

Report on Community Involvement and Neighborhood Complaints for The Gail Miller Homeless Resource Center

Address:

242 West Paramount Ave.
Salt Lake City, UT

Salt Lake City Council District 5—Ballpark

Council Member: Darin Mano

Salt Lake City Planning Director: Nick Norris

The Conditional Use Permit (CUP), issued by Salt Lake City for the Gail Miller Homeless Resource Center, requires the operator to submit a yearly report to Salt Lake City's Planning Director and the City Council member in whose district the Homeless Resource Center (HRC) is located. As per the CUP, this report should include the following information:

(A) List of individuals who have participated in the community coordinating group meetings;

(B) A summary of each community coordinating group meeting;

(C) A summary of complaints received from the community by the operator of the homeless resource center or homeless shelter; and

(D) An explanation of how complaints have been addressed/resolved.

Gail Miller Homeless Resource Center Overview

As this is the first report to be submitted to Salt Lake City officials, we felt it might be helpful to provide some brief background information for institutional history.

In response to an RFP released by Shelter the Homeless in March 2018, Catholic Community Services of Utah submitted a proposal to operate the Men's and Women's Homeless Resource Center on Paramount Avenue in Salt Lake City. Based on their proposal, as well as their long-standing reputation for excellent service in this community, a twenty-one member selection committee, as well as the Board of Directors for Shelter the Homeless, chose Catholic Community Services to operate what is now called The Gail Miller Homeless Resource Center (Miller HRC).

Oakland Construction was chosen as the general contractor to build the Miller HRC, which reached substantial completion in mid-August, 2019. Once Catholic Community Services moved in and was fully staffed, a community open-house was held on September 6th, 2019. The following Tuesday, September 10, 2019, the Miller HRC officially opened, and the first group of clients were transferred from The Road Home's Rio Grande Shelter.

On most nights the Miller HRC operates at capacity*, with 40 women and 160 men receiving food, shelter and housing-focused, wrap-around services. These services include:

- Housing-Focused Case Management
- Housing Locators—This team works at all of our facilities; they are constantly looking for new housing opportunities for our guests and thus work closely with case managers.
- 4th Street Clinic Nurse Care Managers and the Mobile Clinic—providing onsite healthcare.
- Three meals daily—for many of our guests, since becoming homeless, this is the first time they've consistently eaten three meals every day.
- Access to free washers and dryers (and laundry supplies)
- Personal Hygiene supplies
- Clothing
- Food and supplies for Pets
- Connection to substance abuse treatment services
- Connection to mental health supportive services
- DWS Employment and Eligibility Services—a DWS worker is co-located at our facility, thus overcoming a huge barrier for clients who often struggled to get to appointments.
- Employment fairs—At these fairs, several local employers came to the Miller HRC to potentially hire some of our guests. If needed, staff was available to help guests fill out their applications. Many interviews were held at each fair and we know that several guests were hired.

Without question, Catholic Community Services (CCS) has continually provided excellent services for the 200 guests of the Miller HRC, and thus Shelter the Homeless was ready to renew their operating lease. However, two weeks ago we were informed by the Miller HRC Shelter Director that CCS would not be renewing their operating lease, with June 30, 2020 being the last day they would operate the HRC. Naturally, we are disappointed to be losing them as an HRC Operator. Shelter the Homeless, will soon announce how we will choose the next operator of the Miller HRC.

