



**HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION**

**Thursday, August 14, 2014**

Council Conference Room

Palo Alto Civic Center

250 Hamilton Avenue

7:00 PM

REGULAR MEETING

**ROLL CALL:**

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

**Staff:** Minka van der Zwaag, Mary Constantino

**ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

NONE

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Commissioner Stone made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 12, 2014 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Chen. AYES: Unanimous Absent: Morin, Savage, Bacchetti

Commissioner Stone made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 13, 2014 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Alhassani. AYES: Unanimous Absent: Morin, Savage, Bacchetti

Commissioner Stone made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2014 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Alhassani. AYES: Unanimous Absent: Morin, Savage, Bacchetti

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

None

**BUSINESS**

**1. Update on the Microenterprise Assistance Program (MAP)**

Chair O’Nan introduced City Staff Consuelo Hernandez. Consuelo stated that she wanted to provide the Commission with an update on the Microenterprise Assistance Program. The Commission had authorized an additional \$150,000 towards a second year of funding for the MAP Program through the Community Development Block (CDBG) grant funding. Hernandez provided a report that will be presented to the Finance Commission next week but because of changing schedules staff did not have time to get feedback from HRC but wanted to present the

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42 information. Hernandez met with community partners and identified new structural items that  
43 can be added to the program to make it more effective. Hernandez stated that they are hoping  
44 that if the Council allows the program to continue with the current funding that the program can  
45 identify 25 people to receive micro grants this year. Hernandez referred to page three of the  
46 report which includes a bullet list of what they are hoping will be approved for next year. Chair  
47 O’Nan asked how she is going to ramp up to potentially 25 grantees from the current six.  
48 Hernandez stated that they are averaging about \$6,800 per grantee, but they became aware that  
49 they needed to provide general liability insurance for each grantee which delayed the execution  
50 of the agreements for about 1.5 months. Hernandez explained that they had to add the cost of  
51 insurance and then \$170,000 was needed for direct grants. All the funding comes from CDBG  
52 and the program is for one year. Chair O’Nan asked why the first grant amounts varied widely,  
53 is that the nature of the different businesses and are you planning on standardizing the limits?  
54 Hernandez explained that some people wanted grants for under \$1,000 and with the amount of  
55 work that staff provides and the fact the insurance is averaging \$500-600 per grantees it wasn’t  
56 worth the level of work. Staff wanted the range because it gives the opportunity to better  
57 evaluate the program and the effectiveness. Hernandez stated that the Finance Committee can  
58 give staff the authorization to continue with the program as presented or they can give staff the  
59 recommendation to take it to full Council. Hernandez stated that the second year will be a pilot  
60 program because they are taking a new approach and introducing a new structure and eventually  
61 will turn the program over to the community and not have staff administer it. Chair O’Nan  
62 inquired where the six grantees are now and have they started their businesses? Hernandez  
63 replied that a few of the grantees have started their businesses but several are waiting because  
64 they are receiving Seed Grants. Hernandez stated that they are going to issue three  
65 reimbursement requests next week. Their goal is to identify 25 eligible candidates. There are no  
66 applicants from the Buena Vista Motor Home Park. The first year their outreach concentrated  
67 on their partnerships with Downtown Streets Team and Palo Alto Housing Corporation, but the  
68 second year they plan on expanding their outreach Citywide and look to other non-profit  
69 agencies in the City as well as look at the agencies that did not get funded the first year.

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71  
72 **2. Report from the HRC Subcommittee regarding their recommendations for additional**  
73 **FY15 Human Services Resource Allocation Process (HSRAP) Funding. – Chair O’Nan**

74 Chair O’Nan stated that this year something very unprecedented happened in that Council  
75 awarded the HRC an additional \$100,000 in the second year of the HSRAP cycle. Some of that  
76 money is to be distributed as a pro rata increase so all of the agencies will receive an increase  
77 and for the remaining \$68,300 the Council asked the HRC to recommend funding allocations.  
78 The HRC formed a sub-committee to address the Council’s request and came up with  
79 recommendations to the HRC. The application process was a stream lined request for proposals.  
80 Because the funding is for FY15 the committee had to evaluate the request to see what could be  
81 done within the fiscal year and not depend on future funding. There were 10 applicants. The  
82 sub-committee evaluated the 10 applications and felt they were all interesting and very worthy.

