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13 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**
14 **Thursday, January 14, 2010**
15 Council Conference Room
16 Palo Alto Civic Center
17 250 Hamilton Avenue
18 7:00 PM
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22 **ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Bacchetti, Ezran, Khan, Mora, Savage **Staff:** Greg Hermann,
23 Linda Larson
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26 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

27 John Abraham-gave a handout on Palo Alto Police Departments' different type of stops. Mr. Abraham
28 discussed the data included on the spreadsheets. He would like the city to look at the racial imbalance in
29 police stops and acknowledge the data.
30

31 Mary Joe Reynaud of CAMFED, a non profit group, asked if the HRC could co-sponsor a film to be
32 shown at Cubberley Theatre on girls being educated on the subject of AIDS. International Woman's Day
33 is on March 8th which is when they would like to have the screening. Clips of the film can be seen on the
34 website, CAMFED.org and is called, Where the Water Meets the Sky. CAMFED stands for Campaign
35 for Female Education.
36

37 Linda Lenoir introduced herself as representing a sub committee of the youth collaborative. She
38 explained that this is a group of non-profits who come together and work with youths in our community.
39 Ms. Lenoir described how 35 students came together to tell about concerns and have their voices heard.
40 On February 6th, the first session will be held at City Hall for youths only, facilitated by youths and adults.
41 The next youth session will be held on Feb 27th and then April 3rd where youth will meet and talk about
42 the groups' progress. Ms. Lenoir said the youth group will create a dialogue where their concerns are
43 voiced and hopefully they will come up with solutions and long term plans. Ms. Lenoir stated that the
44 youth group would like to hear from the HRC and asked if the HRC could possibly make it to the
45 meetings. Ms. Lenoir gave handouts regarding information about the youth collaborative.
46

47 Mr. Aram James gave handouts and a poster on public defender information. Mr. James feels that many
48 people are not represented by public defenders. Mr. James wants to have Mary Greenwald to speak to
49 the HRC about understanding the issues concerning the lack of access to good public defenders. Mr.

50 James gave suggestions of books to read on the subject. Mr. James stated that everyone should all have a
51 right to the 6th amendment.

52

53 Mark Petersen- Perez spoke of first amendment issues and feels that individuals are forced to say false
54 confessions. Mr. Petersen-Perez wonders if the individuals are coerced by the police officers. Mr.
55 Petersen-Perez mentioned Jorge Hernandez was a local victim of false confessions. Mr. Petersen-Perez
56 stated that his issue is with having police officers actively engaged in false arrests and forced false
57 confessions. Mr. Petersen-Perez said he has a problem with the police officer who was convicted of a
58 DUI and is still employed by the Palo Alto Police Department.

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60 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

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62 None

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

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66 None

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68 **BUSINESS**

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70 **1. UPDATE ON CITIZEN ADVISORY GROUP WITH POLICE CHIEF DENNIS BURNS**

71 Chief Burns gave an update on the Community Advisory Group. With the help of Commissioners Mora,
72 Savage and Bacchetti 13 individuals have been selected to become part of the group. The CAG has met
73 four times so far. Chief Burns gave an overview of the main points covered in each meeting.
74 Commissioner Mora may assist the group by being a facilitator during the meetings. Chief Burns is
75 appreciative of her guidance. At the next CAG meeting the members will be discussing what strategies
76 have been implemented and they talked of engaging the community outreach. He had an opportunity to
77 meet with people who met with community outreach in the past and was given some good advice
78 including working with the local youth and focus groups.

79 Commissioner Ezran asked Chief Burns what the vision is foreseen and what the residents hope to get
80 out of the group and if they are going to take minutes. Commissioner Ezran asks if the minutes will be
81 publicized as well as the group members' names. Chief Burns stated that the names are already
82 publicized. Discussion followed on the logistics of the Community Advisory Group. Chief Burns said
83 that questions should be e-mailed to the group. The names of the group will be posted on the city
84 website. Commissioner Bacchetti wanted to know who was on the committee and Chief Burns answered
85 naming all the members. Commissioner Bacchetti asked if the meetings will be open to the public. Chief
86 Burns said at this time they are not public, perhaps at a later time.

87 John Abraham commented that he would like the Community Advisory Group meetings to be open. Mr.
88 Abraham does not believe the closed meetings are beneficial to the public if they are kept secret. Mr.
89 Abraham sees the meetings as a necessity for educating everybody about the police. He says that people
90 are often unaware of police matters and regulations. What is happening on the streets is one of the more
91 important issues. Mr. Abraham requested that the meetings be made public as soon as possible.

