



CITY OF  
**PALO  
ALTO**

## HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

**Thursday, March 10, 2016**

Community Meeting Room

Palo Alto Civic Center

250 Hamilton Avenue

7:00 PM

REGULAR MEETING

### **ROLL CALL:**

**Commissioners Present:** Alhassani, Chen, Gordon Gray, O’Nan, Savage, Stinger

**Absent:** Stone

Council Liaison: Council Member Wolbach

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

### **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

Mr. David Carnahan, Deputy City Clerk addressed the HRC regarding the Boards and Commissions recruitment. The voice of the community is best represented through the HRC with a good link into the community. The city is currently looking to fill two terms on the Human Relations Commission, two terms on the Library Advisory Commission, and four terms on the Utility Advisory Commission. The city encourages folks to spread the word throughout the community. The application deadline is on March 18 at 5 p.m. The requirement for the Human Relations Commission is that the person needs to be a Palo Alto resident, for the Library Advisory Commission you must be a Palo Alto resident and have demonstrated an interest in public libraries and for the Utilities Advisory Commission each Commissioner must be either a utilities customer or a representative of a utilities customer and six Commissioners must be Palo Alto residents. The Commissions are a wonderful way to make Palo Alto a better place and give back to the Community.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**Commissioner Gordon Gray made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2016 Human Relations Commission (HRC) meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stinger. AYES: Unanimous.**

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

#### **V. BUSINESS**

##### **1. Speaker series “An Immigrant Experience in Palo Alto”**

Commissioner Chen stated that the HRC is honored to have Samina Sundas who is a member of the Santa Clara County Human Relations Commission and founder of American Muslim Voice which is a grassroots organization to help foster friendship among all Americans and bridge the gap of all communities. Ms. Sundas has received multiple awards including a Jefferson award for making a difference in public service

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Commissioner Gordon Gray asked Ms. Sundas to provide information about American Muslim Voice. Ms. Sundas replied that the American Muslim Voice was founded in July 2003 after September 11 the lives of Muslims drastically changed and her life personally changed. At the time of the 9/11 attack she was already a national coordinator for an organization assisting citizens to become full citizens by helping them run for public offices from school board to Congress. The work was very much needed and appreciated and was doing well but 9/11 changed everything. In the election of 2000 there were 700 residents who ran for public office and in the election 2013 there were 70 residents who ran for public office so this community that was law abiding and quiet and almost hidden became very public and were labeled as terrorists.

Ms. Sundas added that personally being a single mom running my family childcare she did not know about the attacks, and she went to Costco, and she entered people were standing around the television monitors so she wanted to see what was happening and was shocked seeing the towers coming down. It was painful as a human being but did not realize my tears and out of the circle of people one person got close to me and yelled “why are you crying. “ Ms. Sundas looked around to see if she had any support but no one said anything. The gentleman was so close to her it was uncomfortable. She replied that she had not figured out how not to care about human beings, and walked away. At that moment she realized that the country that she adopted as her home and had been serving since she arrived had changed. She had been pushed out being an American. She believed that if Americans really knew who Muslims were and about Islam everything would change. She is happy to say that was true fact and things have changed because she is now able to have eye contact shared with her but it has been a slow process because it is one person at a time because she was not going to let Osama Ben Laden be a representative of her beautiful religion so that is how she started American Muslim Voice.

Commissioner Chen asked about her life before 9/11 and asked that she tell the Commission about her background. Ms. Sundas stated that she was pregnant when her husband working on his Masters at the University of Santa Barbara, and she would join her husband from Pakistan once her baby was born so she came to America as a young mom with a 1.5 year old daughter. Her first experience with the United States Consulate was very negative because when she went to get her r visa, they were denied. It took 1 year and 3 months to get the visa and that was with the assistance of a professor who wrote a letter stating that her husband wanted to obtain his Ph.D. but would not stay in America unless his wife and child would be allowed into the states. The American Consulate responded that her presence in Pakistan was a guarantee that her husband would return and said so if she left her baby she could get a visa. The first impression of the nation was very negative. She learned very early that government and people are very “different species.”

