



**San Francisco SRO Task Force**

1660 Mission Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
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(415) 558-6165

Members:

**SRO HOTEL HEALTH AND SAFETY TASKFORCE**

**Meeting Minutes April 17, 2014**

**9:00 AM – 10:30 AM**  
1650 Mission, Room 403

Rosemary Bosque, J.D.  
Department of Building  
Inspection- Chair

Nicolette Alexander  
Tenant Representative

Bruce Burge  
SRO Operator

Angela Chu  
Chinatown SRO  
Collaborative

Dan Jordan  
Tenant Representative

Vacant  
SRO Families United  
Collaborative

Yvonne Mere, J.D.  
City Attorney's Office

Johnson Ojo  
DPH Environmental Health  
Services

Sam Patel  
SRO Operator

Amelia Rudberg  
Non-profit SRO  
Operator/Manager

Wolfgang Stuwe  
DPH Housing & Urban Health

Pratibha Tekkey  
Central City SRO  
Collaborative

Joshua Vining  
Mission SRO Collaborative

Scott Walton  
Human Services Agency

**Members Present:** Rosemary Bosque (DBI); Nicolette Alexander (SRO Tenant), Bruce Burge (SRO Operator); Angela Chu (Chinatown SRO Collaborative); Dan Jordon (SRO Tenant); Dr. Johnson Ojo (DPH); Sam Patel (SRO Operator); Pratibha Tekkey (Central City SRO Collaborative); Scott Walton (HSA); Josh Vining (Mission SRO Collaborative);

**Excused Members:** Yvonne Mere (City Attorney); Wolfgang Stuwe (Environmental Health; DPH);

**Unexcused Members:** Amelia Rudberg (Non-Profit SRO Operator)

**Guests:** Patrick Flanagan (SRO Tenant);

**Minutes:** Theresa Muehlbauer (DBI-HIS)

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:10.

**2. Roll Call/ Determination of Quorum**

There was a Quorum.

**3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for February 20, 2014 and March 20, 2014**

Rosemary Bosque stated that the February minutes are ready for approval at today's meeting. March minutes will be available at the next meeting. She mentioned that the Task Force members should make sure all the technical information was correct.

Rosemary Bosque asked if there were any recommended changes.

Rosemary Bosque asked if there was any public comment

**No Public Comment for Agenda Item No. 3.**

None.

Rosemary asked if there was a motion to approve the minutes.

Scott Walton moved that the minutes be approved.

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Angela Chu seconded the motion.

Minutes approved unanimously.

**4. Administrative Announcements**

Rosemary Bosque stated that she would like to table this agenda item under after agenda item number 5.

**5. Presentation by Lieutenant May Tse San Francisco Fire Department regarding Emergency Response Procedures and Emergency Preparedness Training**

Lieutenant Tse stated that the fire code requires at least one elevator be in use for the Fire Department. When the Fire Department gets complaints about elevators, they write up violations. The Fire Department also notifies dispatch that the elevators do not work and that there is a temporary hazard. The Fire Department does not use freight elevators. She further stated that if there are two elevators in a building and one goes down, the Fire Department cannot require it to be fixed. The code states only one elevator must be operable.

Scott Walton asked what the rule about elevators is. Is it based on the number of stories of the building?

Lieutenant Tse stated yes, but she further mentioned she would have to look up the exact code for height requirements.

Rosemary Bosque stated according to Department of Building Inspection elevators need to be in a building of 50 feet or taller. The Department of Building Inspection requires that the elevator must be available for tenants.

Lieutenant Tse stated that this code applies to new buildings.

Angela Chu asked if the Fire Department had a list of buildings with elevators.

Rosemary Bosque asked if Ms. Chu meant SROs with elevators. Rosemary stated DBI is in the process of auditing all SRO for several factors including elevators. Out of 499 SROs we have completed inspection of 268. We have identified 134 SROs with elevators. She said DBI will continue with a more specific audit of the details and characteristics of elevators. The Director of DBI has called together a task force to study the issue of elevators. This group will convene in mid-May.

Rosemary Bosque asked if fire suppression personnel cite these buildings.

Lieutenant Tse stated they do not cite, but we have a hotline for this issue. Medical personnel really notice when the elevators go down because they have to bring people down from the buildings.

Rosemary Bosque stated that DBI looks forward to opportunities to work with the Fire Department in regards to elevators.

Lieutenant Tse stated the elevators cannot be used in a fire. This is important to emphasize to the residents.

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Rosemary Bosque asked if any of the Task Force members had questions.

