



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42

**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

**Thursday, February 13, 2014**

Council Conference Room

Palo Alto Civic Center

250 Hamilton Avenue

7:00 PM

REGULAR MEETING

**ROLL CALL:**

**Commissioners Present:** Bacchetti, Chen, Ezran, Morin, O’Nan, Savage, Stone

**Absent:** None

**Council Liaison:** Mayor Shepherd

**Staff:** Minka van der Zwaag, Amy Johnson

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2013 meeting.  
Seconded by Commission Savage. AYES: Unanimous

Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2013 meeting.  
Seconded by Commission Stone. AYES: Unanimous

Commissioner Ezran made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 09, 2014 meeting.  
Seconded by Commission Savage. AYES: Unanimous

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

None

**BUSINESS**

**1. Annual Review of the Palo Alto Mediation Program**

Diane Matas and Gill Barsley, Co-Chairs and Paul Hebert, Case Manager of the Palo Alto Mediation Program (PAMP) discussed the report provided in the packet. This is the 12th year of the Mandatory

# FINAL

43 Response Program. They described the program, the range of common issues, and the process for  
44 opening cases. They also discussed the requirements of landlords to provide specific language in the  
45 leases that inform tenants of the program, as well as the requirement for landlords to register with the  
46 City. They also discussed the change to the program that voided rental increases if the required  
47 language is not provided in leases. They summarized case statistics (Pg. 3. of Exhibit A). The most  
48 common issues involved maintenance and privacy.

49  
50 They discussed the process for recruiting mediators. They currently have 18 active mediators, 10 are  
51 up for renewal this year; they expect most will reapply. They are planning to recruit 4 or 5 new  
52 mediators in the coming months.

## 53 Commissioners Questions

- 54 • Statistics are slightly lower in 2013: No significant reason.
- 55 • HRC is aware of a dramatic increase in local rents. There seems no leverage for tenants: PAMP  
56 does receive a lot of calls about rent increases. As long as proper notice is given, the landlord is  
57 within their rights. 10-20% seems to be the normal increase.
- 58 • Are there term limits for mediators: No, terms last 2 years. Most mediators serve repetitive  
59 terms. PAMP keeps track of each mediator's participation. If participation falters, they will have  
60 a discussion about it. It may result in a mutual decision for the mediator to resign, or not reapply.
- 61 • How are calls distributed among the mediators: Everyone is contacted via email and Mr. Hebert  
62 keeps track of who volunteers and who does not. He assigns the cases to different mediators  
63 depending on who volunteers.  
64

65  
66 The Co-Chairs said they would like to come back to the HRC to have their new mediators appointed.  
67 They will provide names and Bio's to Commissioner Stone, their liaison, for the March HRC  
68 meeting.

## 69 70 2. **Housing Learning Series (Part 10) Speaker Tim Wong, City of Palo Alto Senior**

71 Mr. Tim Wong, Sr. Planner for the City of Palo Alto, and Project Manager for the Housing Element  
72 Update handed out a FAQ sheet, and spoke about the project of updating the Housing Element for  
73 2015-2023 with its many aspects and requirements. He handed out a document (Attachment B)  
74 which shows the Final Regional Housing Need Allocation for 2014-2022, which requires the City of  
75 Palo Alto to zone for 1988 additional housing units. He spoke briefly about the lengthy process  
76 which determines these numbers. He spoke about various zoning areas within the city, and explained  
77 that the city needs to locate sites for potential housing units. They will be reviewing current and new  
78 ways to encourage housing opportunities, and affordable housing.

## 79 80 Commissioners Questions

81 Mr. Wong answered questions regarding creating more affordable housing. The city creates  
82 incentives for developers, financial assistance, and/or concessions.

83 Commissioner Ezran commented that the state mandates seem to contradict the residents desire to  
84 slow down growth in Palo Alto, as seen by the failed Measure D. Mr. Wong shared a map of Palo  
85 Alto and spoke about the work of a subcommittee and the process. The city needs to find  
86 approximate 600 more units to meet the 1988 total number of units. The state suggests a minimum of  
87 20 units per acre, which would require 30 more acres of land. The number of inhabitants and/or  
88 bedrooms are not factored into the housing element; only the number of units. Chair O'Nan asked if  
89 some of the vacant businesses could be considered for possible housing options. Mr. Wong said that  
90 all properties like that have been identified, but the City would not force them to be used for this

91 purpose.

