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3 **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**  
4 **Thursday, September 13, 2012**  
5 Council Conference Room  
6 Palo Alto Civic Center  
7 250 Hamilton Avenue  
8 7:00 PM  
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12 **ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present:** Bacchetti, Chen, Ezran, Morin, O’Nan, Verma, **Council**  
13 **Liaison:** Karen Holman, **Staff:** Minka van der Zwaag, Debbie Park  
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16 **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

17 None  
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19 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

20 None  
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22 **AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:**

23 Commissioner O’Nan made a motion to move item #2 to be item #1, and move item #1, to be item #3,  
24 Seconded by Commissioner Verma, AYES: unanimous  
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27 **BUSINESS**

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29 **1. APPOINTMENT OF MEDIATORS TO THE PALO ALTO MEDIATION PROGRAM**

30 Commissioner O’Nan introduced the representatives of the Palo Alto Mediation Program: Gill Barsley,  
31 Dyane Matas, and Ric Rudman.  
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33 Ms. Barsley gave an overview of the recruitment process. She explained that the mediators serve a term  
34 of two years. In January, all nine mediators whose terms are ending are notified and asked to indicate an  
35 interest in reapplying. Of the nine mediators, two declined to reapply and one mediator requested to  
36 move to emeritus status. With these changes, the total number of mediators reduced to twenty. The  
37 bylaws require a maximum of twenty-five mediators. A total of seventeen applications were received  
38 for five positions. From the total seventeen applicants, seven were selected for interviews. Following  
39 the interviews, five were selected.  
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41 Ms. Matas read the names of the new mediators and gave brief biography of each: Amanda Cravens,  
42 Rick Gross, Joan Healy, Steve Topol, Anjali Vishwanath. The reappointed mediators are: Gill Barsley,  
43 Aruna Bellary, Jeff Blum, Megan Gorman, Dyane Matas, and Pam Sturner.

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The commissioners discussed how impressed they were with the candidates and thanked them for volunteering.

**Commissioner O’Nan made a motion to approve the five new mediators, which was seconded by Commissioner Bacchetti, AYES: Unanimous.**

**Commissioner O’Nan made a motion to approve the appointment of three emeritus mediators, seconded by Commissioner Verma, AYES: unanimous**

**Commissioner O’Nan made a motion to approve the reappointment of 6 mediators to another term, Seconded by Commissioner Morin. AYES: Unanimous**

**2. REVIEW OF THE CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT (CAPER)**

**Correction:** In the memo accompanying the CAPER, the subject line is incorrect; it should read the same as the title on the agenda.

Ms. Hernandez said the report is a summary of all the activities that took place with CDBG funding over the last fiscal year and included activities that were funded previously. Two previously funded projects included in the report are:

- 1. Stevenson House, funded in fiscal year 2010, completed in FY 2012, therefore, included in this report.
- 2. Tree House, City allocated \$1.8 million of CDBG funding in fiscal year 2008, completed in November 2011, and therefore, the numbers are reported during this year.

Time was allotted for public comment.

Commissioner Bacchetti had questions regarding pages 1, 2 and 10. Commissioner Bacchetti asked questions of staff regarding numbers that exceeded goals. Ms. Hernandez explained that in one instance, where activities were funded previously, those numbers were reported when the activity took place, which was in this reporting period. Second instance was where the number exceeded the goal because a non-profit organization saw an increase in the volume of the people they serve.

Commissioner Bacchetti commented about the federal dollars not being readily available to Palo Alto. Ms. Hernandez noted that most community development funding coming out of the HUD office is tied to the population and demographics of the area. However, Palo Alto is in a unique position where there is a need in the community but, based on average income, we do not qualify. The average income is calculated on the national level not on area; therefore, Palo Alto is not competitive.

Council Member Holman asked if there is a different way to calculate Palo Alto’s need for assistance. Ms. Hernandez said for entitlement grant such as CDBG, it is difficult for one community to make the argument. Vice Chair O’Nan spoke about the MayView Community Health Center using zip codes and is ultimately somewhat successful in identifying the need and securing increased funding using this model.

Council Member Holman commented that the notice of public review did not mention CDBG and suggested mentioning CDBG in the title of those entities that give input to the report.

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Commissioner Ezran commented that the report containing information on race was not clear.  
Ms. Hernandez said the report is required for HUD

**3. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON RESOLUTION THAT CORPORATIONS ARE NOT PEOPLE AND MONEY IS NOT SPEECH PRESENTED BY SANTA CLARA COUNTY MOVE TO AMEND.**

Santa Clara County Move to Amend returned to the HRC to re-present their request that the HRC endorse a draft resolution and to forward the resolution to the City Council with the endorsement of the HRC.

Ms. Mary Klein, a Palo Alto resident, spoke about the legal historical context. She stated that Corporations are not people and money is not speech. She commented that the first ten amendments to the US Constitution as well as the 14th amendment were written for the purpose of giving legal clarity to the rights of natural people. These Amendments were not written with any concern of the rights of corporations. The corporations do not have the same rights under the Constitution as natural people do.

Ms. Debbie Mytels, a Palo Alto resident, said the group is asking for regulations and limitations on corporations. She provided two reasons why this issue matters for Palo Alto: 1) local government and political decisions are vulnerable to disruption by massive corporate contributions to campaigns and other governmental processes. 2) A change will not happen at the national level without strong local support. Ms. Mytels also spoke about methods to add amendments to the Constitution.

**Comments from public:**

Ms. Diane Rolfe, a Palo Alto resident, called upon the HRC to uphold the resolution and said democracy is impaired and threatened.

Ms. Edie Keating said this is a very local issue and gave examples that corporate or business influences are too strong.

Ms. Stephanie Reader, President of Peninsula Peace and Justice Center, asked if the commissioners had any questions about the issues the ACLU raised. She said the current leadership of the ACLU has retained the old ACLU position. She spoke about the article that was provided and that many ACLU leaders are re-thinking their position.

Mr. Gerry G. said democracy is in distress and many people believe corporations are part of the problem.

Ms. Nancy Neff, a Board member of California Clean Money campaign, said the Clean Money Campaign endorses the efforts to amend the Constitution and asked for the HRC to request City Council to support this resolution as well.

Ms. Susan Stewart spoke about the extreme difficulty for the court to revisit this issue. Ms. Stewart talked about curtailing the concept that corporations have the same rights as people.

Commissioner Ezran noted 2 things to discuss and decide upon:

1. Whether HRC should endorse the resolution
2. If yes, to endorse, then discuss whether to refer resolution to City Council with HRC endorsement.

142 Commissioner Ezran said he was persuaded by Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens dissent summary  
143 of Citizens United vs. Federal Communication Commission. He believes that saying that corporation are  
144 people defies common sense. People are influenced by political ads which can drown out other voices so he  
145 felt this is undemocratic and applies to Palo Alto at the local level. Corporations are motivated by profit and  
146 while there is nothing wrong with this, they do not have same interest as the rest of the people.

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148 Commissioner Bacchetti commented that local elections are not easily bought. So this resolution is a way  
149 of starting something that is a benefit to the nation at the level where it has a best chance of being  
150 thoughtfully considered rather than influenced by someone with a particular outcome in mind.

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152 **Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion to approve the resolution, seconded by Commissioner**  
153 **Verma. AYES: Unanimous**

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155 **Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion to forward the resolution to the City Council for**  
156 **approval, Seconded by Commissioner Verma. AYES: Unanimous.**

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#### 159 **4. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

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##### **A) COMMISSIONER REPORTS:**

162 Commissioner Chen reported that she attended the Cubberley Community Advisory meeting on 9/5/12.  
163 At the meeting they discussed the usage of the Cubberley Community Center.  
164 She also gave a presentation at Senior Friendship Day about city government. The presentation slides  
165 were both in English and Chinese.

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167 Commissioner Ezran reported that he was invited by the San Jose Human Rights Commission to talk  
168 about the Palo Alto Human Relations Commission. They were interested in the study regarding the  
169 Human Services Needs Assessment. He also reported on World Music Day. He's been in contact with  
170 National Make Music Day, a non profit organization trying to promote similar events in USA.

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##### **B) COUNCIL BUDDY REPORT:**

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173 None

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##### **C) COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:**

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176 Councilmember Holman reported:

- 177 • The City is hosting the city representative from Sweden this week.
- 178 • City Council did not vote to appeal the housing allocation for housing units to develop here
- 179 • The Living in Vehicles ordinance will be discussed at Policy and Services on October 9, 2012; it  
180 has been delayed because faith community did not reply.

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#### **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

- 183 • Presentation of Family Odyssey Project
- 184 • Presentation on Project Safety Net by Christina Llerena, Project Director
- 185 • Request for PAPD Chief Burns

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188 The meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.