Dr. Ojo stated he wanted more information about hoarding in SROs.

Lieutenant Tse stated that the hoarding issues have underlying medical issues. The best the Fire Department can do for these situations is to go in, and determine if there is a fire hazard issue. It is difficult because the Fire Department cannot tell people how to maintain their homes. One needs to talk to the City Attorney to determine what can be done.

Lieutenant Tse stated that there is a section for residential homes about how much fuel you can have. She further stated we can only use Chapter Three of the Fire Code to help regulate. This causes frustration for Fire Fighters.

Angela Chu asked does the City have any services for hoarders.

Lieutenant Tse asked what kind of services Ms. Chu meant.

Angela Chu clarified stating services that actually help people clear out the unit.

Lieutenant Tse stated we have some services. But the underlying issue is medical in nature which makes it difficult to address this issue.

Scott Walton said each department has different concerns regarding the dangers of hoarding. While there are some programs, each program has limits. Sometimes the only approach is to pursue eviction.

Rosemary Bosque stated there are some resources available.

Bruce Burge stated he has a particular tenant who cannot keep her stuff in the room. He stated that he assumes the Fire Departments stance on this is that nothing can be in the hallways and blocked doors etc.

Lieutenant Tse stated that her recommendation would be to work with the Fire Departments and pursue evictions to encourage the person to move their stuff back out of the hallway. She further said all departments also have to have the same process for everyone.

Rosemary Bosque stated DBI will cite the situation.

Bruce Burge mentioned he has never seen DBI write a Notice to the tenant.

Rosemary Bosque said that's correct, we cite the landlord.

Scott Walton said DBI can cite them and then the landlord can pass that responsibility on to the tenant. The goal is not eviction but if the tenant is leaving you no option, then that is the only course of action available.

Dr. Ojo stated that at DPH is able to cite the tenants.

Lieutenant Tse stated that the key is not to let it go on forever.

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Dan Jordan asked how about dropping trash in the hallways. He further asked what could be done about this issue since it is management doing the dumping.

Lieutenant Tse said you can make complaints with the Fire Department at 415 558-3300.

Rosemary Bosque stated that the other reason Lieutenant Tse was invited was to talk about emergency responses in SROs and the type of training the Fire Department has available.

Lieutenant Tse stated that the fire department has a program where we work with the Collaboratives and they would identify a hotel that needs training. We then do a quick walk through of the building to identify maintenance issues. We take a look at the building to determine what the life safety features are. Then we talk to the residents about these features, and how they work.

Lieutenant Tse stated she believes most of the SROs have pull stations. If they do have pull stations they must be maintained. We also discuss how fires work. Then we talk about how to behave in a fire. With SROs, a big issue is cooking in units. The Fire Department works with the building to determine scheduling for the kitchen. The department encourages residents to get rid of things that they are not using. She stated this program was started in the 80s after a number of fires that have occurred, and was intended to change behavior.

Dr. Ojo asked do we still have emergency response training programs.

Lieutenant Tse stated this is what she had been discussing. She further mentioned that the Fire Department does not bring equipment for people to test.

Angela Chu stated there was a time when the Collaboratives did more in-depth training. People would get specialized training on how to use the equipment.

Rosemary Bosque asked what does the SFFD do in a situation that may or may not be an emergency. When an elevator is not in service and there is a resident in a wheelchair cannot get out, what does the Fire Department do in this situation?

Lieutenant Tse stated the wheelchair user can call for assistance, but residents cannot make every situation an emergency. She further stated that what people don't understand is there is a service charge when calling for assistance. Sometimes we get calls from the field that a specific resident keeps calling for services. We then try to encourage the owner to fix the issue, and collaborate with other departments. It still takes time to fix the issues.

Sam Patel stated when the sprinkler ordinance went into effect, we were also required to update our fire alarms systems. Now these buildings don't have pull stations anymore. There is usually only one pull station left.

Lieutenant Tse stated the Fire Department's rule is if it doesn't work it needs to be removed. If it is present, it needs to work.

Rosemary Bosque stated that DBI cite for this as well.

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Scott Walton stated he wanted to follow up on the discussion of people calling in for services. He further stated that people may call because there is an emergency to exit. But can they call to get assistance back up to their unit?

Lieutenant Tse stated that people do call to get back in.

Scott Walton asked do you try to move the chair with them?

Lieutenant Tse stated yes we try to bring them with their chair. We might move them to a different chair like Stair chair for example, but generally we try to bring the chair with the resident.

