information regarding an informal meeting she had with staff and friends/community members at Turlock Gospel Mission to further explore the viability of small homes or tents for the summer months with the potential of investing in motorhomes or travel trailers and providing rental assistance, stated she will be scheduling an upcoming meeting for the Bathrooms and Businesses Workgroup now that she has more information, and noted a website with centralized information regarding these matters would be helpful.

Councilmember Larson provided an overview of the Community Engagement Workgroup efforts including a recent meeting held on April 17, 2019, the next meeting scheduled for April 30, 2019, and also recommended a City webpage with information regarding the homelessness workgroups (contact information, meeting times, and group descriptions).

Councilmember Nosrati spoke regarding homelessness issues being a priority for this community and Council, concerns with having a single tent city, police officers dropping off homeless people in other communities, recommendations for Council to move forward on these efforts as a City (not individual Councilmembers), messaging to come from City Hall, and dedicating staff/City resources to assist with communication, press releases, and website updates. Councilmember Nosrati also provided an overview of the Housing Workgroup efforts including two previous meetings held and committee goals to increase the number of stabilized low income units to meet the needs of the existing community, work with developer community to identify/overcome barriers of new development, higher quality housing standards to prevent predatory landlord behavior, expand level of community engagement from at-need and support system communities on housing, reduce the impact vagrancy has on the community (financially and quality of life), more efficiently connect individuals to services that treat underlying symptoms, and identify success metrics to measure efforts.

Mayor Bublak spoke regarding the goal of these workgroups having been to independently perform research, bring that information back to Council, and then Council provide direction to staff to carry matters forward. Mayor Bublak stated that based upon these reports, it is her determination a strategic plan is needed to itemize objectives and quantify needs of the community, seek staff assistance with press releases and website postings, and identify opportunities to meet the needs/provide assistance for those who want to work.

Council and staff discussed this information including the ability to identify opportunities and provide assistance for those who want to work, potentially establishing a commission dedicated to housing and homelessness, the advantages and disadvantages of a commission including dedicated members and consistent/focused oversight as well as concerns that a commission may cause delays and add another level of government without giving Council the opportunity to carry out matters.

The following members of the public spoke:

Robert Allen
Molly Amant

Council provided brief comment in response to public comments.

Council and staff continued to discuss the creation of a commission including the proposed structure and broad representation, addressing stability amongst members due to changes that may occur from an election, utilizing current workgroups to the fullest potential instead of adding another layer, the higher demands that a new commission could place on staff, and deferring the concept of a commission to the future.

The following members of the public spoke:

DJ Fransen

Executive Assistant to the City Manager Maryn Pitt/Housing provided information regarding Stanislaus County having recently updated their 10-year plan to address homelessness including the development of the Stanislaus Homeless Alliance to help direct resources and prioritize funding for the region.

Council and staff discussed the community's desire to see continued progress, Council's commitment to these matters, and ensuring resources and services are available to/in Turlock.

Councilmember Nosrati spoke regarding the recommendations of the Housing Workgroup to establish a housing commission, dedicate resources (staff time or contracted services) to assist with homelessness subcommittee meetings, administrative support, and communication, develop success/tracking metrics, request funding from Stanislaus County to assess tax payer costs of homelessness, and develop a person-first housing strategy.

Fire Marshall Mark Gomez provided information regarding exploration of various types of housing options, impacts on businesses within the community, the City's ability to participate in a pilot program (voluntary work program), and noted downtown business owners were included in the meeting regarding the use of property/lot at the Turlock Gospel Mission.

Council and staff continued to discuss these matters including using available funding to make the biggest impact, focusing efforts and gaining momentum, declaring a mission statement and drafting a strategic plan, criteria of having shovel-ready affordable housing projects in order to obtain funding, and data collection by the service providers.

The following members of the public spoke:

Liz Padilla
Michael Camara

Mayor Bublak clarified based on information gleaned thus far that Councilmember Nosrati will prepare a draft strategic plan for distribution to the Council and to be agendized on a future date and requested staff work with Stanislaus County regarding data collection (quantifiable issues related to emergency rooms visits, EMS calls).

Council and staff further discussed this direction including staff support/resources, possible use of interns, Council communication efforts, prioritizing tasks and resources, and drafting a strategic plan for consideration by the Council.

5. ADJOURNMENT:

Mayor Bublak adjourned the special meeting at 8:26 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

Jennifer Land
City Clerk