

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**
14 **Thursday, March 11, 2010**
15 Council Conference Room
16 Palo Alto Civic Center
17 250 Hamilton Avenue
18 7:00 PM
19
20

21
22 **ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Bacchetti, Bernardo, Ezran, Khan, Mora, Savage **Staff:**
23 Greg Hermann, Linda Larson
24

25
26 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**
27

28 Mr. John Abraham spoke of CMR 156. Mr. Abraham gave a handout showing demographics of the
29 top 10 cities concerning traffic stops. Mr. Abraham also discussed resolution 8301 concerning the
30 protection of civil liberties that are threatened by the U.S.A. Patriot Act. Mr. Abraham would like
31 the police department to look at the advantages of using mathematical statistics relating to the over-
32 stopping or under-stopping of vehicles.
33

34 Eileen Richardson represents the Downtown Streets Team. Ms. Richardson wanted to remind the
35 HRC about the upcoming simulation event being held at the Garden Court Hotel. At the simulation
36 new identity packets will be given out to participants who will then need to use available resources
37 to get out of poverty. The participants have one hour. The event will be worked by the homeless.
38 More information can be obtained from Minka Van Der Zwaag. Ms. Richardson gave a handout.
39

40
41 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
42

43 Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the January 14, 2010.
44 Seconded by Commissioner Bacchetti AYES: unanimous.
45 Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the February 11,
46 2010. Seconded by Commissioner Kahn. AYES: unanimous.
47
48
49

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

51 Agenda item 3 will be 2nd item of business and agenda item 2 will be 3rd item.

52
53
54 **BUSINESS**

55
56 **1. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR**

57 Commissioner Ezran and Commissioner Bacchetti were nominated for the HRC Vice chair
58 position. Commissioners voted on paper ballots which were returned and read aloud. The new
59 Vice chair for the HRC commission is Commissioner Bacchetti.

60
61
62 **2. PRESENTATION REGARDING DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS**

63 Greg Hermann introduced Anne Ehresman. Ms. Ehresman gave a handout on Building a Better
64 Community. Ms. Ehresman is with Project Cornerstone. A power point presentation was shown.
65 The presentation included the mission of the organization to be a catalyst for change within
66 communities. A discussion followed regarding the list of 41 assets middle and high school kids
67 need to succeed. Ms. Ehresman states that children belong to all of us and that every single
68 person plays a role and creates a web around our youth. Federal funding has been received to do
69 another survey. Palo Alto youth was not included in the last 2 samples but hopefully will be in
70 the future. Ms. Ehresman talked of the correlation between number of assets a youth has in his
71 or her life and the reduction in risky behaviors. Programs for local adults showing them how to
72 become role models to our youth will start in the spring. Middle school years are very critical
73 and we need to have afterschool programs to keep from risky behavior. Commissioner Bacchetti
74 asked how compelling the relationship is between the number of assets that youth report being
75 in their lives and the kinds of positive and negative behaviors associated with different number
76 of such assets. Some of the Assets are easier to state than do. Commissioner Bacchetti also
77 asked if there is a curriculum created or is there a training program for assisting a community in
78 building developmental assets? Ms. Ehresman said yes, Project Cornerstone tries to connect to
79 what is done throughout Santa Clara County and refers to programs and practices that work.
80 Greg Hermann asked Ms. Ehresman for advice as to what she may see as a successful way for
81 Palo Alto to get is asset building. Ms. Ehresman said that Project Cornerstone is meant to be a
82 catalyst and would like to help build champions of youth, within our community. Making a list
83 of priority assets is a great start. Ms. Ehresman noted that this is not a suicide prevention
84 program but instead a program to make a difference to where kids and adults will learn of
85 positive assets.

86
87
88 **3. PRESENTATION FROM COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT STAFF
89 REGARDING INITIATIVE FOR CULTURAL OUTREACH AND SENSITIVITY.**

90 Greg Betts provided a brief overview of ways the city is trying to respond to diversity and be
91 sensitive to different cultures within the city. Mr. Betts said that the mission of the Community
92 Service Department (CSD) is to engage, create and enjoy regardless of age, gender, sex,
93 disability or cultural background. Mr. Betts and the department would like to make sure
94 everyone has the ability to learn and enjoy and he said there will be a strategic plan to address
95 the needs of people proactively. Karen Kienzle, the director of the Palo Alto Art Center talked
96 of the current exhibition –Treasures of the Mexican museum: A Spirited Legacy. Ms. Kienzle
97 also spoke of the Cultural Kaleidoscope program where they place artist within the school
98 system. A Power point presentation was shown. The different exhibits at the Art Center are in

99 part there to make connections between different cultural groups.
100 Khashayar Alae, recreation supervisor of the Palo Alto Recreation Department spoke of the
101 cultural outreach and sensitivity within the City of Palo Alto Recreation Department. A Power
102 point presentation was shown. Mr. Alae discussed the different programs and events the City
103 puts on, one of which is the International potluck at the teen center. This is an annual weeklong
104 festival where families were asked to bring dishes from their own cultures and share food,
105 experiences and stories. The recreation department would like the HRC to support cultural
106 diversity and perhaps give ideas on how to be more culturally diverse. Mr. Betts said there are
107 multiple examples of how cultural diversity has been brought into the community and is asking
108 the HRC to be a sounding board to give feed back if program is working well. They would like
109 to see measurable outcomes.

110 Commissioner Mora asked if it would be necessary to reduce recreational activities and
111 services given the current budget constraints? If so, what would be the criteria used to determine
112 cuts or reductions? Mr. Betts answered, yes, there will be reductions. The Department will try
113 and focus on maintaining services that are core to our mission. Discussion followed on which
114 programs may be cut. Commissioner Ezran discussed how the recreation department
115 communicates to the community about its events. Commissioner Ezran said that perhaps the
116 CSD can put together a monthly e-mail newsletter listing key events happening in Palo Alto and
117 to which residents could subscribe. Ms. Kienzle said that the CSD is looking into this idea and
118 is trying to work with a limited bandwidth but is hoping to find other avenues. Discussion
119 followed on different ways of marketing city programs.
120
121

122 **4. DISCUSSION OF RESOLUTION AGAINST THE DEATH PENALTY**

123 Anna Naimark gave a handout. Ms. Naimark discussed how she would like the HRC to sign a
124 resolution against the use of the death penalty. Ms. Naimark stated statistics about the death
125 penalty and death row inmates. Jerry Schwartz spoke of his opposition to the death penalty.
126 Mr. Schwartz said it is presumed the worst of the worst are being executed but it would difficult
127 to show that is the case. Mr. Schwartz mentioned that one of the strongest factors was the race
128 of the victim. He asks that the state stop executing due to arbitrary legally legitimate reasons.
129 Alice Smith an Attorney in Palo Alto said that the death penalty is unfair. Many victims'
130 families argue that they do not want other families to experience the death by way of the death
131 penalty. She says that 25 years on death row is unjust. Ms. Smith would like a motion to move
132 towards permanent incarceration without the possibility of parole.

133 Commissioner Ezran said he was in favor of the proposed resolution abolishing the death
134 penalty. Commissioner Ezran said he would like to make a motion that the HRC move forward
135 with this action. Commissioner Bacchetti said he would second the motion. Commissioner
136 Savage said she is fine with signing off but found it problematic to send this action to Council
137 and would like to discuss the subject further.

138 Commissioner Ezran motioned to adopt a resolution as provided and to recommend to forward
139 the resolution to the Palo Alto City Council for approval. After some discussion there was no
140 second and the motion did not pass.
141

142 **Commissioner Ezran motioned to adopt the resolution as provided. Seconded by**
143 **Commissioner Bacchetti. Ayes; unanimous.**
144

145 **5. REVIEW AND APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE LIAISON VACANCIES**

146 The following appointments were made as follows:
147

148 Civic Engagement- Commissioner Bacchetti
149 CDBG- Commissioner Bernardo
150 HSRAP - Commissioner Bernardo
151 PA Mediation- Commissioner Bacchetti
152 Police- Commissioner Savage
153 TAG – Commissioner Kahn
154
155

156 **6. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

157 Commissioner Kahn commented on the information concerning resolution 8301 given out by
158 John Abraham. Commissioner Kahn would like to make a recommendation to have a
159 subcommittee read his resolution and consider the resolution to pass it or highlight it.
160 Commissioner Mora noted that a resolution was already passed by council in 2003. The Palo
161 Alto Police Department would agree not to stop or detain individuals based solely on the
162 Patriot Act. Commissioner Kahn request that a copy of the resolution get included in a City
163 Council packet as a reminder that it was already passed. Greg Hermann thought this subject
164 could be agendized for the next meeting. It was thought that this should be put under
165 commissioner reports.
166
167

168 **7. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

169 **A. Commissioner Reports:**

170 Commissioner Bacchetti talked of the diversity project which is a project to work towards
171 making a better community. Commissioner Bacchetti named people to talk to within our
172 community and he thought it would be valuable for other commissioners to talk with community
173 members. Greg Hermann commented that it would be good to look beyond just the city and
174 include other organizations within the community to create a better foundation of information.
175 Commissioner Bacchetti spoke of the community Youth Forums which deals with community
176 issues. Discussion followed on whether a youth should sit on the HRC commission.
177 Commissioner Mora mentioned that the HRC explored this possibility af few years ago, and
178 determined it would be more feasible to have youth occasionally attend HRC meetings, and ask
179 Commissioners to attend youth community meetings and report back. Commissioner Bacchetti
180 will review minutes from previous meetings concerning a Youth Commissioner on the HRC, and
181 report back to the HRC. Commissioner Bernardo said she would like to see other commissions
182 have a part in our youth development programs. Commissioner Savage noted that the Youth
183 Forums discussed that there are not many places for our youth to go to have fun. Discussion
184 followed on the need of meeting places for our local youth. Commissioner Bacchetti attended
185 the Community task force meeting where teenage suicide was discussed. Commissioner
186 Bacchetti gave a summary of the Citizen’s Advisory Group. At the meeting there was a taser
187 demonstration followed by a discussion on what part they play and the probability and possibility
188 of harm. The aim of the group is to provide input to the chief. The Committee also discussed
189 whether the meetings should be open to the public or not.
190

191 Commissioner Mora mentioned that at the last HRC meeting we were reminded that attending
192 our local Neighborhood Association meetings could be a good way to become more informed
193 about issues in the neighborhoods. Commissioner Savage and Commissioner Mora attended the
194 February meeting of the Midtown neighborhood Association where local traffic issues were
195 discussed. City staff from the Police, Fire and Planning and Transportation Departments gave
196 presentations on traffic concerns and answered questions from residents. Commissioner Mora,

197 along with Commissioner Savage, also, attended the open-carry 2nd amendment advocate
198 demonstration earlier this month. Palo Alto has a no gun policy but state law supersedes local
199 law. Commissioner Mora also attended the Citizens' Advisory Group meeting.
200

201 Commissioner Savage gave an update on the Youth Forum. The next meeting is April 3rd. The
202 American Society of Suicidology discussed with the press how to report on suicides.
203 Commissioner Savage said the meeting was well attended and there was a lot of important
204 information given out.

205 Commissioner Savage thanked Commissioner Kahn and Commissioner Mora for their service as
206 HRC commissioners.
207

208 **B. Council Buddy Reports:** None
209

210 **C. Council Liaison Report:** None
211

212 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**

213 Greg Hermann reported on the possibility of Google installing a fiber network to provide high
214 speed internet. There is more information on the City of Palo Alto web page. March 26th is the
215 deadline to show support and provide nominations.
216

217
218 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

219 None
220

221
222 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

223 Resolution 8031
224 Having a youth on the HRC commission
225 Council buddy assignment
226 Update world music day
227 Civic engagement award
228 41 assets and how HRC may participate
229

230
231 **ADJOURNMENT**

232 The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.