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10 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**
11 **Thursday, November 12, 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, Bernardo, Ezran, Hamilton, Savage
20 **Council Liaison:** Yiaway Yeh **Staff:** Greg Hermann, Amy Johnson
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23 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

24 Ms. Lynn Krug, Chapter Chair of SEIU reported to the HRC that the future outlook will be worse than
25 was expected. She is faced with employees who are confused because of the implementation of new
26 imposed contract. She is anxious to bring matters to level ground as soon as possible. Employees who
27 earn 59K or less are facing devastating changes to their income similar to what they were 8 to 10 years
28 ago. The other issue is that comments in the media relate more to employees who earn more than 59K.
29 She commented that new employees are still being hired by the city and it doesn't make sense. She
30 asked that the HRC their continued help.
31

32 Mr. Abraham commented that the website has not been updated with demographic data since the second
33 quarter. However, he is happy that he has received all the input data from the police department that
34 they used for their reports. He will finally have answers to many questions because he can analyze all
35 the data.
36

37 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

38 Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the August 15th 2009
39 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Hamilton. AYES: unanimous.
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41 Commissioner Bernardo made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the September 3, 2009
42 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Bacchetti. AYES: unanimous.
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45 **AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

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47 **BUSINESS**
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50 1. **APPOINTMENT OF NEW MEDIATORS TO THE PALO ALTO MEDIATION**
51 **PROGRAM**

52 Mr. Ric Rudman, Case Manager of the Palo Alto Mediation Program spoke briefly about the
53 program: The program is made up of 31 mediators who are citizens of Palo Alto. They average
54 about 150 mediation cases a year, two-thirds of which are landlord-tenant issues, one-third are
55 neighbor-neighbor and a few are business- consumer disputes. The program has an 80% success rate
56 for cases that go to mediation. The volunteer mediators are responsible for mediation and
57 conciliation. Mr. Rudman explained that this year they received 20 applications for eight available
58 mediator slots, and held 16 interviews. The new mediators will serve a 2-year term. He also
59 explained that there are 7 returning mediators and 6 are emeritus mediators. Mr. Rudman read the
60 names of the mediators and asked the HRC for approval and to send the names forward to the Mayor
61 for appointment.

62
63 Commissioner Bacchetti asked about the ratio of men vs. women who are volunteer mediators. Mr.
64 Rudman said that the number of male mediators is low; only 2 men out of 16 women were
65 interviewed. Currently 3 out of 25 are men and the program is looking for ways to recruit more men
66 into mediation. Mr. Bacchetti asked Mr. Rudman to explain the recruitment process.

67
68 **Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion to approve and send to Mayor for appointment,**
69 **Seconded by Commissioner Ezran, AYES: Unanimous.**

70
71 2. **DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL HRC ACTION TO ADDRESS COMMUNITY-**
72 **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS.**

73 Commissioner Bacchetti introduced the topic. He explained the goal is to help heal the attitudes and
74 improve the process by talking about human context.

75
76 Commissioner Ezran suggested that the memo be submitted to the Palo Alto Weekly. Commissioner
77 Bacchetti responded that he spoke with them and was told that they preferred the memo be from the
78 entire commission, rather than from just an individual commissioner because it would be a better
79 message to the community. Mr. Hermann said he would check to see if there was a budget to pay
80 for posting the memo as a public announcement.

81
82 Councilmember Yeh commented that the process and the tone are very important because the HRC
83 is composed of residents and most of the employees do not live here. He also suggested reading the
84 memo into the public record at a City Council meeting or posting it on the City's website, but he is
85 not aware of rules regarding public notices.

86
87 Commissioner Hamilton spoke of the negative effects that imposing the contract has had on the
88 employees and sees the HRC as a proponent of a healing process. He suggested that the letter
89 include the HRC mission statement on it and be sent to the City Council as is and to also send an
90 abridged version as a letter to the editor.

91
92 Ms. Lynn Krug commented that the memo shows a sense of neutrality and cultural acceptance that
93 hasn't existed at this point.

94
95 **Commissioner Hamilton made a motion that the HRC approve the memo and send it to the**
96 **City Council. Seconded by Commissioner Bernardo. AYES: Unanimous.**

97 There was a brief discussion about how to send the memo to City Council. The HRC agreed that the
98 Chair would be the one to read it at a future City Council meeting.

99 Commissioner Bacchetti discussed the idea of having the HRC request to City Council that they
100 discuss different methods of bargaining that would avoid the need of imposing contracts. Other
101 methods include “positional bargaining”, and “interspace bargaining”, because if the negotiation
102 teams are not talking about the interests and only their positions, there can be no empathy at the
103 bargaining table. Council member Yeh suggested that this particular approach is relevant and would
104 be better served if in a guest opinion, because it is very political and that the commissioners also
105 discuss it with their council buddies.

106
107 **3. CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF PROPOSED PROJECTS AS THEY RELATE TO HRC**
108 **GOALS.**

109 Commissioner Bacchetti referenced the August minutes and asked if the HRC would develop two
110 goals. (1) Working proactively on our own and collaboratively with others, build Palo Alto’s
111 commitments to embrace diversity, disabling intolerance, and promoting inclusion. (2) Work with
112 the Police Department to enhance effective, fair, and impartial policing.

113
114 They discussed adding civic engagement to the list as well as defining what diversity includes.

115
116 Commissioner Mora asked how to progress from here.

117
118 **Commissioner Bernardo made a motion to approve the two goals, Seconded by Commissioner**
119 **Hamilton, AYES: Unanimous.**

120
121 Mr. Hermann suggested that now that the goals are set, the next step would be to decide what areas
122 the HRC wants to address and then decide what action needs to be taken.

123
124 There was a brief discussion about some of the items listed on Commissioner Bacchetti’s memo
125 regarding Goal #1 (listed above).

126
127 Commissioner Ezran mentioned that some goals are measureable and some are not.

128
129 Commissioner Bacchetti suggested that a having an HRC working session might be helpful.

130
131 It was decided that each commissioner would bring a list due able action items to the next meeting.
132 Staff agreed to advise the absent commissioners of the upcoming task.

133
134 **4. PLANNING OF JOINT CITY COUNCIL/HRC MEETING IN FEBRUARY, 2010.**

135 Mr. Hermann announced that the Joint meeting between HRC and City Council is scheduled on
136 February 1, 2010. Commissioner Savage suggested that all the commissioners look at their list of
137 items and plan on discussing one at the joint meeting.

138
139 **5. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

140 None.

141
142 **6. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

143 **A) Commissioner Reports:**

144 Commissioner Bernardo said that she was glad to see the Federal Hate Crime Bill finally pass.

145
146 Commissioner Savage reported that she attended the Citizen’s Advisory Group meeting. It was a
147 brief introductory overview. There were so many questions of the participants that they were only

148 able to make it through 25% of the agenda. The atmosphere of the meeting had an open feel which
149 was very nice.

150
151 Commissioner Bacchetti reported that he attended the first gathering of the Citizen’s Advisory
152 Group. They had received 22 applications. (15 Caucasian, 7 African American, 14 were chosen
153 50/50 ratio of men/female) He explained that the participants discussed their views of the CAG and
154 what their role is to be and the method of communicating from the public to the police. The
155 participants age range from 16 to 84 years old.

156
157 **B) Council Buddy Reports:**

158 None

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160 **C) Council Liaison Report:**

161 Councilmember Yeh reported that the City Council Election happened and that the candidates are
162 excited to get started. He said that he was planning to request to continue as liaison to the HRC.

163
164 **D) Staff Liaison Report:**

165 Mr. Hermann said that he attended the CSD Managers Meeting and reported on the work of the
166 HRC. Also, he reported that he and Commissioner Savage are on the Task Force regarding recent
167 teen suicides. He passed out (in draft form) a matrix of action items which lists 21 strategies pulled
168 together from other communities. The matrix shows gaps and where the strengths are. The info will
169 later be posted on the city’s website. He mentioned what aspects the city is directly working on,
170 such as reducing the lethal means by reconstructing the site and making more of a presence,
171 establishing a volunteer group called “Palo Alto Rail Watch”, and developing a media education
172 seminar.

173
174 Commissioner Bernardo suggested that the Task Force get on Facebook.

175
176 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

177 Commissioner Hamilton announced that he will be resigning from the commission because he will
178 be moving out of Palo Alto to a retirement community in the City of Cupertino. December will be
179 his last meeting.

180
181 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

182 Project’s for next year & consolidating the projects.

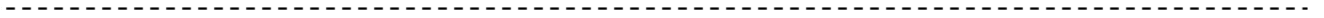
183 Update on Citizen’s Advisory Group

184 Update on Civic Engagement Award

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186 **ADJOURNMENT**

187 The meeting adjourned at: 8:53pm
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