



San Francisco SRO Task Force

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SRO HOTEL HEALTH & SAFETY TASK FORCE COMMITTEE MINUTES – February 17, 2011 101 Grove, Room 302

Members:

Rosemary Bosque J.D.
Department of Building Inspection

Jeff Buckley
Central City SRO Collaborative

Bruce Burge
SRO Operator

Angela Chu
Chinatown SRO Collaborative

Patrick Flanagan
Tenant Representative

Seth Katzman
Nonprofit SRO Manager/Owner

Matthias Mormino
SRO Families United Collaborative

Johnson Ojo
DPH Environmental Health Services

Sam Patel
SRO Operator

Jorge Portillo
Mission SRO Collaborative

Charles Siron
Tenant Representative

Alex Tse, J.D.
City Attorney's Office

Scott Walton
Human Services Agency

Eric Whitney
DPH Housing & Urban Health

Chair:

Rosemary Bosque, J.D.
Department of Building Inspection

Chair: Rosemary Bosque (DBI)

Members Present: Eric Whitney for Margot Antonetty (DPH-HUH); Jeff Buckley (Central City SRO Collaborative); Angela Chu (Chinatown SRO Collaborative); Matthias Mormino (SRO Families United Collaborative); Johnson Ojo (DPH-BEHS); Sam Patel (Independent Hotel Owners & Operators); Charles Siron (SRO Tenant); Alex Tse, (City Attorney's Office), Jorge Portillo (Mission SRO Collaborative) (arrived at 9:55am)

Absent: Unexcused – Patrick Flanagan (SRO Tenant); Excused – Scott Walton (HSA-Housing & Homeless Programs); Seth Katzman (Conard House); Bruce Burge (SRO Operator)

Guests: Tomas Picarello (SRO Tenant); Charles Pitts (SRO Tenant), Joyce Lam

Minutes: May Pasion (DBI-HIS)

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Rosemary Bosque at 9:10 am.

2. Roll call/Determination of Quorum

Rosemary Bosque asked people to introduce themselves.

3. Approval of Minutes of January 20, 2011 (Action)

Rosemary Bosque indicated that she will be making changes to Agenda Item #10 regarding public comment to items not on the agenda.

Public Comment:

Charles Picarello made a request to correct Page 3, first paragraph, to state the comment was made by Charles Pitts rather than *Charles Picarello*.

Motion:

Sam Patel offered motion to approve minutes, seconded by Angela Chu.

Action:

With the above referenced changes Rosemary Bosque adopted the January 20, 2011 minutes.

4. Administrative Announcements (Discussion)

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Rosemary Bosque reported that she appeared before Sunshine Ordinance Committee meeting of February 10, 2011, which will be discussed further down the agenda. She also stated that she received a request from Delene Wolf of the Rent Board, who is requesting to be included on a future agenda regarding the Hotel Visitor Policy. She further reported the Task Force By Laws will need revision to be consistent with the changes made by the Board of Supervisor's through Resolution [582-10]. She recommended to place this on future agenda as soon as possible. She also stated that the Task Force meeting location may migrate to DBI in the next three to six months.

5. Removal of Two SRO Task Force Members (Patrick Flanagan and Charles Siron) Under Article II, §3 and §8 of the SRO Task Force Bylaws

Rosemary Bosque reported that Charles Siron left voicemails and sent e-mails to the membership regarding this agenda item. Hard copies of these documents were distributed during the meeting.

Charles Siron commented that he will be more diligent on communications and he is conscious of being given a second chance.

Rosemary Bosque stated that letters were sent out in February to Charles Siron and Patrick Flanagan regarding their possible dismissal for unexcused absences pursuant to the By Laws, Sections 3 and 8. She indicated that she had heard from Charles Siron but not Patrick Flanagan, who was not in attendance at this meeting.

Matthias Mormino commented that he felt Charles Siron brings a very important perspective to the Task Force as a representative and that the Task Force should consider retaining him. Diversity of representation is important including tenants with health issues.

Charles Siron stated that his lack of attendance was related to health issues, but that he was committed to improved attendance to will keep expanding representation for tenants. .

Jeff Buckley commented that Charles Siron should be retained, and that Patrick Flanagan should be removed because of his lack of attendance.

Johnson Ojo also supported Charles Siron being retained. He indicated that Charles Siron's contact with other tenants and bringing information to the Task Force is crucial.

Sam Patel asked if by chance Charles Siron is retained on the Task Force and he has another unexcused absence will it accumulate or is he starting new as of this date?

