



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
Thursday, July 11, 2013
Council Conference Room
Palo Alto Civic Center
250 Hamilton Avenue
7:00 PM

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: Bacchetti, Chen, O’Nan, Savage
Absent: Ezran, Morin, Stone
Staff: Minka van der Zwaag, Amy Johnson

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Savage made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2013 Minutes, seconded by Commissioner Chen. AYES: Unanimous. (Ezran, Morin & Stone absent).

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:

None

BUSINESS

1. Learning Series on Affordable Housing (Part 3) Presentation by Palo Alto Housing Corporation (PAHC):

Ms. Georgina Mascarenas (title) and Ms. Kate Young, Director of resident services at PAHC gave a power point presentation, see attached exhibit A.

Commissioners asked questions regarding:

- Whether other nearby cities contract with PAHC to manage their housing program.
- Do tenants often have assets. There are asset limits on existing BMR properties only.
- 801 Alma is owned by Community Working Group and is not managed by PAHC.

- 43 • Income eligibility is not a requirement to be on the waiting list.
- 44 • How long are waiting lists? Some lists have about 400 people. PAHC encourages people to get
- 45 on list because they often go through 10 people on the list for every unit that becomes available.
- 46 • Work requirement is a minimum of 20 hours per week, or have an offer to work 20 hours per
- 47 week to qualify for a unit, volunteering does not qualify.
- 48 • Living in a car, does not qualify residency in Palo Alto.
- 49 • Funding sources subsidize.
- 50 • It is difficult to know the total number of people applying because all waitlists are kept separate.
- 51 • Why not use one master application? No, because of different programs and requirements.

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53 Ms. Young, Director of Resident Services presented a powerpoint presentation about resident services
54 and answered questions:

- 55 • Service Coordinators split their time between two properties normally.
- 56 • Spoke about the difference between service coordinators and case managers.
- 57 • How do service providers stay in touch so that residents don't fall between the cracks? Service
- 58 Providers get involved on a case-by-case basis.
- 59 • Building relationships with the residents.
- 60 • Cultural barriers
- 61 • 6 staff currently at PAHC.
- 62 • Resident Services are only provided at Tax Credit and HUD subsidized properties.

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65 **2. Learning Series on Affordable Housing (Part 4) Presentation by Palo Alto Housing**
66 **Authority:**

67 Ms. Kathy Espinoza-Howard, Chairperson of the Santa Clara County Housing Authority (HA), provided
68 handouts and discussed the contents. She explained briefly that they received "Moving to Work"
69 designation. She spoke about the effects of sequestering on the Section 8 program and because that they
70 lost 16 million dollars, raising the percentage for rental income by 5%, affecting 19,000 households. If
71 they hadn't they would have put 900 families out onto the street. They are a 7 member commission.
72 They are also looking at some recovery by not developing some property or possibly selling some
73 property. Their highest demographic for people they serve are seniors (57%) with the remaining being
74 working families. They have been able to convert old public housing to tax credit housing and refurbish
75 them. In Palo Alto, they have 372 Section 8 vouchers. In 2004, 3 parcels were going to be sold. The
76 HA condemned those properties and joined them together to create the Opportunity Center (OC). They
77 hope to develop other centers like the OC in the future. They have a strong relationship with the
78 Veterans Administration. The HA took over the Shelter Plus Care Program which houses chronic
79 homeless people. The HA works to end homelessness by providing housing, they do not provide case
80 management. 6 chronic homeless people have been housed in Palo Alto, to date. They have closed the
81 waitlist and cannot give out any more vouchers. HA across the nation are facing issues due to
82 sequestration and are removing people from the Section 8 program. The Santa Clara County Housing
83 Authority is honored to be in the 1% and has a reputation for being very efficient in the country. They
84 have revamped their business model, removed property management services, reduced staff to 180.
85 Someone on a waitlist has an average 10- year wait. She recommended to the HRC that Palo Alto needs
86 to continue to have a voice and be represented in all future conversations. Santa Clara County is the 6th
87 highest most expensive place to live in the country.

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90 **3. Consideration of New Ideas Generated from HRC County Breakfast**

91 Chair O’Nan wanted to follow up on ideas that came from the breakfast meeting. She reminded the
92 commissioners that there are opportunities to collaborate with the County HRC by serving on their
93 subcommittees. She also spoke of doing a film screening program and showing films in Palo Alto.
94 Commissioner Savage suggested discussing this again at the retreat. Vice Chair Bacchetti suggested
95 including the immigration video project that the Media Center is doing.

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97 **4. Consideration of Upcoming HRC Retreat:**

98 The commissioners decided on the Baylands Interpretive Center as location for the upcoming retreat,
99 which is scheduled for Friday, August 30th from 9am to 1pm. Chair and Vice Chair will schedule a
100 meeting with staff to plan agenda. Staff will inquire about a facilitator, past HRC commissioners Jack
101 Hamilton and Shawna Mora were suggested.

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103 **5. Consideration to Conduct Agency Site Visits:**

104 Chair O’Nan asked that the HRC Commissioners begin to conduct site visits of the current recipients of
105 HSRAP funding, now that the process is set for the next two years. Staff will email out a sign up list for
106 future discussion at the retreat.

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109 **6. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:**

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111 **A. Commissioner Reports:**

112 None

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114 **B. Council Buddy Reports:**

115 Chair O’Nan met with Mayor Greg Scharff. He told her that he feels good about the work the HRC is
116 doing and appreciates all their work.

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118 **C. Council Liaison Report:**

119 None

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121 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**

122 Ms. van der Zwaag reported on the following:

- 123 • The “Living in Vehicles Ban” went to Policy & Services Committee on June 24th, they voted
124 unanimously in favor of the ban. It will be going forward to City Council on August 5th. Once
125 the ordinance passes, there would be a waiting period so that social service providers can inform
126 the homeless and offer services. Palo Alto Police Department officers will respond on a
127 complaint basis only.
- 128 • The Policy and Services Committee will also discuss the Cubberley homeless issues on August
129 13th. She is working with other staff on the situations with the homeless and the vehicle dwellers
130 at Cubberley.

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133 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

134 The Regular August meeting has been cancelled.

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137 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

138 September 2013 Meeting: Housing Learning Series: Temporary and Long Term housing for the
139 unhoused. Staff will contact Emergency Housing Consortium, InnVision and Santa Clara County

- 140 Homeless Services Director.
- 141 Low Cost Senior Housing.
- 142 Continue discussion about school age kids of homeless families
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- 145 **ADJOURNMENT**
- 146 The meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm.