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10 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**  
11 **Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup> 2009**  
12 Council Conference Room  
13 Palo Alto Civic Center  
14 250 Hamilton Avenue  
15 7:00 PM  
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19 **ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Bacchetti, Ezran, Hamilton, Khan, Savage  
20 **Council Liaison:** Yiaway Yeh **Staff:** Greg Hermann, Linda Larson, Minka Van Der Zwaag  
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23 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

24 Lynn Krug, Chapter Chair for SEIU 521 and City Employee discussed how stressful labor  
25 negotiations have been for City of Palo Alto union members. Ms. Krug commented that the  
26 degrading of city employees in the media may be creating a change of attitude in the citizens, not  
27 for the positive. Ms. Krug gave examples of how the City of Palo Alto employees benefit the  
28 city. She would like the employees to be recognized for what they do. She is hoping that the  
29 HRC can help spread the word that the city employees are worth being a part of the city.  
30

31 Mr. Abraham gave a handout consisting of data information. Mr. Abraham discussed a few  
32 articles concerning hate crimes. He would like the City of Palo Alto Police Chief to talk to the  
33 Police Chief from the City of Mountain View to see how they keep track of their hate crime  
34 statistics. He commented that human trafficking should be addressed as a very real problem. He  
35 feels that the local police may not be aware of the human trafficking problem. Mr. Abraham also  
36 noted that the over-stopping of African-Americans is still an ongoing problem within the City of  
37 Palo Alto.  
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40 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

41 None  
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44 **AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

45 Commissioner Savage commented that Chief Burns is not available to attend the meeting tonight  
46 so she will give a brief update on item 1.  
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49 **BUSINESS**

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51 **1. UPDATE ON PALO ALTO POLICE DEPARTMENTS CITIZEN’S ADVISORY**  
52 **COMMITTEE**

53 Commissioner Savage said there are 14 citizens and 2 officers on the Advisory Committee. The  
54 first meeting will be held on October 27th and will be an introduction only. Chief Burns will give  
55 more details next month. Commissioner Savage asked who of the HRC members would like to  
56 act as a Liaison between the HRC and the Advisory Committee. Commissioner Bacchetti  
57 volunteered to act as liaison and will be at the first meeting.

58  
59 Mr. Abraham asked how many police officers will be active in the group. Commissioner Savage  
60 said 2 for sure but it could be more. Mr. Abraham wanted to know if the names will be  
61 announced. Commissioner Savage said she did not know. Commissioner Savage reiterated that  
62 there will not be any hard topics discussed at the first meeting.

63  
64 Commissioner Hamilton asked how frequent the meetings will be held. Commissioner Savage  
65 answered back once per month.

66  
67 Mr. Herb Borock asked if Commissioner Savage was a member of this advisory committee.  
68 Commissioner Savage said no.

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71 **2. PROPOSED CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AWARD**

72 Commissioner Khan provided a handout and then updated the HRC on the civic engagement  
73 award. Commissioner Khan believes that city employees would have a pulse on a good candidate  
74 pool but that the candidate would have to live in Palo Alto. City employees, City commissions  
75 and city council are the 3 groups eligible to nominate candidates. Commissioner Khan thought  
76 there should be at least 2 awards: business and individual. Discussion followed on other groups  
77 which could possibly be nominated.

78  
79 Commissioner Bacchetti stated that he was worried about leaving out the non-profits groups as  
80 well as the school communities and their lack of involvement in the civic engagement award.  
81 Commissioner Khan thought it may be hard to manage a larger group but recognizes that the  
82 point of the award is to involve all. Commissioner Bacchetti reiterated that the administrators of  
83 education and board members of non-profits should be included since they may give another  
84 view of the city. He feels this would make a good first impression.

85  
86 Commissioner Khan also thought to include members of HSRAP and CDBG. Defining the idea  
87 may not be the problem but managing the idea may be. A non-profit e-mail list would be an  
88 easier way to spread the word.

89  
90 Commissioner Hamilton agreed that the inclusive process would stop the raising of questions.

91  
92 Commissioner Khan and Commissioner Bacchetti will continue the discussion. Commissioner  
93 Khan hopes to be ready to open up nominations in December and vote for the candidate by  
94 February 1<sup>st</sup> 2010.

95  
96 Commissioner Hamilton asked if there is going to be any preliminary screening.  
97

98 Commissioner Khan said she would do the first review of the nominations.

99  
100 Commissioner Ezran thought that letters of recommendation could possibly be a beginning  
101 process to the nominations.

102  
103 Commissioner Khan said that there should be a minimum amount of nominees per submitter.

104  
105 Staff Liaison, Mr. Greg Hermann asked why not open the nominations to the general public and  
106 he also wondered if different languages should be added to the information flyers. This would  
107 act as a conduit to include the public in the nomination process. He volunteered to act as a point  
108 of contact for public who were interested in making a nomination.

109  
110 Commissioner Hamilton asked if the criteria leans more towards individuals than a business.  
111 Commissioner Khan stated that this is just a guide and there may be slightly different attributes.

112  
113 Mr. Hermann told the commissioners that this would be an Adhoc Committee made of no more  
114 than 3 commissioners and there should be no outside e-mails amongst each other. The  
115 information is better discussed at the meetings.

116  
117 Commissioner Bacchetti asked if a non-profit could be an award recipient. Commissioner Khan  
118 will clarify that it is for business and non-profits alike. Next meetings proposal will be brought  
119 up by Commissioner Ezran since Commissioner Khan will not be here next month.

120  
121 February 1<sup>st</sup> 2010 is the joint meeting between city council and the HRC. It was suggested that  
122 advance notice of the proposal be given to the City Council. This may allow time for the  
123 proposal to actually be discussed.

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126 **3. CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED PROJECTS AND CONSOLIDATION OF**  
127 **PROJECTS.**

128 Commissioner Khan thought it would be good to take the proposed table of contents and add  
129 other information for new commissioners. She is also working on a proposal for adding crossing  
130 flags at busy intersections in Palo Alto. She showed photos from Menlo Park where the flag is  
131 attached to a pole and any one can hold the flag while they cross the street. She feels this is good  
132 for students and the disabled as well as others. She trying to contact the pilot program  
133 coordinator in Menlo Park to see how this is working and perhaps present this to the city. She is  
134 willing to fund the cost of the pilot program for the city. Discussion followed on getting  
135 quantifiable feedback on the program from other cities which have this program in place. Penny  
136 Ellison and Sgt. April Wagner were suggested as good resources for Commissioner Khan to  
137 contact.

138  
139 Commissioner Hamilton stated that it may be a good idea to have a big educational component  
140 so the driving public will be aware of the flags.

141  
142 Commissioner Bacchetti thought this would be a nice way to create a caring community along  
143 with checking neighborhoods for input.

144  
145 Mr. Hermann also thought that perhaps neighborhoods could be a part of creating the program  
146 and therefore feel collaboration in working with the city.

147 Commissioner Ezran said that the consensus from the public is to have the World Music Day  
148 event again. The organizing of the event should become easier as each year passes. He thought  
149 the event should be publicized more in order to draw a larger crowd.  
150

151 Commissioner Savage asked when one needs to get started to organize the event. Commissioner  
152 Ezran replied that now would be good time to start for an event next summer.  
153

154 Recreation Supervisor, Ms. Minka Van Der Zwaag wondered if this was going to be a city  
155 sponsored or co-sponsored event.  
156

157 Mr. Hermann stated that the city may have to take something off of the event plate in order to  
158 put this event on. Outside support groups may be available also but the city would have to look  
159 at the entire project and see to what extent there can be city co-operation and suggested that  
160 Commissioner Ezran look at the labor cost side and the business benefit side.  
161

162 Commissioner Ezran stated that so much of the event is already set in place like the website for  
163 example, so the labor should be easier. He also said he believes this to be a benefit to business.  
164 The downtown business association said it was a positive event and would like to see it again  
165 next year.  
166

167 Mr. Hermann suggested that Minka Van Der Zwaag and Commissioner Ezran get together and  
168 discuss the event in more detail.  
169

170 Commissioner Hamilton said that he thought the event brought out a positive attitude on most  
171 everyone who attended.  
172

173 Commissioner Khan said that one recommendation for the meeting would be to let the  
174 organizing committee know before the event if there are any resources available matching or  
175 otherwise. She also suggested that the committee review the processes which Commissioner  
176 Ezran has available to see what can be endorsed or supported.  
177

178 Councilmember Yeh asked if the meeting was just for HRC commissioners and staff or can  
179 additional people who may have an interest be included. Ms. Van Der Zwaag replied that if the  
180 content was just asking about city involvement, a smaller group would be better at first.  
181

182 Mr. Hermann said he would like to have a clear idea of what is being asked for initially and if  
183 there are holes perhaps bring others in.  
184

185 Councilmember Yeh said that if burnout of a member is a concern it would be good to have a  
186 shadow person to take over when a member leaves so it transfers smoothly each year.  
187

188 Commissioner Ezran thought organizing the event would be easier to self perpetuate if there  
189 could be a team of perhaps 12 people. Commissioner Hamilton suggested that the venue be  
190 changed each year so other neighborhoods could be included.  
191

192 Commissioner Bacchetti named the goals on his handout and the strategies to bring the  
193 community together through its involvement.  
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195 Commissioner Savage said that those who did not submit their templates will do so for next

196 months meeting.

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Commissioner Bacchetti discussed his project regarding how the HRC and the new Chief of Police work out accurate and non accurate perceptions. The HRC will discuss this further next meeting. Mr. Hermann said he would like to assist in attempting to sequence a clear plan of proposed accomplishments of the HRC commission along with deadlines for ongoing projects. He thought it a good idea to create a score card on the city website so the public can see what the HRC wants to accomplish and when they feel this can be accomplished by. Commissioner Bacchetti believes that See-It is a form of making it tangible.

207 **4. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

208 Commissioner Khan reported that she is on the TAG team which stands for Technical Advisory  
209 Group. She explained that TAG is a housing group which reviews the local housing  
210 comprehensive plan. This includes affordable, market rate housing stock as well as diverse  
211 housing. The group hopes to end housing discrimination. TAG also looks into reducing housing  
212 expenses for energy. The group has a new idea of adding transit and conserving energy including  
213 transportation for a more user friendly housing element for the next 7 years. Commissioner  
214 Bacchetti asked if someone needed to overlap Commissioner Khans' position with the group  
215 when she leaves. Commissioner Khan feels it should be completed by the time her term is up.

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218 **5. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

219 **A. Commissioner Reports:**

220 Commissioner Savage talked of the teen suicide prevention committee. She said there is a  
221 matrix provided naming several agency resources and what is available and what can be done.  
222 Commissioner Savage is beginning PANDA training.

223  
224 Ms. Minka Van Der Zwaag was introduced as the interim Human Services manager. Linda will  
225 send out her contact information to HRC commissioners.

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227 **B. Council Buddy Reports:**

228 None

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230 **C. Council Liaison Report:**

231 Councilmember Yeh reported that Dennis Burns was appointed as the new Police Chief. Chief  
232 Burns is a valuable asset to the city.

233  
234 Commissioner Hamilton asked how Councilmember Yeh felt Chief Burns will work with  
235 Commissioner Bacchetti's project list. Councilmember Yeh answered that he felt when Chief  
236 Burns had meetings with the community he was very knowledgeable and was a positive driving  
237 force in the community. He also wanted to thank the Recreation Department for the Moon  
238 Project. It was a strong and positive community event.  
239 Commissioner Bacchetti stated that the "Meet the Chief" meeting at Channing House was a great  
240 success. Councilmember Yeh said that the city hopes that resolutions to the labor discussions  
241 will be in place by the next meeting. There were questions from the HRC on how people come  
242 back together after a difficult process like labor negotiations. Mr. Yeh said input on this subject  
243 would be greatly appreciated. Commissioner Hamilton wondered if the impression of ill will  
244 surrounding the labor negotiations could possibly be stopped by the HRC. Commissioner

245 Savage asked Commissioner Bacchetti to try his hand at a statement on this topic that the HRC  
246 would consider.

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248 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**

249 Mr. Hermann reported that after speaking with the City Attorney asking if a Commissioner  
250 receives an e-mail from members of the public, can that e-mail become a matter of public record.  
251 Commissioners should hold onto e-mails concerning city business and not post for public view.  
252 He reported that the city is wrapping up the details concerning the advertising for a director of  
253 CSD and asked if there is more input; please send e-mail to him by the 13th. The City is creating  
254 a community information brochure for interested candidates. He reported that he drafted a  
255 document describing the position details and will send it out to the HRC members for review and  
256 would be available if there are any questions between HRC meetings.

257  
258 Commissioner Ezran asked what the format will be for the February 1<sup>st</sup> Council meeting. Mr.  
259 Hermann said it will be an opportunity for feedback from the city council.

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261 Commissioner Ezran asked if Casa Olga is being closed and if there was any updated  
262 information? Minka Van Der Zwaag relayed that her understanding is that the building is related  
263 to a medical social worker network and the tenants were individually being helped in finding  
264 housing, but she will try to find out more information.

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267 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

268 None

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270 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

271 Update on Citizens Advisory Group

272 Continued discussion on Civic Engagement Award

273 Continued discussion of how proposed projects fall within the goals of the HRC

274 Discussion of Potential HRC Action To Address Community Employee Relations

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277 **ADJOURNMENT**

278 The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.