92 Mr. Wong explained that the Housing Element Update is being processed as a “Streamline Update”  
93 with Housing and Community Development, which means it will take less time to review, but it is  
94 crucial that the project stay on task and on schedule through its many steps. The City of Palo Alto  
95 could be at risk of lawsuit if it does not meet the completion deadline. The HRC can assist by  
96 selecting members to serve on the community panel which will be the public review for the entire  
97 process providing feedback along the way. Invitations will be going out next week.  
98

99 **3. Motion regarding participation of Avenidas and Palo Alto Community Child Care (PACCC)**  
100 **in the Human Services Resource Allocation Process (HSRAP.)**

101 Vice Chair Bacchetti commented that he had no changes to the motion that was in the packet and  
102 would answer any questions. Commissioner Ezran said the motion was well thought out and  
103 balanced, and would support the motion. Chair O’Nan invited Lisa Hendrickson and Janice Shaul to  
104 speak. Ms. Hendrickson said they are sticking by their original request to be removed from HSRAP;  
105 while they acknowledge that the recommendation does address some of their issues, historically,  
106 they seldom see an equal share of funding increases, but have an equal share of funding decreases.  
107 Chair O’Nan said she would like to see these agencies stay in HSRAP, because she believed the  
108 problem is due to chronic underfunding of HSRAP. She also supported the motion.  
109

110 **Chair O’Nan made a motion to pass Vice Chair Bacchetti’s motion: The HRC proposes to the**  
111 **Policy and Services Committee that Avenidas and Palo Alto Community Child Care (PACCC)**  
112 **remain within the Human Services Resource Allocation Process (HSRAP) group of human**  
113 **service providers with these differences from other HSRAP grantees: Avenidas and PACCC**  
114 **will be assured that their HSRAP funding will not be cut in order to fund reallocations to other**  
115 **HSRAP grantees. When the Council determines annual adjustments to reflect the increased**  
116 **costs of doing business in the nonprofit sector, Avenidas and PACCC will be assured their**  
117 **proportional shares. When the council makes an incremental allocation over and above any**  
118 **annual adjustment, the HRC will recommend redistribution of those funds according to its**  
119 **assessment of human service needs at that time. Incremental allocations will be recommended**  
120 **according to a review covering all HSRAP recipients (including Avenidas and PACCC) and**  
121 **new applicants. In the case of budget reductions set by the Council and staff, Avenidas and**  
122 **PACCC will bear their proportional share, but no more, in the HRC’S recommendations.**  
123 **Seconded by Commissioner Morin, AYES: Unanimous.**  
124

125 **4. HRC Ad Hoc Subcommittee Work plan Review:**

126 Chair O’Nan- HSRAP Funding Subcommittee with Commissioners Ezran and Stone. She emailed a  
127 Supplemental Needs Assessment and has received valuable responses. Commissioners Ezran and  
128 Stone were tasked with researching what other cities do with similar funding. They will review the  
129 data and prepare a business case when done. Commissioner Stone said he has researched six local  
130 cities and they all have a similar program to HSRAP, they are also comparable in funding (with  
131 PACCC and Avenidas included). Ms. van der Zwaag asked that their report include the type of  
132 funding, i.e. General Fund or Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money.  
133

134 Vice Chair Bacchetti and Commissioner Chen – Low Income Housing Subcommittee. They are  
135 working independently and looking at a variety of things, such as raising public awareness of who  
136 the clients are, and what is the economic make up of families and how it is changing. They have  
137 reviewed the current Housing Element. They are interested in how the HRC can help and what its  
138 role is.  
139

# FINAL

140 Commissioner Savage is working on updating the HRC Brochure and distributing it. She said she  
141 was finally able to have the opportunity to have a discussion with the City Attorney to better  
142 understand the role of the HRC.