Commissioner Chen asked when she moved to Palo Alto. Ms. Sundas replied that her husband began his studies for his Ph.D. at Stanford in September 1982 and they rented a place in Palo Alto until they were divorced in 1985.

Commissioner Chen asked what the positive experiences that she has had living in Palo Alto. Ms. Sundas replied that there are many positive experiences and her fellow Americans are very compassionate, open minded and charitable as Muslim’s are so based on that fact is why she needs to put the two groups together because the values that are shared are so much in

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common. Everywhere she goes there are positive experiences when she wanted to volunteer people welcomed the culture, the country and religion.

Commissioner Chen asked if there were challenges she has faced in Palo Alto. Ms. Sundas replied that the challenges that she had in Palo Alto were in school because her children are very smart and sometimes people just saw their names and what they looked like and really did not acknowledge them for their creative credence. Ms. Sundas stated that if she had not focused on building her children's confidence they would have had very serious problems. When her son moved from elementary school to junior high, his teacher was telling her that her son was "over confident" so she asked her how she came to this conclusion, and the teacher replied that give the students tests where they value themselves on their strengths and weaknesses and her son gave himself A's and A+'s in every subject with the exception of handwriting where he gave himself a C-. Ms. Sundas stated that she smiled and said to the teacher that she did not realize the child was being truthful. She was a single mom so her focus is not with their studies because they will manage their studies, but her focus is making sure her children are confident human beings. The teacher dropped everything and replied "you are a single mom; your son does not show any signs of coming from a broken home." Ms. Sundas replied "I am a single mom but I did not say my home is broken" and that is why for the past eight years she has been presenting to four classes per year training for future teachers on how to be the best teachers for minorities. Experiences like that can be painful when you are in a foreign land and have no support and thousands of miles from your family but by loving human beings she have created a family of her own. Some people, especially ones who are well off, need to keep others at an arms distance and it is not just with one group people. People like to sit with people who look like them and the whole idea that God created us differently in Quran 49.13 it is stated *O mankind we have created you from a single pair and divided you into tribes and nations so that you may get to know each other not to despise each other*. How can we make Palo Alto a city where we build friendships across culture, religious boundaries and reach out to each other?

Ms. Sundas stated that she spoke to former Mayor Shepherd regarding a vision in her mind to have tables with white tablecloths and sit the whole city around and talk about issues that are important to them and each table could come and discuss how can we make this a compassionate city because we have a beautiful city but we do not have the most companionate city.

Commissioner Chen asked Ms. Sundas how the City of Palo Alto can improve. Ms. Sundas replied that is why she founded American Muslim Voice and invite those attending to come and attend their events to share who you are and have organic conversations without an agenda. The events include culture presentation with displays on what kind of clothes and shoes that are worn and these are the kind of things that bring you closer by understanding each other. In America today we are creating boxes for each group but it is important to reach out and build friendships and not talk about alliances and coalitions. Ms. Sundas added that she does not use the word hate except to talk about the word tolerance because it is said that people should tolerate each other we are human beings we are supposed to love and cherish and respect each other for who we are. It does not mean we have to agree with each other.

Commissioner Savage stated that she went to an American Muslim Voice event at Ms. Sundas' home and it was a very memorable experience and she was amazed by the number of people

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going in and out of her home with every room of your house open and it was a very unique experience. Ms. Sundas replied that before one of her open houses she was threatened by someone on the telephone so she told her children if anyone knocks on the door do not open it or if anyone asks anything do not reply. A friend said to cancel the open house but she replied if someone wants to arrest her for cooking good homemade food, feeding people and asking people to be friends with each other than she was happy to go to any prison. She said she was not going to be afraid. When people do not know something it makes us fearful and hateful and sadly our politicians are not thinking about our next generation or America.

Chair O’Nan stated that the HRC and the city need to improve their outreach to minority colleagues and fellow residents because some communities become isolated and do not get engaged with the wider community. She stated that Ms. Sundas is an example of someone who builds bridges into the community and asked if there are best practices or guideless to build the bridges? Ms. Sundas replied that people think that women who are wearing scarves are uneducated, close minded or repressed. If you have that on your mind and looking at that lens the other person is not going to be open. It is about our body language too and not just what comes out of the mouth. Ms. Sundas explained that not to be afraid of these women because they are highly educated and have just decided to dress modestly. The Quran states to dress modestly. When a person sees someone approaching who is different put aside any predetermined ideas and approach with a smile and a simple conversation. Ms. Sundas states that the city’s Know your Neighbors grant is a wonderful idea and putting all of the grantees together to have a citywide event with all of the communities come on the same day so that people unite to come out on this day. Actually have one day “Know Your Neighbor Day” to get to know your neighbor..

## **2. Recommendations to Finance Committee for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding for Fiscal Year 2017**

Eloiza Murillo-Garcia, Senior Planner stated that the purpose of her presentation is to provide a brief overview of the FY2016-17 CDBG allocation process. The City of Palo Alto receives annual funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as an entitlement city under the Community Development Block Grant. The principle federal program provides grants to improve physical, economic and social conditions primarily for persons of low or moderate income and activities funded through CDBG must be one of three objectives:

- a. Benefit low and very low income persons;
- b. Aid in prevention or elimination of slums or blight; and
- c. Meet other community needs that are particularly urgent for the low income community

All of the activities funded by the city meet the first objective. On February 16, 2016 HUD notified the city of their FY2016-17 CDBG entitlement allocation, which was \$431,253, a slight decrease over the FY2015-16 grant so the current balance is \$442,460 a decrease of \$1,207. The total estimated funding available in FY2016-17 is \$754,418 which consists of the entitlement grant and an estimated \$100,000 in program income and approximately \$213,000 in prior year resources.

The CDBG program has five funding categories in which to allocate funds: Public Services, Planning and Administration, Economic Development, and Housing and Public Facilities. According to federal regulations, Public Service has a maximum spending of 15% cap on the

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entitlement grant and 15% of actual program income received during the previous fiscal year so therefore the maximum that can be allocated for Public Services for FY2016-17 is \$76,619. Planning & Administration, which includes the administrative costs associated with managing the CDBG program, has a 20% spending cap placed on the entitlement grant and projected program income from the following fiscal year, therefore, the maximum that can be allocated for Planning and Administration in FY2016-17 is \$108,000. There is no cap on the other three categories: Economic Development, Housing and Public Facilities.

The CDBG program is largely based on a five-year strategic plan of action, referred to as a Consolidated Plan, to address the priority housing and community development needs and to set goals for attaining identified objectives. The Draft FY2015-20 Consolidated Plan was submitted to Council May, 2015. The primary objectives include the preservation of existing affordable housing units, supporting activities to end homelessness, providing community services to special needs populations, strengthening neighborhoods, promoting a fair housing choice, and expanding economic opportunities for low income households. The City needs to prepare a one-year action plan outlining the activities that will implement the strategies identified in the Consolidated Plan.

Currently, the CDBG program operates under a two-year funding request cycle and FY2016-17 is the second year. The HRC Selection Committee consisting of Commissioners Gordon Gray, Savage, and Stinger met on February 25, 2016 and made funding recommendations, which are provided as Attachment C of the staff memo. Ms. Murillo-Garcia stated that she would like to take the opportunity to thank the Commissioners for their support and making the funding recommendations.

Ms. Murrillo-Garcia added that in terms of the recommendations for Public Services there was approximately an 8 percent reduction of funds available over the current fiscal year so the funding needed to be reduced by 8 percent and Planning and Administration reduced City administration and Project Sentinel by 6 percent because there was 6 percent less available for the next fiscal year. The staff recommendation is to have a public hearing and take public comment and then the approved HRC Selection Committee recommendations for FY2016-17 will go to the Finance Committee.

Chair O’Nan stated that she wanted to clarify that there was an 8 percent reduction in Public Services category and a 6 percent reduction in Planning and Administration but the other two categories did not have a reduction. Ms. Garcia-Murillo stated that the reason is that there is a set cap for Public Services at \$76,000. Last year the City had \$82,000 to allocate because we had more program income so there were more funds to allocate. The cap last year in Planning and Administration \$108,000 and the city had \$115,000, and the other categories do not have a cap. Chair O’Nan asked why the Micro Enterprise Program (MAP) program was not listed. Ms. Murillo-Garcia replied that due to staffing shortages in the Planning Department they do not have the capacity to operate the program so the City has not been able to use the \$150,000 that was allocated in FY2013. The City recommends reallocating the funds in this process and next year during the two-year CDBG process look for a third party administrator to run the program because the City is still interested in providing the program but does not have the staffing capacity right now.

Peter Villareal, Director of Housing Development from Mid-Peninsula Housing Development,

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stated that he addressed the Commission last year regarding Palo Alto Gardens, which is an affordable housing project located off of San Antonio Road. Mid-Peninsula Housing Development is requesting additional funding. Last year they had a request for \$500,000, but unfortunately the bids came out higher than anticipated so working with City staff they figured how to split the Scope of Work to work with the funds that were awarded (\$392,000) to focus on accessibility and upgrades for the seniors who live at the property and address the water savings. Mr. Villareal stated that he is requesting an additional \$300,000 and the staff recommendation is \$278,825, even though they welcome any funding. Mid-Peninsula Housing focusses on trying to keep housing affordable for their residents and is trying to take on any public funding to help support the capitol repairs.

Chair O’Nan asked in the category of Housing Rehab if it is possible to divert any of the funds from the Micro Enterprise Program. Ms. Murillo-Garcia stated that the funds have already been diverted. The funding is part of the \$213,000 that was reallocated. The funding is limited to \$754,000 so the only way to provide more funding is to take away funding from another program. Commissioner Stinger stated that the subcommittee looked at the proposals very carefully and the Mid-Peninsula Housing Development packet was well prepared and the subcommittee understands the needs of the program but CDBG supports as many groups as it can and the program is a real service for people who really need it. Mr. Villareal stated he appreciates the Commission’s support because it is his mission to support preserving affordability in Silicon Valley. Commissioner Alhassani asked if the project addresses parking issues. Ms. Villareal replied that the project focused on the interiors first and then there is a component that focusses on improving the parking to make it more efficient by restriping and additional landscape. Commissioner Alhassani asked if there is space for additional units. Mr. Villareal stated that would be a long term goal to look at higher density but right now the project is focusing on preservation.

Ms. Wanda Hale, Program Manager for the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, stated that she wanted to thank the Commission for their support of the program over the years and for this opportunity share information about the program. The Ombudsman Program provides support for the most vulnerable people in the community; seniors and the disabled who live in long term care advocating for dignity in rights and healthcare in the facilities. The service is unduplicated because it is the only program that by law has 24-hour access to the residents in the facility and the facility is required to provide information so that people can contact the program. The program was created from the Older Americans Act so the services are free to the residents and families who need the services and program really relies on the cities which the program serves to who help support because the amount of money from the federal and state government is not enough to sustain the program. Living in long term care is not a first choice of anyone and many seniors and the disabled do not have any other option so it puts them in a very vulnerable position so the program provides unannounced visits to facilities to advocate for the residents. The program services the County of Santa Clara and services 13 cities and is made up of 43 volunteers and 3.5 staff who are all trained and licensed. The volunteers receive a nursing home to advocate for and staff receives about 100 nursing homes. The program serves approximately 12,000 people in Santa Clara County. In Palo Alto there are 4 nursing homes, 9 assisted living facilities and 1,000 people living in these residences in Palo Alto. In Palo Alto there is one staff assigned and a couple of volunteers. Even in Palo Alto there is still a lot of elder abuse and most of the work the program does is elder abuse - from financial, physical, verbal, and sexual abuse some of that is initiated by staff in facilities

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or family members because many families feel entitled to their loved one's home, but the home should be sold to take care of the parent and not allowing the sale of the home jeopardizes the senior by creating a wrongful eviction from the facility.

