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10 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

11 **Thursday, April 14, 2011**

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, Chen, Ezran, O’Nan, Verma **Council**
20 **Liaison:** Gail Price **Staff:** Minka van der Zwaag, Amy Johnson
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23 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**
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25 None
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28 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
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30 Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the January 13, 2011
31 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Verma AYES: unanimous.
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33 Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the February 10, 2011
34 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Verma. AYES: unanimous.
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36 Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the March 4, 2011 meeting.
37 Seconded by Commissioner Chan. AYES: unanimous.
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39 Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the March 16, 2011 meeting.
40 Seconded by Commissioner Verma. AYES: unanimous.
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43 **AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**
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45 None
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51 **BUSINESS**

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53 **1. REPORT ON MANDATORY RESPONSE PROGRAM BY THE PALO ALTO**
54 **MEDIATION PROGRAM**

55 Commissioner O’Nan introduced invited representatives of the Palo Alto Mediation Program: Mr. Ric
56 Rudman, Judith Moss, and Karen Michael and briefly explained purpose of the program.

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58 Ms. Karen Michael, Co-Chair briefly explained the main points of the Ordinance 9.72. She discussed
59 the change in the ordinance which now requires the notice to be provided in all landlord/tenant
60 agreements before rent increases are allowed. When a case is opened within the program it has two
61 phases: first a telephone conciliation, and then if still unresolved, a face-to-face mediation which
62 requires both parties be present for the beginning opening statements.

63
64 Ms. Judith Moss, Co-Chair briefly spoke about the 2010 program outcome and statistics: 70% of the
65 total cases were regarding security or maintenance issues. Most were successfully resolved, with a few
66 cases still open. 90% of all agreements have been complied with. After surveying all parties that
67 participated last year, 85% rated staff and mediators as excellent, 80% said they would use program
68 again. She concluded by saying that they expect to see more cases next year because there is the
69 anticipation that rents will be increasing.

70
71 Mr. Ric Rudman answered questions from the commissioners regarding: a) how the program is
72 publicized: which is mostly by referrals from city staff, especially code enforcement. b) what are the
73 typical calls received that are not within the scope of the program: they see a significant number of cases
74 for terminations and evictions which are not covered in the program c) there was a discussion about the
75 difficulty in getting the word out to landlords that they need to register.

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78 **2. 41 DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS: REVIEW OF SURVEY RESULTS**

79 Commissioner Bacchetti summarized the high points of the handout with regards to the survey results
80 presented by Project Cornerstone. He stated that the Project Safety Net subcommittee is working on a
81 publication that will be distributed broadly and there will be more to discuss soon. He pointed out the
82 following: Grades 5, 7, and – 12 were surveyed. The results be roughly divided into two categories:
83 those in top (21-40 assets) and bottom (0-20 assets) categories representing kids doing well and those
84 who were more vulnerable. He pointed out the graphs and charts and asked the other commissioners to
85 share their thoughts of the survey results.

86
87 Comments: Positive peer relationships showed to be important and surprisingly positive given that most
88 of the time peer pressure is thought to have mostly a negative impact; high school age kids scored lower
89 in assets involving family relationships; high school kids feel less valued by the community; there is a
90 direct correlation between kids with lower assets and negative behaviors; some commissioners were
91 surprised to see that high school kids valued diversity and have a positive outlook about their futures.

92
93 The commissioners discussed reasons for these results and shared ideas to improve the results such as
94 creating programs and activities that target the transitional (middle school) years which would raise the
95 level of the data before it levels off in high school years; finding ways to actually speak to the kids and
96 to those who work with them on a day-to-day basis to find out what is happening in their lives and how
97 to build more assets into their experience; programs need to be created to start the conversation. Next
98 steps will most likely be to design and implement programs to start the conversations.

99 Commissioner Bacchetti suggested that anyone interested in seeing the entire survey can go to the

100 Project Safety Net website. This will be a multi-year project so there will be more discussions on this in
101 the future.

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104 **3. HUMAN NEEDS ASSESSMENT: GETTING STARTED ON THIS HRC PRIORITY**

105 Commissioner Bacchetti started the conversation by explaining that the timing for this is really good
106 because of the recent completion of HSRAP and CDBG and the information contained in the several
107 applications. He asked for volunteers to form a subcommittee that would begin working to outline a
108 needs assessment. He suggested that the committee might begin by reviewing the proposals and talking
109 in a more general manner with the non-profit organizations.

110
111 Ms. van der Zwaag explained that she has been instructed to provide a strategic plan next year to City
112 Council regarding HSRAP funding. She will be hiring an intern to help with this project and that person
113 can probably also assist with the assessment and she has initiated some preliminary discussions with
114 Vice-Mayor Yeh regarding the scope of the strategic plan which she plans to begin on this summer.