92 Aram James gave a handout and discussed a closed classroom case. He did not feel this was right. He
93 read from his handout about the criminal process. He would like to be part of the Community Advisory
94 Group meetings. He stated that citizens have the right to conflicting views. Mr. James says that the
95 group will not make a difference if the public does not have access to it.

96 Mark Petersen-Perez said that transparency should be a part of the Community Advisory Group. Mr.
97 Petersen-Perez feels that the closed sessions sends the wrong signal when having meetings that impact
98 the general public but are held secret. There should be public participation. He hopes that the meetings
99 will become a public form to show that transparency exist in this community.

100

101 **2. PRESENTATION OF THE UNIVERSAL PLAYGROUND PROJECT BY**
102 **REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FRIENDS OF THE MAGICAL BRIDGE.**

103 Olenka Villareal spoke of the friends of the Palo Alto parks and Friends of the Magical Bridge. The
104 mission statement fits in well with the building of the new playground for developmentally disabled
105 children. All the playgrounds have limitations. Ms. Villareal said that with Greg Betts' assistance they
106 have explored building a new playground at Mitchell Park behind abilities united. This is a 5013c group
107 under Friends of Palo Alto Parks. They are doing fundraising for this park. A diagram of the new park
108 was shown. Ms. Villareal said that the park would be a great way to be able to use the park with
109 wheelchair access to park equipment. The park would also be for the elderly to play games at tables
110 without being told to leave by sports or party groups. Ms. Villareal and Mr. Greg Betts stated that this
111 park could break down the physical barriers which par let into a social barrier. Discussion followed on
112 the status of the park and the process for approval and implementation. Commissioner Mora asked Ms.
113 Villareal what she would like of the HRC. Ms. Villareal would like one of the commissioners to act as a
114 liaison as well as giving input. Ms. Villareal would like the park operational by December of this year.
115 Commissioner Khan asked where are donation going to if the project does not launch also if it does how
116 is maintenance going to be paid for when there are already money constraints. Greg Betts answered that
117 cash and in-kind services from the City would like to be stated. Non-Profits go through the process of
118 planning and hold money in an account ready when approved. Private-Public partnerships work together
119 in keeping cost down. More discussion followed on the fundraising and time line in creating the park.

120 Aram James asked that the discussion be re-opened on the renaming of Lytton Plaza. Mr. James feels
121 that the plaza should be named after someone like Malcolm x or Caesar Chavez. Mr. James finds it
122 disturbing that the name is already chosen without much public input. Mr. James said he would like to
123 see Mary Greenwood speak on joint issues and the death penalty should be discussed perhaps matching
124 the Europeans.

125 Mark-Petersen Perez spoke of how Palo Alto could spearhead a project establishing relationships with
126 sister cities such as Cuba or Santa Clara.

127

128 **3. PLANNING OF DISCUSSION ITEMS FOR JOINT SESSION WITH CITY COUNCIL**
129 **TO INCLUDE PROPOSED HRC PROJECTS.**

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131 Greg Herman talked of identifying the HRC projects relating to 2010 priorities. Greg Herman said that
132 Mayor Pat Burt expressed interest on having the Council hear what the HRC does and represents.
133 Discussion followed about the outline of how the HRC will present its projects and priorities to the City
134 Council. Commissioner Kahn offered to map the proposed projects into priorities and create a
135 framework of priorities and how the goals are are going to be achieved. Commissioner Savages said that
136 everyone will be able to talk about what their championed project is. Commissioner Mora noted thatwith
137 four new members on the City Council, itmay be necessary to describe the extent of the HRC charter.

138 Commissioner Kahn said that she would like the Council to allow the civic engagement award recipient
139 to receive the award at the State of the City address or at least announce or recognize the person at that
140 time. Commissioner Mora thought that perhaps HRC milestones beyond just 2009 could be mentioned.
141 Commissioner Savage asked Commissioner Mora to take the milestone project. Commissioner Bacchetti
142 asked that perhaps the question could be posed to the council of what they would want to see the HRC
143 do. Commissioner Kahn asked Greg Herman if he could put together a Bio of everyone in the HRC as
144 well as the Council members so that the introduction time can be reduced. Commissioner Mora said that
145 she only had HRC highlights since 2003, and asked staff for historical information on HRC highlights
146 and milestones prior to her term on the HRC. Greg Herman asked that all discussion outline items be
147 sent to him by Friday January 22nd.