83  
84 Adolescent Counseling Services is a long time HSRAP grantee. They requested money to fund  
85 internships and a staff position. They are serving about 50% more students in the Palo Alto  
86 Unified School. The sub-committee decided to recommend an award of \$3,000 to fund one of  
87 their internships.

88  
89 Community Technology Alliance is the organization that is managing Tech SCC the HMIS  
90 Compliant software required by the federal government in order for Santa Clara County to

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91 receive HUD funding. Palo Alto's share of the IT infrastructure upgrade is \$2,162.00 which will  
92 enable the whole county to receive millions of dollars from HUD funding. Therefore, the sub-  
93 committee decided to fund their request.

94  
95 Dreamcatchers is a new agency helping middle school students close the achievement gap in  
96 Palo Alto. They requested money for several different programs but the amount was too large  
97 for this small incremental funding allocation. Therefore the sub-committee recommended  
98 funding one of their programs in the amount of \$4,400.00 to teach teens science, technology  
99 engineering and mathematics and that is an important focus area for the teenagers.

100  
101 InnVision Shelter Network has been struggling with a number of their programs but particularly  
102 their food-based programs. They requested \$20,000 for their Breaking Bread Program which  
103 was seven days a week but has been cut back to five. The subcommittee did not want the  
104 program cut back any further so they recommended \$20,000 to help shore up the program.

105  
106 Mayview Health Center is another long time grantee. They requested money, \$11,334.00, to  
107 purchase an asset which is two medical equipment monitors and displays. The sub-committee  
108 felt that Mayview Clinic is in real need of the infrastructure upgrade.

109  
110 Momentum for Mental Health requested that the City fund their Field Specialist, which the sub-  
111 committee felt was a worthwhile request and an increase of \$5,648 was recommended.

112  
113 Palo Alto Housing Corporation submitted a request for funding for a very innovative food  
114 program to help very low income seniors get to the La Comida lunch program by leasing a van  
115 from a third agency, Avenidas. The subcommittee liked the collaboration. The cost for the  
116 program is \$8,268.00 and sub-committee decided to recommend funding this program.

117  
118 Senior Adults Legal Assistance cannot charge for their fees which is a legal requirement with the  
119 County and they have a backlog of elders who are at risk of being abused financially and  
120 physically. The funding requested would enable them to see more clients. The sub-committee  
121 recommended funding at \$4,500.00.

122  
123 Vista is a new agency to HSRAP. They requested money to increase service levels for seniors  
124 suffering from visual impairment to help live them independently. The sub-committee  
125 recommended \$5,500 in funding.

126  
127 Youth Community Service reported that they are switching their staffing model to something  
128 that will be more cost effective. The sub-committee recommended funding half of their request  
129 (\$3,568.00) to pay for a part time staff to do youth programing more effectively.

130  
131 With the recommended spread the sub-committee hoped that every agency will receive a  
132 significant amount of money with which they can do something meaningful by continuing a  
133 program or starting a program. The HRC plans to share the results of their efforts with Council to  
134 demonstrate the impact of the increased funding with the hopes of continued increased funding  
135 in future HSRAP cycles. It is difficult to quantify how human services are delivered and what  
136 kind of outcomes they have. Chair O'Nan stated that she is very confident that the HSRAP  
137 agencies will work with the HRC to provide the information to Council and the community so  
138 that they can see what types of good things can be done with these small grants. That was the  
139 thinking of the sub-committee's decision making. Serving on the subcommittee was Chair

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140 O’Nan and Commissioners Alhassani and Morin, who is not present tonight. Chair O’Nan asked  
141 her fellow Commissioners if they had any questions.

142

143 Commissioner Stone asked “What was the process in determining who got what and what share.  
144 There is a large discrepancy between InnVision and other services. How did you make those  
145 decisions?” Chair O’Nan replied, “The needs of the agencies are very different. In our view  
146 hunger and nutrition were a very key priority. In a community that is affluent, having people,  
147 like low income seniors, chronically sick people, and homeless, going hungry is a very  
148 disturbing image so we put priority on food base programs. Because the money may not be  
149 renewable, we wanted programs and projects that could be completed and do some good for the  
150 community. All of the requests were worthy. We had to operate as if the funding is a one-time  
151 allocation.”

152

153 Commissioner Chen asked, “What type of work are they doing and how can they achieve?”  
154 Chair O’Nan replied, “Some of the agencies are doing good work and would like to do more.  
155 For instance, SALA will be doing the same work but adding more clients and Adolescent  
156 Counseling Service is seeing more teens. The applicants had new and innovative ideas that were  
157 creative and wanted to see what the agencies could do collaborating with each other or reaching  
158 a new demographic within the City.”

159

160 Commissioner Stone inquired, “Adolescent Counseling Service (ACS) wanted to fund an  
161 additional counselor for one of the Palo Alto high schools. For instance, if they added \$6,000  
162 would there be a counselor at both high schools?” Chair O’Nan replied, “Adolescent Counseling  
163 Service did request two counselors but that grant would have been quite large and that was a  
164 difficult tradeoff in the decision making process. ACS received the highest pro rata increase and  
165 HSRAP cannot fund the entire program.

166

167 Commissioner Alhassani commented that he echoed Chair O’Nan comments. What made it  
168 difficult is that you see rising needs in many areas. Chair O’Nan stated that the Human Relations  
169 Commission’s key tasks are to ensure that access to community resources such as food, nutrition,  
170 education, and medicine; which is a really broad charter. It is difficult for the HRC to fulfill that  
171 charter. The additional funding will give the agencies a lift and allow them to do a little more.

172

173 Commissioner Stone inquired as to whether the agencies knew their pro rata increase amount  
174 when they submitted their requests. Chair O’Nan replied, “They knew about the pro rata  
175 distribution but they did not know the amounts.”

176

177 Chair O’Nan invited the first speaker to present.

178

179 Philip Dah, InnVision Shelter Network (IVSN)

180 Mr. Dah thanked the Commission for all of their hard work. Dah reported that InnVision knows  
181 the hunger issues are very vital to the community. Breaking Bread programs has been cut by two  
182 days. They are partnering with Loaves and Fishes providing food for the host congregations so  
183 the burden for supplying the food will go away, while still maintaining the same volunteers.  
184 This program model is sustainable. He gave an update on services at the Opportunity Center.  
185 Case managers are overwhelmed, but they are plugging away and making sure clients are having  
186 their needs met and moving some clients into permanent supportive housing. Supervisor  
187 Simitian has proposed a satellite Social Security office at the Opportunity Center for one or two  
188 days a week. Another pilot program is working with the Second Harvest Food Bank to have a

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189 satellite office at the Opportunity Center InnVision Shelter Network has made tremendous  
190 steps.

191  
192 Heiri Schuppisser, Momentum Mental Health.

193 Mr. Schuppisser thanked the Commission for the extra recommended funding. Momentum  
194 networks with many agencies. Mr. Schuppisser discussed how he assesses his clients' needs and  
195 determines what agency would help meet their needs. It is all about the community and working  
196 together. He stated that food is very important but housing is the main issue. He believes  
197 landlords need to be more educated. There is less housing in Palo Alto because there were 160  
198 single room occupancy units that were closed in Palo Alto. It is difficult to find housing in Palo  
199 Alto.

200  
201 Michelle **Schroeder**, Senior Adults Legal Assistance (SALA)

202 Ms. Schroeder thanked the Commission for allowing her to speak. Ms. Schroeder explained that  
203 SALA provides free legal services to seniors in Palo Alto and throughout the county. SALA's  
204 target clients are low income or at risk of abuse or lose of independence. They provide services  
205 by appointment at Avenidas, Stevenson House or by home or telephone visits. They continue to  
206 see many seniors in crisis. The demand far exceeds what they are able to provide. Ms.  
207 Schroeder was very grateful for the recommendation for the additional funding and said that the  
208 funding will allow them to expand their services and add an additional appointment day at  
209 Avenidas every month. It will increase their capacity to provide more intensive levels for our  
210 most needy of clients.

211  
212 Barbara Sih Klausner, Dreamcatchers

213 Ms. Klausner stated that she is the new Executive Director with Dreamcatchers. Ms. Klausner  
214 stated that Dreamcatchers is a young organization and is populated with young people. They  
215 have Stanford under grads who are volunteers as afterschool tutors. Over 75 percent of our  
216 students they serve are from Palo Alto. For the last six years, Dreamcatchers has had only one  
217 full time employee, but they just hired a new second person. Dreamcatchers has a goal to bring  
218 in some businesses (local professionals) and more high school students. Ms. Klausner thanked  
219 the HRC for the opportunity to request additional funding, and she also wanted to take this  
220 opportunity to let the Commission know that the money is important but the aspect of  
221 community involvement is as well. She doesn't have great connection in the business  
222 community but wants to reach out and make connections with professionals in Palo Alto.

223  
224 Sharon Hudson, Vista Center for the Blind or Visually Impaired

225 Ms. Hudson stated that she is very appreciative of the Human Relations Commission. Vista is a  
226 new organization to HSRAP in 2014 but has been around for 78 years. Ms. Hudson stated that it  
227 is a boost being supported by Vista's home town. The Vista Center works with all age groups  
228 for people who are losing or have lost their vision to help them maintain their independence.  
229 The grant is for seniors and 80 percent of their clients are over the age of 60 and 70 percent of  
230 our clients are over the age years of 80. When seniors lose their vision and do not have the  
231 ability to read, drive or simple things as pour a cup of coffee or make a meal, it makes a big  
232 difference to learn the tasks which allows them to stay in their own home.

233  
234 Leif Erickson, Youth Community Service (YCS)

235 Mr. Erickson thanked the Commission for the recommendation to increase the grant with Youth  
236 Community Service. Youth Community Service worked with over 1,200 students in service  
237 learning. Youth Community Service is one of the HSRAP grantees who have had a significant

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238 deficit for their Palo Alto programs and they went back to Palo Alto Unified School District to  
239 negotiate a fee-based agreement to help bring down the deficit. Their full time person left the  
240 position and the position was divided into two part-time positions. The recommendation is to  
241 support a portion of the position working with deepening their programs with students. With  
242 youth ages 11-14 they will be working with peer lead campaigns that identifies identity safety  
243 issues, bullying, gender roles, where middle school age, whether at school or in the community,  
244 feel disrespected and have a lack of confidence. At the high schools, YCS has student peer  
245 leadership activities to address issues with decisions about health and behavior.

246  
247 Chair O’Nan asked if the Commissioners had any comments or questions regarding the  
248 recommended allocations. Commissioner Stone stated that the Commissioners did a great job by  
249 the fact that we had a majority of the agencies here to talk to us and the agencies are very  
250 thankful. Commissioner Chen stated that she was happy with the recommendations.

251  
252 **Commissioner Stone made a motion to approve the recommendation from the**  
253 **subcommittee and Commissioner Chen seconded the motion. Ayes: Unanimous (4-0)**  
254

255 Ms. van der Zwaag stated that she will keep the Commissioners and applicants apprised of the  
256 next step and what form it will go through the Council. Traditionally it has gone to Finance and  
257 then to Council but she is working with leadership in the City for the exact process.

258  
259 Chair O’Nan reminded the agencies that these are HRC recommendations but there may be some  
260 changes by Council.

### 261 262 263 **3. HRC Retreat planning –**

264  
265 Chair O’Nan explained that often the HRC Retreat is in August but since there was a HRC  
266 meeting in August the Retreat will be in September. The following are items of interest that may  
267 be included on the retreat agenda:

- 268
- 269 • Revisit projects from last year
- 270 • Plan for Study Session with Council
- 271

272 The following are areas of focus suggested to be considered for the HRC’s work plan for the  
273 coming year.

- 274
- 275 • Homeless Veterans
- 276 • Immigration situation regarding children from South America
- 277 • Chinese Integration/Outreach to Asian community
- 278 • Mental health/depression -- Help support PSN
- 279 • Civility Round Tables
- 280 • HRC more visible in the community.
- 281

282 Ms. van der Zwaag asked the Commissioners if they would like the Retreat facilitated. Chair  
283 O’Nan responded that the facilitator was helpful in the past, but she would rather have a  
284 discussion on activities without a facilitator. Staff was requested to poll the commissioners for a  
285 retreat date.

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The September 11, 2014 Human Relations Commission meeting is cancelled.

#### **4. Reports from Officials:**

##### **A. Commissioners Report:**

Chair O’Nan stated that she viewed some amazing films developed by the Palo Alto Housing Corporation for low income youth called Digital Leaders. The films were shown at the Palo Alto Media Center. The students work for six weeks and then showed their films in August. The films were amazing. One film made by two immigrants from Nigeria was very moving; it was about class differences in Palo Alto. Chair O’Nan wants to have the filmmakers show their film to the HRC.

Commissioner Chen had nine Chinese immigrants to her home to talk about involvement within the City. They know so little on how the City operates, and they need to be involved in community.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

None

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

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.