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9 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

10 **Thursday, May 08, 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, Khan, Mendoza, Mora, Savage **Council Liaison:** Peter
19 Drekmeier **Staff:** Amy Johnson

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22 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

23 Mr. John Abraham, A Palo Alto Resident, handed out a document he prepared regarding the
24 demographic police data in Palo Alto. The data says that African Americans are rarely given penalties
25 for a traffic stop, but yet they have the highest arrest rate. He believes that it raises a question as to why
26 are African Americans being singled out for arrests but then let go for traffic stops. He would like to see
27 more of the data if the police would be more cooperative. He also suggested that Police Department
28 staff should look at the tapes and listen carefully to the audio portions. He also commented that the
29 demographic data is not on the city's website and is a year out-of-date.

30
31 Mr. Greg Kerber, a Palo Alto Resident, thanked staff for being accommodating in providing his
32 materials to the HRC members. He explained his documentation to the commissioners and explained
33 his issue with the Palo Alto Police Department, because he has been banned from calling in and
34 complaining about noise violations. He spoke of a recent time he called in and complained about a high
35 level of noise near California Avenue and he was told to call back later, because there were no officers
36 available at that time, and the staff person refused to give him an incident number. He does not believe
37 that this is the policy of the PAPD, nor does the Police Chief have the right to ban his calls.

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40 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

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42 Commissioner Mora made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the March 13, 2008 meeting.
43 Seconded by Commissioner Savage. AYES: unanimous.

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

47 None

49 **BUSINESS**

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52 **1. DISCUSSION TO CONSIDER FACTORS FOR PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS:**

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54 Commissioner Atito started the conversation by asking if anyone agreed to the list of factors that was
55 provided in the packet and if it could be adopted as a guideline for future proposed resolutions.

56
57 Commissioner Mendoza asked for some verbiage to be removed on one of the items. Everyone agreed.

58
59 Commissioner Savage wanted to go on record by saying that she believes most resolutions discussed by
60 the HRC never should have come to the HRC.

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62 Staff was asked to include the document in new commissioner orientation packets.

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65 **2. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION CALLING FOR STATE OF CALIFORNIA TO**
66 **PASS A UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE BILL:**

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68 Ms. Lynn Huidekopen, RN and resident of Menlo Park said that she was here tonight to answer
69 questions and address comments. She explained that Senator Kuehl is asking all City Councils in
70 California to endorse Senate Bill SB840. She spoke briefly about the bill and explained that they will
71 continue reintroducing it until it is eventually passed. Many cities do not realize the potential savings
72 that can be made from this bill, if it were passed. She offered to provide copies of the letters and
73 resolutions passed by other cities in support of the bill.

74
75 Commissioner Mora stated that she has always been a big supporter of this bill. She spoke about the
76 challenge the HRC has had in the past regarding passing resolutions that are based on issues outside of
77 the City of Palo Alto. She also offered some suggestions of how to modify the resolution outlining the
78 problems that SB840 addresses.

79
80 Ms. Huidekopen suggested meeting with a committee from the HRC to come up with something that
81 this commission would approve.

82
83 Commissioner Mendoza commented that based on the guidelines that they discussed and approved
84 regarding proposed resolutions, this draft resolution should write more about the problem and not about
85 a specific solution, because there could be other bills out there that might be better.

86
87 Ms. Huidekopen explained that the Governor's Bill failed in committee and that there are no other bills
88 out there like this one and that she is only interested in this bill. She also explained that it is her goal to
89 educate today's City Council members about the bill so that when they become future members of
90 legislature, the bill will be passed in the future.

91
92 Ms. Eve Agiewich, A Palo Alto resident and former member of the HRC, encouraged the HRC to go for
93 it and present something to the City Council. She explained that in the past, the HRC has been able to
94 get things passed by City Council that were not always about the City of Palo Alto. She believes that
95 the city will save a lot of money and could be convinced to take interest in this bill. She also explained
96 her views about the current health care system and how claims are being denied while costs for health
97 care are increasing.

98 Commissioner Savage said that everyone can agree that there is a crisis, and she asked the question of
99 what can the HRC do to go forward.

100
101 Commissioner Mora discussed how to use “whereas” statements in the resolution and sending the City
102 Council a simple statement that the HRC supports universal single payer health care and asking for the
103 City Council to support SB840.

104
105 Commissioner Khan said that she would be in favor of supporting the resolution, and said that it would
106 be a good supporting document to be sent to City Council. However, she recommended not using
107 adjectives that cannot be supported and explained which ones should be removed.

108
109 Mr. Hubert Morel-Seytoux provided a handout of San Mateo’s budget as an example, to the
110 commissioners. He explained that he and others have been working on getting this bill passed for the
111 last 10 years. They are patient and do not want to rush the process, since it is their goal to have
112 unanimous support. He spoke about the handout and how San Mateo would save 26% of payroll costs if
113 this bill were passed. His asked for the HRC to help him make contact with someone in the City who
114 could provide information to him regarding health care costs.

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117 **3. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

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119 Commissioner Mora reported that she and Commissioner Bacchetti have continued their efforts around
120 civic engagement and the partnership between PAGE (Palo Altan’s for Government Effectiveness) and
121 PAMP (Palo Alto Mediation Program). They have a new concern, because the staff person who was
122 helping them recently resigned from the City of Palo Alto.

123
124 Commissioner Savage reported that she and Commissioner Atito met with Sheryl Contois and Chief
125 Johnson, to discuss the upcoming community forum and other issues. She reported that they still plan to
126 hold the community forum, but it is on hold until after the investigation of the Children’s Theater is
127 completed.

128

129 Commissioner Khan said that she wanted to resurrect the idea of developing an HRC award or
130 fundraiser event and that she is willing to work on that, but she was not fully aware of the history with
131 this idea. Commissioner Mora explained briefly what the committee had previously done.

132

133 Commissioner Mendoza commented that it would be nice to reward those individuals who regularly
134 speak at HRC meetings, because they are passionate about their view and civically engaged, whether or
135 not the commissioners agree with their views.

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137 Commission Khan said that she would like to research the idea further, if the rest of the commission did
138 not mind. They agreed.

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141 **4. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

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143 **A. Commissioner Reports:** None

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146 **B. Council Buddy Reports:** None

147 **C. Council Liaison Report:** None

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150 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**

151 Ms. Amy Johnson reported that Ms. Sheila Mandoli was recently awarded the Community Star
152 Award from the Cubberley Community Center and Human Services Division for her work in the
153 community. Ms. Johnson also reported that the item from the HRC making changes to the
154 ordinance requiring mandatory response to request for discussion of disputes between landlords and
155 tenants, is tentatively scheduled for the July 8, 2008 Policy and Services meeting.

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158 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

159 None

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162 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

163 Status Report from the Palo Alto Police Department regarding demographic data and other issues.

164 Discussion of Proposed HRC Award

165 Discussion of Resolution in support of Public Health Care Senate Bill 840.

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168 **ADJOURNMENT**

169 The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm