

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

11 **Thursday, January 08, 2009**

12 Council Conference Room

13 Palo Alto Civic Center

14 250 Hamilton Avenue

15 7:00 PM  
16  
17  
18

19 **ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Atito, Bacchetti, Ezran, Mendoza, Mora, Savage **Council**  
20 **Liaison:** Yiaway Yeh **Staff:** Kathy Espinoza-Howard, Amy Johnson  
21  
22

23 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

24 Dr. John Abraham provided handouts and spoke about the percentage of stops of men versus women.  
25 He said there is not a good sample of how many women drive at night or during the day. For reasons he  
26 could not explain, 71% of men are stopped over women. He then discussed the percentage of men in  
27 disposition versus racial group.  
28  
29

30 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

31 None  
32  
33

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

35 None  
36

37 **BUSINESS**  
38  
39

40 **1. DISCUSSION WITH POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFF REGARDING POLICE**  
41 **DEPARTMENT'S ACTION PLAN**

42 Acting Chief Dennis Burns was invited to the table to speak. He thanked the commissioners for the  
43 opportunity to speak and said that he was here to ask for assistance from the HRC with regard to some  
44 aspects of their action plan that was presented to City Council on December 15, 2008; which is to help  
45 the department engage the minority communities of Palo Alto and East Palo Alto. The first component  
46 is to enhance training on a variety of different levels. The second component is to strengthen internal  
47 policies and procedures by working with Police Auditor. The third component is to do aggressive  
48 outreach by working in communities of Palo Alto and East Palo Alto.

49 Acting Chief Burns asked the HRC for assistance to select members for the Police Advisory Committee.

50 He explained his vision of the committee that it will have a cross section of diverse people. The  
51 committee will be charged with creating the mission, the objectives, and metrics for measuring success.  
52 Acting Chief Burn asked for help to decide who should be on committee by helping staff develop a  
53 criterion for the selection process.

54  
55 Acting Chief Burns said that the committee would hold regular meetings for a long-term. The  
56 committee would continually engage the community. He suggested that the HRC select members for a  
57 subcommittee that would work with his command staff which would develop the committee.

58  
59 Commissioner Ezran suggested that he develop a short summary explaining the roles and  
60 responsibilities for committee members. He asked questions about recruitment.

61  
62 Acting Chief Burns said that even though he could do a good job on his own, he would like help with  
63 recruitment. He suggested one method of recruiting might be a joint press release between HRC and  
64 PAPD. He also commented that this is going to be something that is in place for many years and he  
65 does not want to rush into this.

66  
67 Commissioner Ezran suggested this be discussed further as a future agenda item.

68  
69 Commissioner Mendoza commented that the December 15, 2008 CMR is very thorough and has a good  
70 approach. However, he is concerned that targeting specific people for the committee could also be seen  
71 as discriminatory. He said that the process will be difficult to develop and must be done very carefully.

72  
73 There was a brief discussion about the process of recruitment, about the possibility that there may not be  
74 the diverse group of people interested.

75  
76 Commissioner Bacchetti commented about a process of using applications and what the criteria would  
77 be. He said that it is important that the selected people are those who are conduits to the community and  
78 who will take the information back. He suggested that when discussing criteria for recruitment, we  
79 consider people with specific talents and or job expertise. That way if those people do not apply, we can  
80 go out and do specific recruitment. He said that it is important to create the committee with the best  
81 group of people possible.

82  
83 Commissioner Mora asked for clarification on who would be working with the HRC on the selection  
84 Committee. Acting Chief Burns said that the command staff would work with the HRC. She suggested  
85 adding an elected official to the group. She recommended doing extensive outreach to solicit input from  
86 a broad segment of the community, including people who have been critical of the PAPD

87  
88 Acting Chief Burns said that he agreed not to look for only people who would say that the PAPD is  
89 doing a fabulous job.

90  
91 Commissioner Atito said that he agreed that it was important to take time to develop the committee and  
92 that the department should be the one to start defining the committee. He also commented that the  
93 committee should include a field of experts. He also wanted the department to include what its needs  
94 are, because in the end, it is the community and the department that has to work together.

95  
96 Commissioner Bacchetti said that this conversation proves how critical it will be to get clarity of what  
97 the group is supposed to do, instead of having to deal with boundary issues.

98 Commissioner Savage suggested a subcommittee to discuss this further. She asked Acting Chief Burns

99 for the timetable.

100

101 Acting Chief Burns said that if the HRC agrees to have a subcommittee, he would like the first meeting  
102 to take place within the month. In the meantime, his staff will start doing the background work and  
103 outlining their vision for the committee.

104

105 Commissioner Mora asked questions about some of the other aspects of the action plan. She asked for  
106 more information about the U.S. Department of Justice Mediation Program and if there is a charge for  
107 their services. Acting Chief Burns said that their services are free and they help by holding large  
108 community meetings. He also said that the department has used them in the past and he believes they  
109 will do a great job.

110

111 Commissioner Bacchetti asked if the committee would fall under the Brown Act. Acting Chief Burns  
112 said that is something he looking into with the City Attorney's Office. He said that he believes it will  
113 depend on whether it is an open or closed meeting. He explained the difference.

114

115 Commissioner Mora asked for more explanation of the Field Training Officer Training. Acting Chief  
116 Burns explained that the program is a highly standardized training program, and that they will look into  
117 making modifications to improve the FTO training program.

118

119 Dr. John Abraham commented that it is the tendency for the police staff to want to set up the committee  
120 which will be safe, thoughtful and constructive. He urged Acting Chief Burns to look for controversy  
121 and make it work for them. He provided an example of a consented search that was a controversial  
122 issue. He said that the committee should be a little out of control and he urged the subcommittee not to  
123 be too safe.

124

125 Commissioner Atito suggested that Dr. Abraham be part of subcommittee. Commissioner Savage  
126 explained that she did not think that is what the Police Department is looking for, and rather Dr.  
127 Abraham might be on the actual committee instead.

128

129 It was suggested that the current Police Sub-committee members be the subcommittee to determine the  
130 selection process. The current Police Sub-Committee is made up of Commissioners Savage, Atito and  
131 Bacchetti.

132

133 Commissioner Mora stated that she was interested in being on the subcommittee to provide support and  
134 background in the public meeting process.

135

136 Staff Liaison Kathy Espinoza-Howard suggested that commissioners whose terms expire this March  
137 consider not being on the subcommittee. Commissioners Atito, Mendoza, and Bacchetti's terms expire  
138 in March.

139

140 Commissioner Mendoza suggested the possibility of having two subcommittees if the work can be  
141 divided.

142

143 There was a brief discussion about having one or two subcommittees.

144

145 The commissioners took a vote to decide who would be on the subcommittee. It was decided that  
146 Commissioners' Atito, Savage and Bacchetti continue on as the subcommittee working with police  
147 department command staff on the selection process.

148 **2. CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF PROPOSAL FOR BUILDING CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**  
149 **INTO CIVIC BUSINESS.**

150 Commissioner Bacchetti thanked Commissioner Khan for her work in revising the report. He said that  
151 her work made it clearer and better. He also thanked Commissioner Ezran for providing him with a  
152 brochure from Duveneck School as an example of one type of contribution.

153 He explained that he recently met with Assistant City Manager Kelly Morariu and he would like to get  
154 this paper approved tonight so that it is ready to go to City Council if they agree to have civic  
155 engagement as one of their top priorities at this Saturday’s study session meeting at Lucie Stern.

156  
157 Ray offered to answer questions.

158  
159 **COMMISSIONER BACCHETTI MADE A MOTION THAT THE PAPER GO FORWARD TO**  
160 **CITY MANAGER AND CITY COUNCIL. SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER EZRAN.**

161  
162 Commissioner Savage asked for any discussion.

163  
164 Ray spoke about the range of responses the HRC might receive after sending the paper.

165  
166 Commissioner Atito thanked Commissioners Bacchetti, Khan and Mora for their hard work to write the  
167 paper.

168  
169 Commissioner Savage asked for a vote. **AYES: UNANIMOUS.**

170  
171  
172 **3. DISCUSSION TO ASSIGN COUNCIL BUDDIES**

173 The Commissioners discussed their current Council Buddy assignments. All assignments remained the  
174 same with one exception; Commissioner Ezran was assigned to Council Member Sid Espinosa.

175 Commissioner Savage asked that everyone try to meeting on a regular basis with their buddy.

176  
177 Council Liaison Yeh said that he was never aware of this practice and he thought it was a good idea. He  
178 said that he would mention it to the other council members at their next meeting.

179  
180 **REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

181 None

182  
183  
184 **4. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

185  
186 **A. Commissioner Reports:**

187 Commissioner Ezran reported that he received media sponsorship for World Music Day which will  
188 help with the event.

189  
190  
191 **B. Council Buddy Reports:**

192 None

193  
194 **C. Council Liaison Report:**

195 Council Member Yeh introduced himself. He explained that with Council Member Drekmeier  
196 becoming the new Mayor for 2009 and no longer being responsible to sit on a commission, he

197 requested to be the new HRC Liaison. Council Member Yeh also spoke about upcoming Study  
198 Session this Saturday at Lucie Stern and he asked that the HRC members consider attending because  
199 the HRC will have an important role based on tonight's discussion.  
200

201  
202 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**

203 Kathy handed out a letter she received from the City Attorney's Office regarding the new "Open  
204 City Hall" online forum. In the letter she explained, the City Attorney asks that all boards and  
205 commissions not participate in the online discussions because of the possibility of a Brown Act  
206 violation. Ms. Howard also reported on the current budget problems with InnVision and that they  
207 have met with the Counties of San Mateo and Santa Clara asking for funding. The City of Palo Alto  
208 is also hoping to provide some funding pending City Council approval. They are also working with  
209 Anna Eshoo's office to hopefully get a vacation from rent they pay to the Veterans Administration  
210 for the Clara Mateo Facility.  
211

212  
213 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

214 None  
215

216  
217 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

218 Subcommittee Report on Police Action Plan  
219 Follow up discussion on City Council priority setting  
220 Proposal of HRC Award  
221 Report on Mandatory Response Ordinance  
222

223  
224 **ADJOURNMENT**

225 The meeting adjourned at 8:29p.m.