

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Thursday, March 14, 2013

Council Conference Room

Palo Alto Civic Center

250 Hamilton Avenue

7:00 PM

ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present: Bacchetti, Chen, Ezran, O’Nan, Savage

Staff: Minka van der Zwaag, Amy Johnson

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS: None

BUSINESS

1. Presentation by Assistant Community Services Director, Rhyena Halpern regarding Arts and Sciences Programs:

Ms. van der Zwaag introduced Ms. Rhyena Halpern, the Asst. Director of the Community Services Department who began employment with the City of Palo Alto 6 months ago. Her focus is half on Arts and Sciences and half on other departmental issues. She spoke about her previous work in social services. She invited the commissioners to attend a Board Development Training on March 23rd, regarding fundraising. She presented a PowerPoint presentation that addressed four program areas within the Arts and Sciences Division:

- The Art Center’s focus on diversity is an essential part of their mission and there is an increasing focus on the needs of East Palo Alto audiences. They are developing a multicultural audience task force to assist with marketing their free family day events and promoting its long standing outreach programs: Cultural Kaleidoscope, Day of the Dead Family Day, Project LOOK!, and Exhibitions. Jr. Museum and Zoo offers free admission and has interactive exhibits to engage children in science and nature, live animals, special programs for visitors and events throughout the year. They also target special needs and at-risk youth by providing programs in the schools that are funded by the Friends of the Jr. Museum and Zoo. Palo Alto Children’s Theater serves youth between the ages of 8 and 18 regardless of socio-economic status or physical ability. In partnership with the Palo Alto Unified School system, the Children’s Theatre provides arts education enrichment in the area of dance to all K-3 elementary school aged children. Annually

50 800 elementary age children are involved in the 10-week dance in school residencies that
51 take place at local elementary schools during the school day.

52
53 Vice Chair O’Nan said she was aware that there are many under-privileged children who need
54 help with getting art supplies for summer camps, because there are some camps and classes that
55 require participants to bring their own supplies.

56
57 Chair Ezran shared a concern that the department may be missing many opportunities for
58 receiving grants because it does not have the resources to be able to apply for them.

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60 Ms. Halpern said that she would look into the commissioner’s questions and have staff respond.

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62 Commissioner Bacchetti recused himself at 7:24pm.

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64 **2. Recommendation for the next funding cycle of Human Services Resource Allocation**
65 **Process (HSRAP) Funding for year 2014:**

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67 Ms. van der Zwaag explained the process of reviewing the applications. As expected, the funding
68 requests exceeded the amount available. The sub-committee felt strongly about continuing the funding
69 for current recipients, as well as recommending new programs for youth tutoring and food assistance. .

70
71 Public Comment:

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73 Ms. Carol Hoshizaki, representing Community Technology Alliance, thanked the city for the ongoing
74 support. She explained the services they provide to 600 at-risk and homeless people, with 71% of
75 clients achieving housing because of their ability to receive messages through the voicemail services
76 they provide.

77
78 Ms. Michele Schroeder, representing Senior Adults Legal Assistance, spoke about the free legal services
79 they provide to seniors in Palo Alto and countywide. This will be their 14th year receiving HSRAP
80 funding. They continue to see an increase of seniors in crisis.

81
82 Mr. Jim Santucci, representing KARA, thanked the city for the opportunity to receive funding. He
83 spoke about the grief support services they provide, and explained that it is very comprehensive because
84 they serve many types of individuals: from 6 years old, to first responders, and those facing end of life.
85 They do not charge for their services, and rely on funding.

86
87 Ms. Eileen Richardson, explained she is involved with three agencies: Downtown Streets Team,
88 Community Technology Alliance and Peninsula Healthcare Connections. She supported the proposed
89 5% cut in order to be able to support new agencies and food programs.

90
91 Mr. Heiri Schuppiser, Outreach Specialist for Momentum for Mental Health, said that it takes a long
92 time and is a difficult process to build a rapport with the people who need their services.

93
94 Mr. Philip Dah, representing InnVision Shelter Network, explained that they provide hot meals and
95 groceries, and emergency housing assistance. They have a hand in every single type of service provided
96 by all the agencies who receive HSRAP funding. The amount available for HSRAP needs to be
97 increased.

99 Ms. Aarika Riddle, representing Adolescent Counseling Services, spoke about the increase to the on
100 campus counseling program at five Palo Alto Unified School District secondary schools. They have
101 seen a 7% increase in the need for services.

102
103 Ms. Jo Bailard, representing Abilities United, spoke about their services and thanked the HRC and City
104 for past support.

105
106 Mr. Carlos Guzman, representing Dreamcatchers, spoke about their free tutoring and mentoring
107 services. They have partnered with the YMCA and Palo Alto Housing Corporation. They have been
108 recognized by the PTA and the City of Palo Alto. The program is cost effective, since he is the only
109 paid employee. The program is 5 years old this year.

110
111 Ms. Kate Young, representing Palo Alto Housing Corporation, explained that they provide services to
112 children who live on their properties. They are able to provide tutoring to the children because they see
113 them everyday. The funding will allow them to provide summer programs.