Rosemary Bosque offered that the Bylaws allow for three (3) unexcused absences and missing six (6) meetings within a 12 month period is consideration of dismissal. If Charles Siron does not contact the chair and does not attend the meeting, that absence would be considered unexcused.

Eric Whitney pointed out that there are currently three (3) absences and wanted to know when it resets.

Rosemary Bosque indicated that attendance will be noted at each meeting and absences would be reported on at the beginning of each meeting, and that Charles would be starting with a new 12 month period. She indicated she was open to suggestions from the membership.

Angela Chu stated she would like to give Charles Siron a second chance, and that since Patrick Flanagan had not been attending Task Force meetings she did not believe he would work out as a tenant representative.

Rosemary Bosque reported that there are approximately 8,000 residential guest rooms, representing a significant inventory of units that need tenant representation. She further stated that Charles Siron is one of two people representing this group and he should know that his representation is very important. She recommended that they give Charles Siron a second change. She recommended that Patrick Flanagan be dismissed since was not in attendance at this meeting and had missed the other meetings referenced.

Rosemary Bosque asked for separate motions from Alex Tse regarding the retaining of Charles Siron and the dismissal of Patrick Flanagan.

Public comment:

Charles Pitts stated that someone is needed that is going to understand and study more policy and procedures and be more vocal about what SRO's should look like. He Stated that he did not support the retention of Charles Siron. He did not believe that Charles should be given another chance. He also asked who submitted the letter of recommendation for Charles Siron's appointment to the Task Force.

Motion:

Alex Tse made the motion to retain Charles Siron on the Task Force as a tenant representative. The motion was seconded by Matthias Mormino.

Action:

The motion was approved, with 9 voting to approve, and 1 voting against the motion.

Motion:

Alex Tse made a second motion to dismiss Patrick Flanagan from the Task Force as a tenant representative.

Action:

The motion was approved unanimously.

Rosemary Bosque indicated she would notify Linda Wong Clerk of the Board Rules Committee of the dismissal of Patrick Flanagan, so that the Task Force vacancies could be posted.

6. Families in SROs Survey

Matthias Mormino reported on the status of families-in-SROs survey. He believed he would be able to bring recommendations to the Task Force in April for member feedback.

Jeff Buckley reported on the affordable housing site at Taylor & Eddy Street. The project was approved by planning and they are getting funds to develop the property. One of the sites has been hit by the economic downturn but he indicated that hopefully in the next two years the site will be developed for families.

Matthias Mormino commented that the Hugo Hotel (the building with furniture attached to the outside) is also in the planning stages to be developed as affordable housing.

Johnson Ojo asked if this building was a designated landmark.

Matthias Mormino responded that the effort had been made to create this designation.

Johnson Ojo asked for a current list of families in SRO's.

Matthias Mormino responded that there was a list compiled six (6) months ago and he would send it to him, unless that was violation of the Sunshine Ordinance. He thought Rosemary Bosque would like to see this list as well.

Rosemary Bosque agreed and indicated she would make it available to other members and the public, and see if it can be put on the DBI website. She will have hard copies at the meeting following receiving the list.

Public Comment:

Thomas Picarello requested that presentations by members of the Task Force should be in writing of what is being discussed and what the recommendations are. He suggested that the Task Force recommend to whomever is creating affordable housing that families as well as seniors and disabled move up the ladder in terms of consideration for affordable housing. Families, seniors and disabled should be prioritized.

Charles Pitts agreed with Thomas Picarello's. He asked if we should write a letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding policy and procedure changes to buy vacant properties.

7. Follow-Up on Bedbug Eradication

Johnson Ojo reported over the past few weeks he has met with colleagues and companies regarding heat treatment machines for bedbug eradication. The discussion involved how to reduce the cost for this alternative. He distributed the revised-user friendly brochures.. This information will be put on the DPH website. The Mission SRO advice was to look at the DPH website, where there is a lot of bedbug information available there. Dr. Ojo indicated that Spanish and Cantonese versions of the pamphlet will hopefully be available by next month.

Matthias Mormino commented that he has had conversations with tenants about what can be improved about the current process regarding reporting and dealing with bed bugs. It was a wish list that the Mission SRO Collaborative felt was helpful.

Rosemary Bosque said she would scan the recommendations from the Mission SRO Collaborative and send it to all Commission members. She also stated that there was a housing inspector vacancy posted on the DHR website that the membership should be aware of.

Rosemary Bosque indicated a hotel operator was looking into creating an area in their hotel to use heat treatment to address the migration of personal property from one area of the building to the other. She hoped that other hotel operators would consider this option as well.