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149 **4. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

150 None

151 **5. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

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153 **A. Commissioner Reports:**

154 Commissioner Bacchetti reported on his experience with the Citizens Advisory Group. The last meeting
155 was good and issues were discussed. Commissioner Bacchetti said that the PAPD and the Citizens
156 Advisory Group gave information on other public venues which would be accessible for input.
157 Commissioner Bacchetti thanked Greg Herman for referring Karen Kinzel from the Palo Alto Art
158 Center. Commissioner Bacchetti invited other HRC commissioner to visit the Art Center and see how
159 they work with the community. Commissioner Bacchetti mentioned Project Safety Net and the strategies
160 being discussed in making Palo alto a safer place. Commissioner Bacchetti hopes that the HRC could
161 perhaps provide some support to Project Safety Net. Commissioner Mora mentioned that Commissioner
162 Bacchetti, in his capacity as a volunteer track watcher, was able to assist a Palo Alto police officer in
163 preventing a potential suicide on the tracks.

164

165 Commissioner Ezran attended the Regional HRC breakfast in Mountain View. Commissioner Ezran said
166 the conference was very interesting especially in hearing how other HRC commissions work.
167 Commissioner Ezran said that there was much talk of the 2010 census and thought this to be an
168 important item to other HRC's. Commissioner Ezran talked of a new program called Mountain View
169 Reads. Commissioner Ezran also mentioned the fact that the City of Mountain View closes its streets
170 quite a bit during the summer for events and that other local HRC's are involved with neighborhood
171 associations.

172

173 Commissioner Kahn talked of the Civic Engagement Award and announced the new secured website
174 called www.pacivicengagementaward.org. There will be free advertising for the Award in the Palo Alto
175 Weekly with the first ad to run tomorrow. There will be free online advertising as well. Commissioner
176 Kahn said that the project is on track to receive prospective recipients, which the nominees are due by
177 February 15th. Commissioner Kahn asked if one of the HRC commissioners would be interested in being
178 the TAG liaison (technical advisory group). The TAG reviews housing elements and creates guidelines
179 for new housing in order to fulfill ABAG requirements. Commissioner Kahn said that TAG is a very
180 important group and someone from the HRC should be encouraged to participate. January to June
181 meetings are most critical in order to put a document draft in place by the end of June. Commissioner
182 Kahn explained that there are up to 20 people within the group. Commissioner Bacchetti asked if

183 Commissioner Kahn’s position was as an advisor or a liaison. Commissioner Kahn answered that you
184 are an advisor but the city should check on what relationship it should be. Commissioner Mora said that
185 as a liaison the HRC member could participate but not vote. Commissioner Kahn asked if there needs to
186 be a new CDBG liaison. Commissioner Savage answered yes, a liaison is needed. Commissioner Kahn
187 offered to be involved in the playground project.
188

189 Commissioner Savage met with Mayor Pat Burke last week pertaining the February 1st meeting.
190

191 Commissioner Mora responded to Commissioner Ezrans’ comment on getting the neighborhood
192 associations more involved with the HRC. Commissioner Mora stated that about two years ago each of
193 the Neighborhood Associations were invited to attend an HRC meeting and outline neighborhood
194 concerns that might be areas of focus for the HRC. Those neighborhood Associations that responded to
195 the HRC letter declined the invitation. Commissioner Mora suggested that perhaps the HRC
196 Commissioners can attend their own neighborhood associations and report back to the HRC on
197 neighborhood issues and concerns. Commissioner Mora mentioned that she, Commissioner Bacchetti
198 and Commissioner Hamilton met with Patricia Brown to discuss any further support the HRC might be
199 able to provide regarding communications during labor negotiations.
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201 **B. Council Buddy Reports:**

202 None
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205 **C. Council Liaison Report:**

206 None
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209 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**

210 Greg Herman said that he and Commissioner Bernardo met with someone from the Junior Museum.
211 Greg Herman gave out a memo about an ethics meeting from the city attorney. Mr. Herman said that the
212 HRC should attend and whomever is interested, to please confirm via his e-mail.
213

214 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

215 None
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218 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

219
220 CO-SPONSORSHIP CAMFED FOR FILMING AND USE OF CUBBERLEY THEATRE
221 LET MARY GREENWALD SPEAK TO US
222 CO-SPONSOR THE MAGIC BRIDGE
223 UPDATE ON COMMISSIONER KAHN’S CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AWARD
224 DEBRIEF THE FEB. 1ST 6 PM STUDY SESSION WITH CITY COUNCIL
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227 **ADJOURNMENT**

228 The meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.