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HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, October 24, 2007
Council Conference Room
Palo Alto Civic Center
250 Hamilton Avenue
7:00 PM

ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present: Atito, Blum, Khan, Mendoza, Mora, Savage **Council Liaison: Staff:** Kathy Espinoza-Howard, Debbie Park

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

Mr. John Abraham spoke about racial profiling by Palo Alto Police Department officers. He stated that collecting demographic data is just one part of a comprehensive approach. There is an implied assumption that police are not doing racial profiling. There is a higher probability of African-American searches. He recommended that an independent party should look at the data as it is and then have the data analyzed by a statistician.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Blum made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected for the June 14, 2007 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Atito AYES: Unanimous.

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:

None

BUSINESS

1. DISCUSSION TO CO-SPONSOR “NOT IN OUR TOWN” EVENT.

Commissioner Mora made a motion that the HRC co-sponsor the “Not in Our Town” Event. Seconded by Commissioner Khan, AYES: Unanimous.

48 **2. DISCUSSION WITH (PAGE) PALO ALTAN’S FOR GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS**
49 **AND PALO ALTO MEDIATION PROGRAM**

50 There was a discussion about ideas around community building and collaboration with Palo Alto
51 Mediation Program (PAMP) and Palo Altan’s for Government Effectiveness (PAGE).

52
53 Mr. Mark Sabin from PAGE commented that it is very clear that conflict happens in the community. It is
54 important to build stronger, common dialogue and to build a framework where people are more
55 thoughtful and open minded. PAGE’s philosophy is to start with ideas and attitude, deal with the
56 controversy and leave with the idea of being able to work together, to build social capital.
57 He also explained that PAGE does not intervene in controversy, but provides concrete information about
58 the topic.

59
60 Elaine El-bizri, a Palo Alto resident and representative of the Palo Alto Mediation Program (PAMP)
61 stated that she has been with PAMP for 6 years and with the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center
62 (PCRC) for 3½ years. She explained that PAMP manages the process of the meeting while encouraging
63 and empowering community members to resolve conflicts and build community. Elaine has been
64 working with PCRC on a number of community building activities in Redwood City and other Cities in
65 San Mateo County.

66
67 Liz Douthitt, a Palo Alto resident and co-chair of the Palo Alto Mediation Program spoke to the work
68 PAMP is doing in the community to address community conflicts through mediations and through large
69 group facilitations. PAMP is working with representatives from Not in Our Town on a series of
70 meetings to begin in January.

71
72 Mr. Ray Bacchetti, a Palo Alto resident and representative of PAGE referred to PAGE’s white paper “A
73 new dispute resolution process for complex community issues in Palo Alto”.
74 He said that the notion of collaboration is important and should be consistent rather than antagonistic.
75 He highlighted the ideas of starting broadly and deal with conditions of emotions as well as deal with
76 concerns that emerge by moving toward general proposition. PAGE is interested in a Citizens Academy,
77 or Leadership Academy.

78
79 PAMP and PAGE representatives answered questions from the commissioners about training, and costs.

80
81 Mr. Mark Sabin said that the ball is in their court and that they wanted to get the buy-in of the HRC.

82
83 The commissioners discussed next steps and asked PAGE and PAMP to come up with a specific outline
84 or proposal that the HRC can review and consider passing along to council.

85
86 Commissioner Blum suggested to establish one or two goals because too many will be difficult to
87 establish; also he said we should be careful about what is proposed, because the City Council may be
88 concerned about increased costs down the road.

89
90 Kathy Espinoza-Howard suggested talking to the Fire Department about their volunteer PANDA
91 program and the staff of the Family Resources program because they are all about community building.

92
93 Commissioner Khan said that she would like to see a flow chart indicating the number of facilitations, as
94 well as more tangible numbers to show cost effectiveness and suggested presenting a scope for a pilot
95 program.

97 Commissioner Mora said that the HRC wants to work with PAGE and PAMP and that she liked the idea
98 of task force training. She encouraged them to share their ideas about a Citizens Academy, but was
99 concerned about the tremendous amount of staff time that would be needed for such a program.

100
101 The commissioners asked PAMP and PAGE to bring back their ideas to the HRC January 2008 meeting.
102

103
104 **3. UPDATE ON STATUS OF IMMIGRATION RESOLUTION**

105 An updated version of the resolution was provided in the packets. There was a brief discussion about
106 what previously took place with the resolution with regards to the City Council having additional
107 questions and the City Attorney's Office adding additional language for clarity.

108
109 Kathy Espinoza-Howard said that she updated Chief Johnson who was fine with the latest version of the
110 resolution.

111
112 **Commissioner Blum made a motion to approve the resolution as amended by the City Attorney's**
113 **Office, Seconded by Commissioner Mendoza, AYES: Unanimous.**

114
115
116 **4. DISCUSSION OF CODE OF CONDUCT**

117 Commissioner Mora encouraged everyone to share their opinion. There was a discussion to create a
118 Code of conduct to be used at HRC meetings which would include group agreements for meetings
119 which would be stated on speaker cards, enlarged and hung on the wall during meeting, and possibly
120 provide consequences for which protocols would need to be established.

121
122
123 **5. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

124 There was a brief discussion regarding the unique situation on the HRC since Linda Lenoir who as vice
125 chair has resigned and would have likely been voted into the position of chair.

126
127 Commissioner Mendoza nominated Commissioner Savage for the position of chair.

128
129 Commissioner Savage nominated Commissioner Atito for the position of chair. AYES: Unanimous.

130
131 Commissioner Atito nominated Commissioner Savage as vice-chair. AYES: Unanimous.

132
133
134 **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

135 Commissioner Savage reported that she and Commissioner Atito met with Chief Johnson, Dennis Burns
136 and Cheryl Contois regarding the collection of police data. They discussed the idea of reporting the
137 results of collected demographic police data to one quarter per year as a trial because everything is
138 recorded on cameras, and there has been no change in the data for the past 7 years. The process takes
139 200 hours of staff time per quarter to prepare. The data would continue to be collected and recorded but
140 reports would not be compiled. She would like to include this discussion on the next meeting's agenda.

141
142 Commissioner Khan spoke about the Ad Hoc committee regarding youth involvement and asked for it to
143 be a future agenda item.

144
145

146 **6. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

147
148 **A. Commissioner Reports:**

149 Commissioner Blum spoke about the upcoming Community Law Night which is co-sponsored by the
150 HRC. He also said that he will be one of the volunteer attorneys at this community event.

151
152 Commissioner Atito spoke about his involvement with a violence offense organization.

153
154 **B. Council Buddy Reports:**

155 None

156
157 **C. Council Liaison Report:**

158 None

159
160 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**

161 Kathy Espinoza-Howard reported that the Immigration Ordinance will be discussed at the Policy and
162 Services meeting on November 14, 2007 as well as the funding for the Palo Alto Mediation Program to
163 become a contractor rather than through HSRAP funding. Kathy also reported that Commissioner
164 Lenoir's resignation letter needs to be sent to the City Clerks Office.

165
166 Commissioner Mora said that she will fax Commissioner Lenoir's letter to staff.

167
168 Kathy also reported that she will have her staff provide to the commissioners copies of material from
169 Media Workshop. Her staff is also updating city website with HRC information that was discussed at the
170 retreat.

171
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173 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

174 None

175
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177 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

178 Discussion about Collection of Police Data

179 Code of Conduct

180 Discussion about civil rights violence in Myanmar (Burma)

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183 **ADJOURNMENT**

184 The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.