****In case you're asking, "We have such a large unsheltered population in our community, so why aren't you at 100% capacity every night": Bed management at a shelter is more complicated than it might seem on the surface. We serve men and women who are free to come and go from the Miller HRC as they please. Every day all of the beds in the facility are reserved for a specific individual. Most of these individuals have been guests at the facility from the night before, but everyday a small number of beds are assigned to new guests who have been waiting to get into one of the HRCs. Despite all of the beds being reserved during the day, it's fairly common to have a few individuals not show up that night to claim their bed. Because there aren't enough beds in the systems to meet the demand, when a bed is not claimed, the front desk staff notifies someone from the Coordinated Intake Program run by Utah Community Action (UCA). Without going into deeper detail as to how we coordinate the intake for the HRCs and manage overflow in Salt Lake County, we'll simply say that the UCA staff works very hard to fill those unclaimed beds. Considering this is done late at night, there are times when a bed or two goes unused. Those unused beds always fill up the next day, and the cycle starts again. However, despite the complexities of bed management, the Miller HRC's average occupancy rate is well over 90%.***

(A) List of individuals who have participated in the community coordinating group meetings;

Since the Miller HRC opened in September, 2019, only two community meetings have been held—November 13, 2019 and February 13th, 2020. The following individuals have attended one or more of the community coordinating group meetings—which we now call, “Neighborhood Advisory Councils”:

Name	Role/Organization;
Councilman Darin Mano	Salt Lake City Council—District 5
Zoe Morgan	SLC Government
Dennis Faris	VOA Community Engagement
Morgan Bodily	VOA Case Manager
Alan Lange	Miller HRC Guest
Amy Russell	Shelter the Homeless
Matt Melville	CCS Miller HRC Director
Amy J. Hawkins	Ballpark Community Council Chair-person/Resident
Bob Danielson	Ballpark Community Resident & Business Owner (Alpha Munitions)
Terrell Bodily	Ballpark Community Council/Local Resident

(B) A summary of each community coordinating group meeting;

November 13, 2019 Community Meeting—Held at the Miller HRC included the following topics:

- Introductions of those present and their role in the neighborhood
- Discussion of the “Ground Rules” for civil and respectful discussions
- Increased trash and debris in the neighborhood—City personnel said they could work on this issue.
- Inviting other businesses to join the meeting (i.e. Walmart)—This action still needs to be followed up on.
- Small grants to businesses and neighbors surrounding the HRCs are available.
- Alan Lange, a resident of the Miller HRC, spoke about some of great services available to guests.

February 12, 2020 Community Meeting—Held at the Miller HRC included the following topics:

- Introductions of those present
- Quick review of the “Ground Rules” for civil and respectful discussions.
- Follow-up about what has been done about Trash and Debris—The City’s contracted cleaning crew is working once a week around the Ballpark neighborhood. Additionally, there are cleans around the HRC multiple times a week. Matt has noticed that the cleaning crews are regularly cleaning between Trax and the HRC as well. Residents seems pleased.
- The abandoned house in front of the HRC—upwards of 20 people going in and out of the house in a one-hour period. SLC police needs to patrol more and watch this as a hot spot—Matt Melville and Councilman Mano are going to follow up.

- Bob Danielson from Alpha Munitions was threatened by a man with a knife. The individual wasn't staying at the Miller HRC, but did appear to be homeless. Danielson also reported finding all sorts of paraphernalia and weapons around his property, as people are often stashing these items so they won't lose them when being searched upon entering the HRC.
- **Need to get bright street lighting installed on Paramount Ave.** This will be worked on by many people attending the meeting, including the new City Council Member, Darin Mano.
- Catholic Community Services will no longer be operating the Miller HRC past June 30, 2020. Shelter the Homeless will be finding a new operator and informing the community about that decision.
- Reminder of grants SLC's small grants for businesses and neighbors surrounding the HRCs.

(C) A summary of complaints received from the community by the operator of the homeless resource center or homeless shelter; and

Since opening, the following complaints have been received by either CCS or Shelter the Homeless from the community members surrounding the Miller HRC:

- Abandoned House and property next door to the Miller HRC (aka Bagley's Property)—Some of the concerns with respect to this building are drug trafficking, sex trafficking, drug use, camping, and camp fires. We've received and made many complaints to the police about this building. Salt Lake City has received direct complaints about this building as well. **This is a significant issue, for which we need the city's help.**
- Alpha Munition—located on the corner of 300 West and Paramount Ave., the owner has found drugs, drug paraphernalia, and two knives on his property. The owner was also threatened by a homeless man who had a knife.
- Diggity Dog—located directly across the street from the Miller HRC. Owner has complained many times about people parking in front of her business, and loitering in front of her building, thus scaring customers. A window on her building was broken in August, 2019. The owner of Diggity Dog has also contacted the city about parking issues.
- A car was burglarized on Paramount Ave.—The owner believed it was a guest staying at the Miller HRC.