143  
144 Commissioner Morin said she met with Miryam Castaneda, from Santa Clara County HRC. They  
145 discussed the Palo Alto HRC getting involved in the Northern California HRC. Ms. Castaneda  
146 expressed some disappointment in the Palo Alto's HRC's lack of contribution to the movie  
147 documentary project. Ms. van der Zwaag said it is possible to for the city to provide a venue for a  
148 movie.

149  
150 Commissioner Chen explained she is working on a special project to help new immigrants in Palo  
151 Alto get acclimated and involved in the city. Commissioner Chen said she met with RuthAnn  
152 Garcia, a Senior Librarian at the Temporary Mitchell Park Library. They discussed holding various  
153 meetings for different age groups at the new Mitchell Park center so that they can be customized for  
154 immigrants in a specific age group demographic. She also reported on the Chinese New Year event  
155 for the weekly Senior Friendship Day gatherings at Cubberley. Mayor Shepherd recommended that  
156 Commissioner Chen contact Claudia Keith, Chief Communications Officer at the City of Palo Alto  
157 who is leading the "Our Palo Alto" project.

## 160 5. Selection of an HRC Liaison to CDBG

161 Ms. van der Zwaag asked for two volunteers to participate in the Community Development Block  
162 (CDBG) Grant review committee for year two of the CDBG process. It will consist of reading and  
163 reviewing applications, as well as attending a few meetings. Chair O'Nan already volunteered.  
164 Commissioner Morin agreed to be the second volunteer.

## 167 6. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:

### 169 A. Commissioner Reports:

170 Commissioner Ezran announced that he has decided not to reapply to the HRC. It's time to move on  
171 after 6 years. He plans to remain in public service and possibly run for City Council, or reapply to a  
172 different commission in the fall. He also announced that a contractor has been hired to take over the  
173 next World Music Day event on June 15, 2014.

174  
175 Vice Chair Bacchetti referred everyone to Steven Levy's memo that was at places tonight. He  
176 believed it was good resource document. He also announced that Downtown Streets Team and Palo  
177 Alto Police were recognized with a National Safety Award.

178  
179 Commissioner Morin spoke of her visit to Mayview Community Health Care with Commissioner  
180 Stone.

181  
182 Commissioner Stone reported that the Project Safety Net Committee is continuing to work on goal  
183 setting. Commissioner Stone asked Mayor Shepherd to clarify that youth well-being is no longer a  
184 current City Council priority; she explained that priorities do not continue more than three years. It is  
185 still important to the community.

186  
187 Chair O'Nan attended a Tea event put on by the children in the Stepping Stones Program. The  
188 children prepared and served tea and cookies. She also spoke of a personal experience of being

# FINAL

189 accused of a hit and run vehicle accident, and her experience with the Palo Alto Police Dept.

190  
191 **B. Council Buddy Reports:**

192 Commissioner Morin said she received some feedback from her Council Buddy that they are too  
193 overwhelmed and have little time to meet. They recommended that commissioners try and  
194 attend events where they are likely to have an opportunity to talk briefly with their Council  
195 Buddies at that time.

196  
197 **C. Council Liaison Report:**

198 Mayor Shepherd reported that City Council has passed over 30 different action issues in their  
199 work plan, and suggested that the commissioners review it. There are many opportunities for the  
200 HRC to participate; one such issue will be the public discussions regarding the Cubberley  
201 Community Center Lease.

202  
203 **D. Staff Liaison Report:**

204 Ms. van der Zwaag reported on the following:

- 205 • Reminder of the upcoming San Francisco HRC Conference on April 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. She has
- 206 some funding available to assist with registration fees for commissioners who want to attend.
- 207 • Announced that local HRC breakfast is scheduled on April 8<sup>th</sup> in Mountain View.

208  
209  
210 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

211 None

212  
213 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

- 214 • Election of New Chair and Vice Chair
- 215 • Micro-Enterprise Update by CPA Planning Dept.
- 216 • Appointment of New Palo Alto Mediation Program Mediators
- 217 • Continued Housing Learning Series

218  
219 **ADJOURNMENT**

220 The meeting adjourned at 9:26pm.