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10 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**
11 **Thursday, December 11, 2008**
12 **Council Conference Room**
13 **Palo Alto Civic Center**
14 **250 Hamilton Avenue**
15 **6:00 PM**
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19 **ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Atito, Bacchetti, Ezran, Khan, Mendoza, Savage
20 **Staff:** Kathy Espinoza-Howard, Linda Larson, Amy Johnson, **Council Liaison:** Vice Mayor Peter
21 Drekmeier
22

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24 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**
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26 Mr. Abraham commented on statements Chief Johnson made concerning the demographic data at the
27 November 13, 2008 HRC meeting. He said that he felt that the data from the Portland Police department
28 is different than the data Palo Alto Police collects and should not be used as a comparison. Mr. Abraham
29 referred to page 2 of the data sheet he handed out. He mentioned that it would be a mistake to ignore the
30 ratios listed on the data sheet. He feels there are definite instances of racial profiling. Over-stopping is a
31 problem prevalent towards Afro-Americans and Hispanics.
32

33 Commissioner Atito asked Mr. Abraham what he felt could be the solution to the problem and how is
34 Mr. Abraham going to help. Mr. Abraham said to “turn him loose” with the data so that he can put
35 validity to the question of ‘why’ the stops are being made.
36

37 Commissioner Savage stated that this is a continuing problem with the police department and reiterated
38 that each complaint will be looked at and everyone should get the word out that if you feel you are a
39 victim let us know so an investigation can be started.
40

41 Kathy Espinoza-Howard agreed that it would be important to identify the circumstances of the stops.
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43 Commissioner Savage stated that an upcoming presentation by Interim Chief Burns on Monday will
44 hopefully put these questions on a more comprehensive level.
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47 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
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49 None

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

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52 None

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55 **BUSINESS**

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57 **1. INTRODUCTION OF THE “LET’S GO PALO ALTO ACTIVITY CHALLENGE**
58 **PROGRAM” BY COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT STAFF**

59
60 Ms. Amy French from the City of Palo Alto Planning Department gave a power point presentation on
61 the “Let’s Go Palo Alto” program. Ms. French explained that through the website activities like walking
62 or any physical exercise can be converted into ‘steps’ and kept track of to ‘virtually’ walk across the
63 United States.

64
65 Commissioner Ezran asked how the program is or will be marketed. Ms. French said it will be
66 advertised in local newspapers, Facebook and word-of-mouth.

67
68 Commissioner Savage wondered if there were incentives for participants. Ms. French said the
69 Recreation Division is working on that and she also explained how to become involved and how to sign
70 up.

71
72 Commissioner Bacchetti asked about getting on the website and the ‘cookies’ problem which shows up
73 on some individuals computers. Ms. French said she would have to ask I.T. if there is an override
74 function.

75
76 Commissioner Ezran asked what the cost of this program is to City of Palo Alto. Ms. French replied
77 approximately \$3000, or \$249.00 for each set of individuals.

78
79 Commissioner Khan offered to be the team captain for the HRC in order to enter ‘steps’ into the activity
80 tracker for a proposed team.

81
82 Commissioner Ezran suggested that for long term interest in this program there should be fun events and
83 some new activities.

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86 **2. DISCUSSION OF PROPOSAL FOR BUILDING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT INTO CIVIC**
87 **BUSINESS :**

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89 Commissioner Bacchetti stated that the concept for Civic Engagement came from two ideas: the first
90 idea is about the opportunities one gains via the meetings; the hope of getting as many things to happen
91 at a single setting, the second idea being ‘how to run a good meeting and engage people to continue to
92 participate. These ideas depend on skills, attitudes and understanding. It is important that the HRC and
93 PAGE making a contribution to put attention towards civic engagement meetings. There should be a
94 concentration on creating a framework for Palo Alto. People should like to be engaged in civic work of
95 the community. Commissioner Bacchetti gave a handout of information.

96
97 Commissioner Khan asked about the pilot program and whether or not it is the hope of the HRC to ask
98 City Council for their approval of the program. Commissioner Bacchetti stated that the group is trying

99 to offer ideas with which to experiment but not ideas that are so specific that they are over specified.
100 Perhaps the City Manager may see this as a contribution. A pilot program may be a way for people to
101 see how it works. Commissioner Khan said that the proposal seemed confusing and should be more
102 specific about what we are suggesting. Commissioner Bacchetti offered to put the proposal on a separate
103 page. Commissioner Khan felt this was good so people can make choices before signing on to the idea.
104

105 Commissioner Savage reiterated what Commissioner Khan said and suggested that it be rearranged then
106 revisited.
107

108 Commissioner Ezran shared his experience with Duveneck School and shared the pamphlet the school
109 had put out on community building of a community culture. Commissioner Bacchetti thought a
110 pamphlet would hopefully be an end result of this ‘meeting’ idea. Civic capital and social capital will be
111 built
112

113 Commissioner Khan asked why this is being proposed as a recommendation as opposed to developing a
114 brochure. The question was posed if HRC should put out a pamphlet or should a central source to
115 collect the ideas first. Commissioner Atito suggested the HRC be the initial user of this pilot project.
116

117 Commissioner Savage thought Commissioner Bacchetti could incorporate the ideas mentioned tonight
118 and perhaps discuss it again at the next meeting. She also asked how the idea should be phrased.
119 Perhaps it should be submitted to the City Council and let them decide if they would like to move on
120 this.
121

122 Commissioner Khan said that she thought the proposal needed to be edited first. She offered to edit the
123 proposal for clarity. Commissioner Bacchetti agreed to email it to Commissioner Khan to be edited in
124 preparation of the next HRC meeting.
125
126

127 **3. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES.**

128

129 Commissioner Savage reported that she and Commissioner Bacchetti met with Acting Chief Burns and
130 Chief Johnson to discuss the HRC’s future role in working with the police department. They discussed
131 helping out with forums and public meetings, neighborhood associations, school groups, and faith
132 groups. There will be massive marketing to open conversation with the public. HRC will play an integral
133 part though not sure now what that would be exactly.
134

135 Kathy Espinoza-Howard said that Chief Johnson suggested to her that someone from the HRC sit on the
136 interview board to select members for an upcoming panel.
137

138 At 7:17pm, Commissioner Mendoza arrived.
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141 **4. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS**

142 **a. Commissioner Report**

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144 None
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146 **b. Council Buddy Reports**

147 None

148 **c. Council Liaison Report**

149
150 Vice Mayor Peter Drekmeier shared recent topics of discussion of the City Council: prevailing wage for
151 capital improvement projects; issues concerning the affordable housing project at Alma Plaza; issues
152 surrounding the ‘tree house’ on Charleston Rd; continuing discussion about the Stanford Housing
153 projects concerning low income jobs; the high speed rail will be a future issue because it has not been
154 decided whether the stop will be in the City of Palo Alto or Redwood City and the possibility of elevated
155 crossings or tunnels and using air space for housing or commercial buildings and parking for rail users;
156 the issue of composting, whether to keep it at the Baylands or ship garbage to Gilroy. He concluded by
157 saying that the City Council will discuss a leadership academy proposal and World Music Day proposal
158 at the council meeting on January 10th.

159
160 **d. Staff Liaison Report**

161
162 Kathy Espinoza-Howard discussed the upcoming problem for InnVision. She explained that because of
163 lack of funding available many programs have been reduced or have stopped services including Clara
164 Mateo. There is a gap of millions of dollars needed to keep the programs running. Ms. Howard will mail
165 the operating budget to Commissioner Savage. They applied for HSRAP and CDBG funding. InnVision
166 wants the City Council to be aware of this issue. Ms. Howard said that she will be meeting with
167 Representative Anna Eshoo. Hopefully she will be able to engage the help of Supervisor Liz Kniss and
168 Santa Clara County Commissioner Gibson.

169
170 Commissioner Savage asked how the Opportunity Center will be affected. Ms. Howard replied that they
171 cannot raise donations to have longer periods of service time. Churches and local governments will
172 hopefully defray the problem. Ms. Howard explained that InnVision will close if nothing can be done.
173 The services such as the Food Pantry, Opportunity Center and Clara Mateo Shelter depend heavily on
174 private donations and may have to reduce or close.

175
176 Commissioner Atito wanted to know if one of the HRC Commissioners can meet with Representative
177 Anna Eshoo along with Kathy Espinoza-Howard. Ms. Howard encouraged the idea of commissioners
178 attending the meeting.

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181 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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183 None

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186 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

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188 PALO ALTO POLICE DEPARTMENT ACTION PLAN
189 CONTINUED DISCUSSION ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
190 ASSIGN COUNCIL BUDDIES

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193 **ADJOURNMENT**

194 The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.