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9 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

10 **Thursday, April 10, 2008**

11 Council Conference Room

12 Palo Alto Civic Center

13 250 Hamilton Avenue

14 7:00 PM

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18 **ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Atito, Bacchetti, Blum, Khan, Mendoza, Mora, Savage
19 **Council Liaison:** Peter Drekmeier **Staff:** Kathy Espinoza-Howard

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21 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

22 Mr. John Abraham spoke about demographic data and compared traffic stops, citation, and arrests for
23 different ethnic groups. He concluded that African Americans get stopped more than any other ethnic
24 group. The data appears to be contradictory.

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26 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

27
28 None

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31 **AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

32 Agenda item #2 was moved to be agenda item #1.

33
34 **BUSINESS**

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36
37 **1. DISCUSSION OF HRC INVOLVEMENT IN CITY COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

38
39 Councilmember Drekmeier was asked to give an update of the City Councils work on setting their
40 priorities. He spoke briefly about each of the priorities and some of the recent surveys that have been
41 conducted.

42
43 Commissioner Bacchetti provided a summary of his view of the City Council's discussion of the priority
44 of civic engagement. He reported that it was a complicated and rich discussion. There were times when
45 the line between policy and management became blurred. Basically, the City Council has asked staff to
46 continue to work out the details and the implementation. There will be more discussions throughout the
47 year.

48
49 Commissioner Mora asked how the HRC can be of further assistance. Councilmember Drekmeier said

50 that more things would come through HRC, and for the HRC to send a proposal to City Council or
51 having a discussion with Council might lead to a colleagues memo. He suggested that the HRC look for
52 opportunities to give input to the City Council.

53
54 Commissioner Blum suggested that the HRC continue to work on the idea of how to bring groups
55 together and participate in civic engagement because the City Council has a lot on its plate.

56
57 Councilmember Drekmeier also commented that there has been a growing concern about self-
58 segregation among the growing Asian population. Currently the City of Palo Alto is 20% Asian. He
59 suggested that the HRC look into ways to get this population more engaged in the community.

60
61 Commissioner Mora said that there are a lot of best practices already developed and recommended using
62 some of these methods.

63
64 Staff Liaison Kathy Espinoza-Howard commented on the Juneteenth Celebration because it brings a
65 diverse group of people together.

66
67 Councilmember Drekmeier reported on the recent dedication of King’s Plaza. He suggested that there be
68 an annual Martin Luther King Day celebration and that the HRC could co-sponsor and participate in this
69 event.

70
71 The current HRC civic engagement sub-committee will continue to think of ideas to work on this effort.

72
73 **2. DISCUSSION OF RESOLUTION CALLING FOR STATE OF CALIFORNIA TO PASS**
74 **A UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE BILL**

75
76 Ms. Lois Salow, a 42 year resident of Palo Alto spoke to the commissioners about Senate Bill 840;
77 which will provide Medicare for everybody. She explained briefly the need for the bill. She said that
78 Insurance Companies take 1/3 of the profits. The Bill was passed by State Legislature but vetoed by
79 Governor Schwarzenegger. Her organization wants to pass the word to the public so that when it goes
80 before the Governor again he will know that there are many people supporting it. Research has shown
81 that this bill would save the state a lot of money and would also cover medications. The bill is currently
82 in the State Assembly and will be going to Appropriations Committee next. The City of Palo Alto
83 provides health care benefits to its employees and would stand to save a lot of money if this bill was
84 passed. This bill would also benefit businesses especially those who do not provide insurance to their
85 employees. She asked the HRC for a letter of support from the City Council and asked for the HRC’s
86 help. She provided handouts.

87
88 Commissioner Blum commented that the HRC needs to decide if this resolution falls within the
89 resolution guidelines that the HRC has decided upon. Also he said that he is a big fan of the bill.

90
91 Commissioner Mora commented that she has been following this bill and was disappointed that it had
92 been vetoed and that there was not enough votes to override the veto. She recommended that some
93 changes need to be made to the wording of the sample resolution before she could support it. She
94 recommended adding “whereas statements” that include the need for this health care bill.

95
96 Commissioner’s Mendoza, Blum, Khan, and Bacchetti spoke about their various concerns and
97 commented that they might not be in favor of supporting this resolution because of its political nature;
98 however they offered her suggestions on how to proceed.

99 Councilmember Drekmeier suggested that Ms. Salow speak to individual council members because they
100 can endorse the resolution as individuals.

