



**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**  
**Thursday, March 08, 2012**  
Council Conference Room  
Palo Alto Civic Center  
250 Hamilton Avenue  
7:00 PM

**ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Bacchetti, Bernardo, Ezran, O’Nan, Savage, Verma  
**Council Liaison:** Karen Holman **Staff:** Minka van der Zwaag, Amy Johnson

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected of the December 8, 2011.  
Seconded by Commissioner Bacchetti AYES: unanimous.

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

None

**BUSINESS**

**1. DISCUSSION OF FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) FUNDING  
ALLOCATIONS.**

Commissioner Bacchetti introduced the topic and explained that this year’s funding is receiving 29% less funding from last year. Mr. Steven Turner, the Advanced Planning Manager introduced Consuelo Hernandez, the CDBG Coordinator, who explained there is a 12% reduction in federal allocations, and the use of Census data in 2010.

Commissioner Bacchetti turned to page 5 and provided an overview of the recommendations from the committee in each category, which are: Public Services, Planning Administration, Economic Development, Housing, and Public Facilities. The funding compared to requests is 40% below the total. The committee included himself, Commissioner Bernardo, and staff members Minka van der Zwaag, Consuelo Hernandez, and Debbie Park .

44 Ms. Hernandez explained the 2-year cycle and the process they used to decide which programs and  
45 projects to fund for the second year.

46  
47 Commissioner Bacchetti noted that when the funding is the same as the prior year, it doesn't take into  
48 account inflation, so the purchasing power is less.

49  
50 Councilmember Karen Holman, commented that she didn't see a description of what the impact would  
51 be due to the reductions. She suggested another approach which is not to look at programs but to cut  
52 across the board. The impact isn't represented in the report.

53  
54 **Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion to approve the recommendations, Seconded by**  
55 **Commissioner Bernardo, AYES: Unanimous.**

56  
57  
58 **2. DISCUSSION OF FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013 HSRAP**  
59 **FUNDING ALLOCATIONS.**

60 Ms. van der Zwaag explained that this year, the city is facing a 2.1 million dollar shortfall. Each dept  
61 has been asked to offer up cuts. The Community Services Department was asked to offer up  
62 approximately \$430,000. She explained the process and the recommendations. \$11,000, or one percent,  
63 is a suggested cut for HSRAP. The subcommittee agreed.

64  
65 Public Comments:

66 Senior Adults Legal Assistance: Ms. Georgia Bacil briefly explained their program and that they serve  
67 seniors. They have been receiving HSRAP funding for the past 12 years. Many clients are in crisis.  
68 They had 120 appointments this year. Most clients are victims of elder abuse. They do not accept fees  
69 from clients and operate on grant funds.

70  
71 Commissioners Comments:

72 Commissioner Bernardo commented that she felt the 1% was fair because the results of the HS Needs  
73 Assessment are not yet completed.

74  
75 Commissioner O'Nan said that she felt the HRC should push back and not accept any cuts. Since this  
76 comes down to basic needs, it is not compassionate or reasonable. They discussed what the process  
77 would be if the HRC did not approve the recommendation. Ms. van der Zwaag explained that the  
78 HRC's recommendation would be included in the staff report and presented to Finance Committee.

79  
80 Councilmember Holman asked about the historical cycle for HSRAP, regarding whether there have been  
81 increases or cuts historically. Ms. van der Zwaag commented that since 2003 there have been no  
82 increases and two cuts.

83  
84 Commissioner O'Nan had an issue of treating all the services the same because some are more important  
85 to basic life needs and would literally take food from someone's mouth.

86  
87 Commissioner Bacchetti commented about cutting across the board or in a different manner.

88  
89 Commissioner Ezran said he would support the staff recommendation. Commissioner Savage said she  
90 agreed with Commissioner O'Nan.

91 Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion to approve the committee's recommendation, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Seconded  
92 by Commissioner Ezran. AYES: 3, Nays: 3.

93  
94  
95  
96  
97  
98  
99  
100  
101  
102  
103  
104  
105  
106  
107  
108  
109  
110  
111  
112  
113  
114  
115  
116  
117  
118  
119  
120  
121  
122  
123  
124  
125  
126  
127  
128  
129  
130  
131  
132  
133  
134  
135  
136  
137  
138  
139  
140  
141

Commissioner Savage made a motion that the committee’s recommendation not be approved, Seconded by Commissioner O’Nan, AYES: 3, NAYS: 3.

No HRC recommendation would be stated in the staff report to council.

**3. UPDATE ON HUMAN SERVICES NEEDS ASSESSMENTS:**

Commissioner O’Nan explained that the subcommittee has closed out the research phase. The next phase is writing the report, which will take several weeks. May is also the month when the Finance Committee schedules budget hearings. She is asking for presentation of the report to be as late as possible. The subcommittee is reviewing all the data from the research phase. She will be discussing and planning with staff when the report will be available to the rest of the HRC, so that everyone is on board. The staff intern is providing help with graphs and charts, which will make the report easier to understand. Considering the time required to fine tune the report, it might be necessary to schedule extra meetings of HRC to be able to have time to review and make changes to the final report before the May meeting with Finance Committee. Ms. van der Zwaag explained that after the Finance Committee reviews the report, they could require additional research to be done, or ask for more information or for the report to go in a different direction.

There was a discussion about changing the April and May meetings.

Commissioner Ezran requested that as soon as staff knows more, to let the commissioners know how the meetings need to be changed.

Councilmember Holman suggested that the document be broken down into two meetings.

**4. UPDATE ON SITE VISITS**

Commissioner Ezran spoke about how a list was passed around and everyone signed up to make site visits. Some are complete, but some still need to occur. He asked that everyone who has not completed theirs, to please do so, soon.

**5. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

**A. Commissioner Reports:**

Commissioner Ezran reminded everyone that this is Commissioner Bernardo’s last meeting. He spoke about what a pleasure it has been to work with her and that she has made great contribution to the commission and the community and said “Thank You”.

Commissioner Bernardo said she enjoyed the last 3 years on the HRC and that it was fun to have been able to contribute. It was a bittersweet decision to leave, but that she hopes it is just temporary.

Commissioner Ezran reported that La Comida celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a luncheon. He attended and it was a nice event. The work they do is fantastic. He also reported that during the previous week he visited a new project of the Palo Alto Housing Corporation.

**B. Council Buddy Reports:**

None

142  
143  
144  
145  
146  
147  
148  
149  
150  
151  
152  
153  
154  
155  
156  
157  
158  
159  
160

**C. Council Liaison Report:**

None

**D. Staff Liaison Report:**

None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

All the commissioners are invited to attend the Santa Clara County HRC Breakfast on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

**CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

**Discussion of Preliminary Summary of Recommendations for the Human Services Needs Assessment**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at: 8:08 pm.