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9 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

10 **Thursday, February 08, 2007**

11 Council Chambers
12 Palo Alto Civic Center
13 250 Hamilton Avenue
14 6:00 PM

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17 **ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Blum, Lenoir, Savage, Wilson Mora **Staff:** Amy Johnson
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20 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

21 Ms. Anne Cribbs, a commissioner of the Palo Alto Recreation Commission invited the members of the
22 HRC to participate in the Recreation Commissions challenge to walk 10,000 steps a day. She
23 distributed flyers for the event.
24

25 Mr. Abraham, a Mountain View resident remarked on the last demographic report by the Palo Alto
26 Police Dept. He said that suspect descriptions in the database have nothing to do with the stop rate. He
27 distributed a report that he had written. He indicated that the data is consistent even though the police
28 department claims that their data is not. He claims that African Americans are still being stopped more
29 than those people of any other race.
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32 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

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34 Commissioner Blum made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2006 meeting as
35 corrected, seconded by Commissioner Lenoir. AYES: Unanimous.
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37 Commissioner Savage made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2007 meeting as
38 corrected, seconded by Commissioner Blum. AYES: Unanimous.
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41 **AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS: None**
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44 **BUSINESS**

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46 **1. UPDATE OF OPPORTUNITY CENTER BY DIRECTOR, PHILIP DAH.**

47 Mr. Dah requested two of his staff to speak about their housing programs. Ms. Nancy Noel, explained
48 that she is responsible for support services at the Opportunity Center. She explained that she works with
49 the single residents. Currently the center has 88 units of permanent housing, of which 70 are for single

50 person occupancy, and the remaining 18 are for families. She also explained that 24 of the 70 single
51 person units are subsidized from an endowment fund from InnVision. The residents who are there via
52 the subsidy are required to meet with her, one on one, for case management. She explained that their
53 program is state of the art because it follows a “Housing First” model, which gives them housing
54 without any behavior restrictions; once the residents become more stabilized in housing, than they begin
55 to make personal improvements. Ms. Noel said that she also meets by request with the remaining single
56 residents who are not required to meet with her.

57

58 Commission Lenoir asked about interactions between the residents and the drop-in clients. Ms. Noel
59 said that they took this into consideration when they designed the building. The building has separate
60 entrances, one for the singles and one for the families. The families mostly stay on their own side. The
61 general lobby area spans into the drop-in area, but the living areas are separate. The various services
62 that are provided at the center have separate entrances for singles and families.

63

64 Commissioner Savage asked about any tension between the drop-in clients and the residents. Ms. Noel
65 said that there is tension between the residents and the drop in clients. This may be because the drop-in
66 clients are still homeless and some have drug problems. Some residents don’t want to associate with the
67 drop-in clients because they were formerly homeless prior to moving into the center.

68

69 There was a brief discussion about the demographics of the center. Mr. Dah said that 80% are men.

70

71 Commissioner Blum asked about methods for measuring the success of the center, so that they are
72 prepared when funding is challenged. Ms. Noel said that she doesn’t think that there are any
73 benchmarks yet, but they should begin to work on that. Commissioner Blum also asked about their
74 participation in the Palo Alto restorative policing program. He suggested that there should be a point
75 person at the center for this program. She said that they are working with the Police Dept, which is
76 being very supportive.

77

78 Commissioner Wilson asked about the waiting list for the center. It’s done by PMI, of the Housing
79 Authority. The list currently has 500 names on it. Commissioner Wilson asked how long residents are
80 expected to stay at the center. Ms. Noel said that it is permanent housing and they can stay as long as
81 they want to. Many residents have told her that they love it there, but their living space is small and
82 many have a lot of personal items. Center staff anticipates that tenants may decide to move out once
83 they are on their feet. She also explained that because the residents don’t have much of an income they
84 really can’t afford to move out especially once their subsidy runs out. Commissioner Wilson asked Ms.
85 Noel if the Opportunity Center was working with youth aging out of the Foster Care system, since many
86 former foster care youth end up homeless when they turn 18. Ms. Noel said that she didn’t know much
87 about it, except that she knows that the Bill Wilson Center is very big in the county and has just
88 expanded to include ages up to 24 years old, to receive services.

89

90 Commissioner Lenoir asked about who makes social services referrals. Ms. Noel said that she does the
91 referrals; in addition they have two part-time people to help her because of the volume of people who
92 need services.

93

94 Ms. Kristen Chandler, the Family Case Manager at the center is responsible for the 18 families who
95 reside at the center, she also runs the drop-in center. She spoke of the many services the center provides
96 such as case management, showers, laundry, computers, etc. She also said that between the hours of
97 3:00pm and 6:00pm, she oversees the children in the family services center. Currently there are 2
98 families that are subsidized and required to meet with her, she is hoping that as they build community in

99 the center, others will come to her when they need assistance.
100 Commissioner Blum asked if they have a homework center. Ms. Chandler said that they have 28
101 children living in the building. When they arrive home from school, they get snacks and help with
102 homework. They do have volunteers, who are mostly from Stanford. She also said that she has a contact
103 at the school district, so that she is kept informed about how the kids are doing in school.

104
105 Commissioners Lenoir and Blum suggested that she also contact Youth Community Services for
106 additional volunteers.