Angela Chu asked Johnson Ojo how many people at DPH deal with bedbug eradication. She further stated that there is a lot of confusion for the tenants when owners try to resolve the bedbug issues. She wanted to know what other best practices are available.

Johnson Ojo responded that there were budgetary and resource constraints regarding the number of DPH inspectors available to address bed bugs. He will research the possibility of using other assigned inspectors. He indicated that there are behavioral issues associated with the bed bug problem that made eradication difficult and frustrating to address. He stated that it is the landlords' responsibility to have more aggressive pest control services but the possibility of reinfestation of bedbugs exists when tenants bring materials back into the hotel.

Angela Chu stated that in a building that has bed bugs, mattresses have been discarded in inappropriate areas (such as the roof top) thereby infecting the rest of the building. She inquired how can tenants be assisted with infested mattresses.

Dr. Ojo suggested that infested mattresses be report to DPH as soon as possible. The DPH Director's Guidelines address the treatment of infested mattresses before discarding. He indicated that DPH has had many educational forums informing hotel owners and operators of these requirements.

Rosemary Bosque commented that the bed bugs issues have been discussed at length at the Task Force and that it was time to develop policy recommendations.

Jeff Buckley asked why the Task Force Subcommittee meeting previously scheduled - did not occur. He stated that the Task Force should take action and a Subcommittee meeting would be necessary to develop Task Force recommendations.

Rosemary Bosque offered clarification that the meeting was not a Subcommittee meeting. It was a working group that Scott Walton put together. She further indicated that creation of a subcommittee would have to follow Task Force By Laws and the Sunshine Ordinance requirements.

Jeff Buckley stated that the Central City SRO has been proactive regarding the bed bug issue by facilitating its own work group meetings that involved reviewing the DPH Director Guidelines and other issues. He stated that Supervisor Kim is going to hold a hearing on this issue and the Task Force can play an important role in providing recommendations to the Board.

Sam Patel stated he thought they should put together a Subcommittee to address bed bugs.

Public Comment:

Thomas Picarello stated that his room was treated for bed bugs three (3) weeks ago and woke with bed bugs prior to coming to the meeting. He asked Dr. Ojo to investigate the protocols used by the pest control companies. He also indicated that he had reviewed the DPH Director's Guidelines, and felt that the time for frame for responding to bedbugs was too long. He felt that hotel operators should respond to a report of bed bug infestation as soon as received or within six hours (for example). He felt that the City was putting more resources toward the inspection of dog kennels and restaurants, instead of the serious conditions in SRO's. He did not feel that DPH should be the principal City agency addressing the eradication of bed bugs.

8. Reports from the SRO Collaboratives

Jeff Buckley reported on the Universal Lifeline Program. He indicated that the program involves a very low cost landline phone service (less than \$8 month) that will commence soon. In the next year the Lifeline program will fluctuate with market demands. He stated that there is one utility consumer advocate on CPUC, Mike Florio, which is a huge victory for consumers in California.

9. Prioritization of Future Meeting Topics

Rosemary Bosque reported the following items for the next meeting:

- a. A presentation by Rent Board Executive Director, Delene Wolf regarding the Hotel Visitor Policy
- b. Task Force consideration of amendment to the By Laws for conformance with the Board Resolution.
- c. Bed Bug Eradication- Next Steps

Jeff Buckley indicated the Central City SRO Collaborative would like to present an item for the April meeting

Public Comment:

Thomas Picarello made the comment that he would like to see Supervisor Kim come to the Task Force and would like to hear her ideas on how to enact code enforcement.

Charles Pitts added that he thought the Task Force needed to schedule the issue of bed bugs so it is not forgotten. He indicated that he would like to hear solutions from the Task Force and did not believe he heard any at this meeting. He also recommended the Task Force produce a quarterly report for Board of Supervisors regarding solutions to SRO problems.

10. Public Comment

Thomas Picarello indicated that he was very impressed by this meeting, especially with discussions on recommendations on issues important to SRO tenants. He felt that discussions should end with proposed solutions. He requested recommendations be submitted to the Board of Supervisors so that they could receive the benefit of the Task Force discussions, knowledge and suggested solutions. He also requested that when the By Laws are revised consideration be given to extending the monthly meeting time an additional 30 minutes.

Charles Pitts commented that he thought the meeting room is too small. If wheelchairs were in attendance they would not get past door. If there are ten (10) public members at the meeting there may not be room for a person in a wheelchair. He felt the current meeting room also has excessive background noise.

11. Adjournment

Motion:

Sam Patel moved to adjourn the meeting. Eric Whitney seconded the motion.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.