Bruce Burge mentioned when the Fire Fighters work on getting people out of elevators that sometimes can be hard on the elevator. Is there anything we can do about this? We are told that elevators are expensive, and we're not supposed to damage them.

Lieutenant Tse asked if you call the elevator service contract representative ask how soon the elevator representatives show up.

Bruce Burge stated they usually arrive within the hour.

Rosemary Bosque stated that the elevator group is looking to make recommendations. One recommendation could be giving the Fire Department information about the elevators. So they can know how to minimize the damage to the elevators.

Scott Walton said calling service representatives doesn't always work if residents are panicking. This makes it seem more urgent to the emergency responders.

### **Public comment for Agenda Item No. 5**

None.

### **4. Administrative Announcements (Revisited)**

Rosemary Bosque mentioned the Department of Building Inspection is putting together an elevator work group. This group will be talking with the elevator vendors and the State. The elevators are completely under the jurisdiction of the State, which is why we are involving them in the work group.

Rosemary Bosque stated with respect to the hoarding and cluttering program, it is starting to come together. Ms. Bosque further stated the aim is to work on these cases and develop trust with the individual so that the issue can be fixed before eviction. DBI will cite a hoarding situation for numerous situations. However, our code doesn't let us write up the tenant. We will provide more information as it becomes available. Please let us know if you have a hoarding and cluttering situation.

### **Public Comment for Agenda Item No. 4**

None.

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**6. Reports from SRO Collaboratives**

Rosemary Bosque asked if the collaboratives had reports.

The collaboratives responded No.

**Public Comment for Agenda Item No. 6.**

None.

**7. Prioritization of Future Meeting Topics**

Rosemary Bosque stated the Task Force will be adding hoarding and cluttering to the agenda topics. We also would like to add the elevator issues to the June meeting. Does anyone want to speak on a specific issue for May? I have it in my notes that we want to approach the mental health association, but this would be a good thing to add to the June meeting.

Nicolette Alexander mentioned she would like to see something about wellness in the SRO. She asked if this was a separate issue or should we discuss it in the June meeting with the Mental Health Association.

Rosemary Bosque asked if the Task Force thought it would be a good time to have someone from community behavioral health services speak at the May meeting.

Scott Walton mentioned it is hard to discuss that particular issue, but we can talk about the services available. It would probably be good to bring APS to the discussion. We should also bring someone in from in-home support services.

Rosemary Bosque stated she would like to get a representative from DPH here to talk about the services available, then that's a good segway into the next meeting as these issues are complex.

Scott Walton stated one of the things that is great is that more people have access to health care with the passage of healthcare legislation. However, people should be exploring if they are eligible for Medi-Cal which is located at 1440 Harrison Street which is the main office.

Nicolette Alexander stated the topic she was thinking about was a little different. Not sure how to characterize it, but wellness beyond services available. She was thinking about things like do they have community space, are people isolated, how people get food, etc; a more proactive wellness, verses responding to problems.

Rosemary Bosque stated we are talking more about assessment. HSA and other services have done profiles. It might be a good idea for Ms. Alexander to look at these profiles to help her to specify her issue.

Angela Chu stated she wanted to compare buildings that do have supportive services, and those that do not. She further stated the Task Force needs to look at how to bring those services to buildings which do not.

Scott Walton stated there are a lot of different groups interested in housing. HSA has asked the controller office to do a survey of their housing.

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Rosemary Bosque mentioned that we are dealing with very old buildings. It is very difficult to add open space. Getting this data interconnected is very valuable.

Nicolette Alexander stated she was thinking about individuals becoming aware and bringing outside speakers to discuss this program.

Rosemary Bosque stated the Task Force can look at some services which have not been historically available to these buildings.

Dan Jordan stated most people don't have a clue as to what is available. Most of the non-profit hotels have case managers. Private hotels do not have case managers available, and that the Task Force needs to create a list where residents can get services.

### **Public Comment for Agenda Item #7.**

None.

### **8. General Public Comments**

Patrick Flanagan stated he wanted to discuss the use of TV as disciplinary tool. There was an issue in the TV room which results in the staff and residents sitting down to talk about the issue. They developed a list of recommendations for behavior standards. Then the staff didn't follow through, and the Staff turned the TV off for a week. He further stated when it was turned on again, it was restricted. He then contacted the Rent Board; they were unable to help. He then went to the Housing Rights committee, who advised him to follow the grievance procedure. He referred the issue to the Manager, which he left a message with the manager of the program, and did not hear from him.

Rosemary Bosque stated the task force doesn't have jurisdiction for this issue.

### **Public Comment for Agenda Item #8.**

None.

### **9. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25.