(D) An explanation of how complaints have been addressed/resolved.

- Abandoned House (Bagley's Property)--- Miller HRC and Shelter the Homeless staff have repeatedly reported issues to the police and have discussed the problem at safety and security meetings. The shed behind the house has been taken down by the property owner, but only after the snow had almost completely collapsed the structure. We've been told the property was put on the market to be sold and is now under contract. Preston Cochrane, Shelter the Homeless' Executive Director, has contacted the group who is purchasing the property to let them know that immediate demolition is necessary. The Salt Lake City Homeless Engagement

Team have also tried to mitigate the problem by talking with squatters. **We still need the city's support dealing with this property.**

- Alpha Munition—Director Matthew Melville has forged a strong relationship with the owner. Together they have spoken to police about the issue, asking for their help. In the case of the knife attacker, the police found the man but couldn't arrest him because there was no direct evidence of the man's crime.
- Diggity Dog—Although the owner has put up no parking signs in front of her building, they are only her signs, and cannot be legally enforced by the police. Matt Melville has talked to the owner and in a gesture of good will, he has encouraged her to tell us whenever someone parks in front of her business. Despite it being legal to park there, when we are aware, we make an announcement over the intercom to have the guest move their car right away. We have even asked County Mayor Jenny Wilson to move her car when she parked there one day. The owner contacted the city to ask if she could have a loading zone in front of her building, and Zoe Morgan from the Homeless Engagement Team is looking into the best options for a solution. When the window was broken, Matt Melville arranged to have it fixed, and Shelter the Homeless paid the bill.
- Car burglary- Matt Melville met the car owner and encouraged him to file a police report. Matt also pulled security footage of the crime to give to the police.

More complaints might have been made if it weren't for the superior work of Salt Lake City Government's Homeless Engagement and Response Team and VOA'S Community Engagement Specialists that Salt Lake City funds. This team has created pro-active relationships with the community, to address any potential issues before they become a complaint. (A sampling of just some of the work done by the Homeless Engagement Team can be found at the end of this report).

Community Engagement on a City Level

(Work done by Salt Lake City Homeless Engagement and Response Team)

- Maven District engagement, their bra/underwear drive for the Geraldine, future partnerships with the individual businesses
- Urban Indian Center engagement, hosting future events with their clients and Gail Miller clients
- Yoga classes going since late October at the Geraldine. Were twice monthly, now happening every week. We have a regular crowd at this point, and I will be inviting housed women from the surrounding neighborhood to attend for free yoga and to make new friendships between residents and housed neighbors starting next Wednesday.
- Consistently attending and presenting at the Community Council meetings within the two HRC neighborhoods (Central City CC and Ballpark CC) to respond to complaints, concerns, questions. These meetings are monthly.
- Representing at Client Focused Core Group and Legal Rights Core Group
- Prepared presentation on Homeless Services at Ballpark, to explain and talk through the system with representatives from five different provider groups, might extend this to Central City.
- Weekly outreach to SLC arts academy with information about cleans at Taufer Park so they know when they can send the school kids to play or do park projects.
- Constant outreach with Community Intelligence Officers, City contracted clean teams, and the VOA city mitigation representatives for better responses to community concerns
- Meeting neighbors through flyering about the City sponsored Landscape/Security improvement grant for the neighbors of the new HRCs
- Facilitation of the Neighborhood Advisory Councils (scheduling, preparing agendas, providing a note taker, facilitating discussion).
- Finding the right avenue for skilled volunteers—meeting with and facilitation introductions from a massage therapist to find the right place for her to volunteer.