114
115 Mr. Taaregue Tuategi-may greeted everyone and said that he likes Palo Alto and is proud to live here.
116 He likes the feeling of community. He shared his concern about “that place” and said it is not a fit place
117 to live or be there.

118
119 End of public comment.

120
121 Chair Ezran pointed out that tonight’s vote will need to be unanimous because there are only 4
122 commissioners present. He also explained that they are not limited to the two funding options presented
123 – Option A and Option B.. He also explained that the two organizations that were not recommended for
124 funding are very worthy, and that the decision not to fund them is not a reflection on these organizations,
125 but rather on the specific needs that these organizations fulfill in comparison with the HRC’s priorities.

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127 Commissioner Savage said that she supported the Dreamcatchers program. She encouraged everyone to
128 vote for Option A because it supports this program.

129
130 Commissioner Chen commented that during the Human Services Needs Assessment there was a strong
131 outcry for more transportation services. She was surprised that there were no recommendations made
132 for this. Ms. van der Zwaag explained that the subcommittee felt that transportation issues are not under
133 the purview of the HRC.

134
135 There was a brief discussion about funding both tutoring programs, and how to make the most of the
136 funding available, and funding both programs with \$5,000 would be more symbolic.

137
138 Chair Ezran mentioned that he has heard interest by several City Council Members to increase HSRAP
139 funding in the future.

140
141 **Commissioner Savage made a motion to approve Option A. Seconded by Commissioner Chen,**
142 **AYES: Unanimous. Commissioners Morin and Verma absent. Commissioner Bacchetti recused**
143 **himself.**

144
145 Ms. van der Zwaag announced that April 16th will be the Finance Committee. Everyone is welcome to
146 attend and speak again.

3. Debrief Human Services Needs Assessment discussion at Finance Committee

Commissioner Bacchetti returned to the meeting at 8:17pm.

Chair Ezran reported that the discussion centered around the follow up items and recommendation forwarded by the HRC including: 1) The possible allocation of the non-recurring interest income from the Stanford University Medical Center mitigation funds in the amount of \$100,000 over a four year period 2) A 3-5% reduction of all agencies to be able to fund new agencies, this was not favored by the HRC as indicated in their recommendation to the Finance Committee 3) Bi-annual gathering of non profits on training topics of mutual interest and collaboration 4) Fine tuning of the language regarding HSRAP focus in terms of “low income” and “quality of life” The Finance committee provided some suggestions for the HRC to consider. 5) There is no recommendation to change terms of the duration of the contracts for Adolescent Counseling Services and Youth Community Services.

Chair Ezran made a motion to fine tune the verbiage of the recommendation; to be done by Chair and Vice Chair with Staff, Seconded by Commissioner Bacchetti. AYES: Unanimous. Commissioners Morin and Verma absent.

4. Election of Chair and Vice Chair for next one year term.

Chair Ezran nominated Vice Chair O’Nan for Chair. He said he appreciated her work as Vice Chair and that she has a genuine interest for the people the HRC serves in the community. Vice Chair O’Nan accepted the nomination.

Commissioner Bacchetti made a motion to close the nominations. Seconded by Commissioner Savage AYES: Unanimous, Commissioners Morin and Verma absent.

(Paper ballot completed) Vice Chair O’Nan voted Chair unanimously.

Commissioner Ezran nominated Commissioner Bacchetti for Vice-Chair. Chair O’Nan seconded the motion. Commissioner Bacchetti accepted the nomination.

Commissioner Savage motioned to close the nominations, Seconded by Commissioner Chen, AYES: Unanimous, Commissioners Morin and Verma absent.

(Paper ballot completed) Commissioner Bacchetti voted Vice Chair unanimously.

5. Council Buddy Assignments

Chair and Vice-Chair are matched up with Mayor and Vice Mayor leaving the others open.

Chair O’Nan said she would like a stronger relationship with the City Council.

Commissioner Savage chose Councilmember Price, Commissioner Ezran chose Councilmember Berman, Commissioner Chen chose Councilmember Kniss.

Staff will ask Commissioner Morin for her choice.

6. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:

A. Commissioner Reports:

197 Commissioner Savage reported that she attended the Police Departments Citizen Advisory Group. They
198 will continue to meet in some form. She also sat in on a police promotion panel for the position of
199 Agent.

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201 Chair O’Nan reported that she attended the Palo Alto Mediation Program workshop, the speaker was
202 very interesting.

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204 **B. Council Buddy Reports:**

205 None

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207 **C. Council Liaison Report:**

208 None

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210 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**

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212 Ms. van der Zwaag said she is working on the HRC breakfast on May 15th. The location has not been
213 determined. Invitations will need to be sent out soon.

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215 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

216 None

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218 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

219 Presentation by Day Workers

220 PAMP Annual Report

221 Report on Buena Vista Mobile Home Park

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224 **ADJOURNMENT**

225 The meeting adjourned at 8:47pm