115
116 Commissioner Bacchetti reported that the Finance Committee approved the HSRAP funding
117 recommendation from HRC which included funding the 2.5% administrative costs with Council
118 contingency funds.

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120 Commissioner O’Nan will chair the subcommittee for the Human Services Needs Assessment; other
121 members will be Commissioners Verma and Bacchetti.

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124 **4. HUMAN SERVICES RESOURCE ALLOCATION PROCESS AND COMMUNITY
125 DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT FUNDING (HSRAP/CDBG): CRITIQUE OF THE
126 REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION PROCESS**

127 Ms. van der Zwaag would like to postpone the meeting of the review committee until after May 9th when
128 the funding recommendations go to City Council for approval.

129
130 Commissioner Bacchetti asked for commissioners to share thoughts of the process thus far.

131
132 Comments: The selection and criteria for HSRAP funding did not seem to be as transparent in the
133 documents provided for review; the tables were helpful but could be improved if data compared funding
134 from previous years were included; adding comparisons between agencies that provide similar services;
135 adding columns for notes; asking agencies who have been through the process several times for input to
136 improve; looking for ways to reduce the amount of paperwork; the unfamiliarity of HUD regulations
137 made it hard to understand the CDBG process compared to HSRAP process.

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140 **5. YOUTH RECOGNITION DISCUSSION**

141 Commissioner Ezran explained that he and Commissioner Chen met and prepared a proposal which was
142 emailed to everyone prior to the meeting. He explained that the idea is to recognize high school students
143 in many areas of success besides sports. The idea came after the Parade of Champions that was held for
144 two of Palo Alto High Schools winning sports teams. He explained that he wants to keep the project
145 simple; otherwise, it may never happen. The award would recognize students from Palo Alto and Gunn
146 high schools. Assistance from the principals and PAUSD administration would be needed to select the
147 recipients. Limit the number of recipients to about 20 kids. Awards would start next year in 2012
148 possibly at a City Council meeting.

149 The commissioners discussed next steps: take the proposal to the City/School Liaison Committee to
150 review the concept, identify the gaps that need to be filled because there are many awards out there
151 already; how involved should the HRC be; would someone else take it over after the details are worked
152 out.

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154 Should other schools be included right away, or add them in later after the program gets off the ground;
155 this is a good way to show high school kids that the community does value them; take the concept to the
156 teen council; Ms. van der Zwaag shared two other programs involving recognizing youth, one is for the
157 Palo Alto Reading Stars who will be recognized as Grand Marshals in the May Fete Parade, and
158 Summers Excellent Adventure volunteers who will receive a Community Star Award at City Council
159 meeting on May 19th.

160
161 Commissioner Bacchetti suggested that Commissioner Ezran take the idea to the City/School Liaison
162 Committee, staff will arrange to have him on the agenda for a future meeting.

163
164 **Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion that the HRC approve the idea in principle and that**
165 **Commissioners Ezran and Chen take the proposal to the City/School Liaison Committee to see if**
166 **there is interest to participate in this effort, Seconded by Commissioner O’Nan, AYES:**
167 **Unanimous.**

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170 **6. REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

171 **None**

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174 **7. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

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A. Commissioner Reports:

177 Commissioner O’Nan reported that she is going to “Camp Everytown” next week.

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180 Commissioner Ezran reported that he attended the Police Citizen’s Advisory Group meeting and they
181 discussed issues around towing and impounding cars and possibly modifying the ordinances, but it is a
182 complex issue that needs more discussion.

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185 Commissioner Chan reported that there was no Youth Council meeting last month, but she has had
186 email discussions with Adam Howard about youth recognition effort.

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189 Commissioner Bacchetti reported that Project Safety Net received two awards and that he is continuing
190 to work on the noise complaint from Mr. West. The issue is currently in the hands of code enforcement
191 and he is waiting for an update, then he will communicate with Mr. West about the results.

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B. Council Buddy Reports:

194 **None**

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C. Council Liaison Report:

197 Councilmember Gail Price said she will be interested in seeing how Project Safety Net uses the survey
results. She reported that the Stanford Development Agreement is scheduled on a future City Council

198 agenda.

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D. Staff Liaison Report:

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Ms. van der Zwaag invited any of the commissioners to march with the dignitaries in May Fete Parade who might want to. She also announced that the Youth Council is hosting an event this Friday from 3pm to 6pm on King Plaza, inviting everyone to come and help fold 1000 Cranes to raise money for relief effort in Japan. Their goal is to raise \$1000 dollars. She also invited the commissioners to attend a reception for Donna Butts, from Generations United at the home of Greg Betts, on April 23rd from 7pm to 8:30pm. The meeting will be noticed if four or more Commissioners plan to attend.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

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None

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CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS

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None

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ADJOURNMENT

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The meeting adjourned at: 8:50pm.