101
102 Commissioner Blum suggested that Ms. Salow come back again to the HRC with a resolution stating
103 that the HRC supports Single Payer Universal Health Care coverage in California, without reference to a
104 particular bill, because that would take the political aspect out of this, without passing it on to City
105 Council. He also asked for copies of resolutions from other cities.

106
107 **3. CONSIDERATION FOR POSSIBLE AMENDMENT TO THE MANDATORY**
108 **RESPONSE PROGRAM ORDINANCE**

109
110 Mr. Eichner presented proposed language to amend the ordinance and cited other cities; the City
111 of Campbell and the Town of Los Gatos that have similar language in their ordinances that voids
112 any rental increase when the landlord is out of compliance with their ordinance. Mr. Eichner
113 also stated that the administrative cost for the City of Campbell and the Town of Los Gatos to
114 administer the sanctions to their ordinances were minimal because landlords were eager to
115 comply to avoid the rental sanctions.

116
117 The HRC took testimony from Ms. Kirsten Carr from the California Apartment Association,
118 Tri-County. She stated that the position of the Tri-County Apartment Association was to
119 request a delay until the HRC's May meeting in order to provide time for the Tri-County
120 Apartment Association to investigate the situation with its members. She stated that the
121 association was uninformed that its Palo Alto members were out of compliance with the Palo
122 Alto ordinance.

123
124 There ensued a lengthy discussion among the HRC Commissioners regarding Tri-County
125 Apartment Association's request for more time, the need for more communication on the part of
126 the City of Palo Alto regarding the ordinance to "Mom and Pop" and mid-level landlords and
127 the wording of the amendment to the ordinance.

128
129 **Commissioner Shauna Mora moved to approve Project Sentinel's appendix A-Proposed**
130 **Language for Amended Ordinance with the inclusion of edits offered by Commissioner**
131 **Jeff Blum, who seconded the motion. There was a lengthy discussion. The Chairperson**
132 **asked for the Commissioners to vote. The motion failed with three commissioners voting**
133 **in favor and three opposing the motion.**

134
135 More discussion ensued. Commissioner Mora stated that there will be many opportunities for
136 all parties; in favor or opposed to the amendment of the ordinance, to testify and make their case
137 as the recommendation is reviewed by the City Council's Policy and Services Committee and by
138 the City Council.

139
140 Commissioner Khan stated that if the goal is to increase landlord registration, promote and
141 encourage the use of the Palo Alto Mediation Program by landlords and tenants then she could
142 support an amended motion that contained a Communication Plan along with the proposed
143 amended ordinance that had the following elements:

- ❖ Communication using e-mail, website, or other means targeting “Mom and Pop” and mid-level landlords encouraging them to register and educating them about the ordinance
- ❖ Similar notification targeting the registered landlords about the ordinance
- ❖ A 90 day grace period for all landlords to register and comply with the ordinance

Commissioner Khan offered an amended motion to support the amendment to the ordinance as stated in Project Sentinel’s Appendix A: Proposed Language for Amended Ordinance with the afore mentioned communication plan. Commissioner Blum seconded the motion. There was further discussion and clarification regarding the motion. The motion passed with four commissioners in favor and two opposed.

4. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

None

5. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:

A. Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Bacchetti announced that he will be out of town and unable to attend the next two meetings, he apologized.

B. Council Buddy Reports:

Commissioner Bacchetti reported that he met with Councilmember John Barton and had a useful discussion. Councilmember Barton told him that he thought the HRC could be helpful regarding the civic engagement priority.

C. Council Liaison Report:

Councilmember Drekmeier reported on the BMR program and said that the City Council voted to give owners, moving forward, 100% of CPI, which then was changed to AMI (Average Median Income).

D. Staff Liaison Report:

Kathy Espinoza-Howard discussed the CMR regarding changes to reporting demographic data by the Palo Alto Police Department. She explained that it was decided by staff that the information in the CMR is an administrative issue which went to City Council in April as an informational CMR and required no action by City Council.

Ms. Howard asked the commissioners for help in getting the word out to the disabled community the importance for representation at meetings with her and county personnel in order for their issues to be heard. She has attended recent meetings and no one has attended who can speak on behalf of the disabled community, even though she has left messages with people who have had complaints in the past.

192 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

193 None

194

195 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

196 Factors for Considering HRC resolution

197 Discussion about resolution in support of a Universal Single Payer Health Care Bill

198

199 **ADJOURNMENT**

200 The meeting adjourned at 9:50pm