107
108 Mr. Dah said that their biggest need currently, is for emergency services such as groceries. Any help or
109 suggestions would be appreciated.

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111

112 **2. DISCUSSION WITH NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS REGARDING COMMUNITY** 113 **BUILDING AND ANY ISSUES OR CONCERNS:**

114

115 Commissioner Wilson said that she didn't expect anyone to attend tonight based on emails that staff
116 received. Copies of the emails were distributed to the commissioners for their information.

117

118 Commissioner Blum stated that he and Commissioner Lenoir attended a PAN meeting to discuss
119 emergency preparedness.

120

121 Commissioner Wilson explained that the emails suggested that the HRC attend Neighborhood meetings.
122 She asked all the commissioners to attend their local association meetings.

123

124 **3. UPDATE FROM HSRAP (HUMAN SERVICES RESOURCE ALLOCATION PROCESS)** 125 **PROPOSAL REVIEW COMMITTEE:**

126

127 Commissioner Lenoir spoke to the other commissioners about how important it is to respond to staff
128 emails. She explained that staff emailed the HRC asking for help with the HSRAP committee and not
129 everyone responded to the email. She had not planned to be a part of the process, but because no one
130 else was available, she did it. She explained that the committee is still reviewing the proposals and
131 discussing their recommendations. It is a big process. She said that the City Council is going to have a
132 meeting on Monday, Feb. 26th to discuss budget cuts. She explained that the council may look at cutting
133 the HSRAP budget. She suggested that the HRC notify those affected by HSRAP and CDBG to attend
134 the meeting.

135

136 Commissioner Wilson also suggested that they try to speak to their council buddies about this too.

137

138 Commissioner Wilson invited Mr. Bill Stemple, Co-chair of the Palo Alto Mediation Program (PAMP)
139 to speak to the Commissioners. He explained that there have been a couple of meetings with City Staff
140 to discuss the future funding of the program, but he was not aware of the final outcome. Because this is a
141 city mandated program, and HSRAP funding has a limited amount of money, PAMP feels that they
142 should not compete for the same money as other very worthy causes. He also said they want to continue
143 to work with the HRC; they do not want that to change.

144

145 There was a brief discussion about whether the program should be removed from HSRAP.

146

147 Mr. Bill Stemple commented that expanding the program would come at the expense of taking money

148 away from other Project Sentinel programs. Project Sentinel currently underwrites expenses not covered
149 by the City; Project Sentinel does not have the means to extend further funding to this City Program.
150

151 **4. DISCUSSION OF FUNDING WISDOM SHARER’S PROGRAM AND NEXT**
152 **INTERGENERATIONAL WEEK EVENTS.**

153
154 Commissioner Blum commented that he would like funds from the Human Services budget used for this
155 expense.

156
157 Commissioner Lenoir asked him to explain what the program is. Commissioner Blum briefly explained
158 the program and said that the scope of the project was emailed to Kathy Espinoza-Howard. He also said
159 that he wants to review the Human Services budget to find out what HRC money is available. Ms.
160 Johnson said that there is no defined HRC budget, but that she would pass along the request to Ms.
161 Espinoza-Howard.

162
163 Commissioner Lenoir asked Commissioner Blum what other sources of funding had been explored.
164

165 **5. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

166 **A. Commissioner Reports:**

167 Commissioner Savage reported that she met with InnVision staff on the Emergency Task Force. Also,
168 she attended the Taser Task Force meeting, and reported that it is moving along at a snail’s pace but is
169 making progress. She explained that the task force members received two binders full of material to
170 read. She also reported that she attended the IDEO brown bag lunch and it was really good.
171

172 Commissioner Blum reported that he and Commissioner Lenoir attended a peace march in East Palo
173 Alto and that it was well attended. He also reported that the Off the Streets Team discussed respite
174 facilities for those who aren’t quite ready for permanent housing. They are working to find facilities. He
175 also reported that he and Commissioner Lenoir attended the IDEO brown bag lunch meeting.
176

177 Commissioner Lenoir reported that she attended the Youth Council meeting which addressed the recent
178 panel event on drug issues. The kids at the meeting said that the panel members were not listening as
179 closely as they should have. The Youth Council discussed having their own forum. She also reported
180 that there was a public forum at Palo Alto High School to discuss what they wanted in the next
181 superintendent for PAUSD.
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184

185 Commissioner Wilson reported she attended 4 community building meetings in Redwood City.
186 Redwood City is very far along in the process of encouraging civic participation. She is working on
187 bringing a Community Builders/Citizen’s Academy type program to Palo Alto. Commissioner Wilson
188 also attended the IDEO brown bag lunch.
189

190 There was a brief discussion about the positive experiences at the IDEO brown bag lunch.
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194 **B. Council Buddy Reports:**

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196 None

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197 **C. Council Liaison Report:**

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199 None

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201 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**

202 Ms. Amy Johnson reported on Ms. Espinoza-Howard's behalf that the pilot expedited food stamp
203 program is currently underway at the Opportunity Center.

204 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

205 None

206

207

208 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

209 Update on HRC goals

210 Discussion about having an HRC social.

211 Discussion about funding Intergenerational Project.

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213

214 **ADJOURNMENT**

215 The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.