Ann Marquart from Project Sentinel stated that they are funded by the city to provide fair housing services, investigation and enforcement of civil rights laws and also tenant/landlord counseling and dispute resolution through Human Services Resource Allocation Program (HSRAP). Through the CDBG program Project Sentinel takes in complaints from residents in Palo Alto who believe they are experiencing housing discrimination or from a home sale or any facet of the home maintenance process. For example when a family of four submitted an application to rent a 1,100 square foot property that had a clause limiting the two bedrooms to four people with no more than two children so if the wife got pregnant they would have to vacate the home. Project Sentinel educated the owner of the law and the owner replied that if she had known the law, she would not have rented to them. Project Sentinel wrote a letter clarifying the law and again the owner was not going to withdraw the notice to the family so this is a case a lawsuit was drawn with a resolution. The family was able to remain in place with a promise from the owner she would not increase the rent and the rental agreement clause was changed so there was no longer any discrimination and \$4,000 was paid to the family of the children and mandatory trainings for the owner. The most frequent protected category that Project Sentinel receives is in regards to disability and service animals.

Philip Dah of LifeMoves formerly InnVision Shelter Network reported on some of the successes with the Opportunity Center and Hotel de Zink. Hotel de Zink is the only shelter in Palo Alto. The shelter sleeps 15 people all year around at different locations and last November worked with the county to increase the capacity to 20 which will end at the end of March, but in speaking with the County the program may be able to continue all year. The County has approved to provide the Opportunity Center a paid Housing Specialist with the sole purpose of looking for housing for clients who come to the Opportunity Center as well as homeless prevention. The people who live at the Opportunity Center have many reasons as to how they lost their previous home such as mental health and income. The Housing Specialist will make sure people keep their housing and stay in there. Since there are no housing opportunities in Palo Alto, a good relationship has been built with landlords in San Jose, Hayward and Oakland and as far as Sacramento to make sure their clients can afford their low income places. In January the County also provided \$60,000 to provide emergency rental and utility assistance. Prior to that grant the Opportunity Center only received \$16,000 for the year and was able to serve a very small number of people but now the contract is good for the next two years.

Chair O'Nan stated that it is very difficult when there are cuts, and she is trying to figure out how to allocate anymore fairly, but when the federal funds are decreased for this cycle there is nothing that can be done.

**Commissioner Savage made a motion to approve the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding for Fiscal Year 2016. Seconded by Commissioner Gordon Gray AYES: Unanimous**

### **3. Discussion on planning for the joint HRC/Council Study Session scheduled for May 9, 2016**

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Chair O’Nan stated that for the last few years the HRC has had a chance to spend time with Council and review the HRC’s accomplishments for the year and share some future goals and often receive input from Council on what they want the HRC to work on. The Study Session is a good interactive session and this year the Study Session is scheduled on May 9 at 6 p.m. Chair O’Nan stated now is the time to discuss what kinds of communications the HRC would like to have with Council. The HRC could have a recap of events from last year such as the Homeless Veterans Summit, Domestic Violence Forum, and the upcoming Implicit Bias Forum, and share plans for additional forum that the HRC is planning to do later in the year. She asked the other commissioners if there were issues they would like to raise.

Commissioner Gordon Gray asked if the HRC present something related to diversity and the invited speakers who have shared their experiences. Commissioner Chen stated that she agreed that it is an important topic explaining what the HRC has learned from the speaker series on the immigrant experience. Commissioner Stinger stated that she has been through the budgeting process twice, once as a subcommittee and once with the HRC, and would like to raise increasing awareness and share the experience of the funding cutbacks on social services and another topic of discussion is housing and the limitations on programs that might increase housing for seniors and low income residents. Ms. van der Zwaag added that could be under the section of the key areas that the HRC has an interest or welcome Council’s feedback or direction regarding looking into a certain item more at the Council’s direction. Commissioner Gordon Gray added that the domestic violence forum was bringing out in the open what are the hidden issues in the city and are not always on our radar seem to be the most prominent issues.

Ms. van der Zwaag added that the HRC may receive more direction when the Chair and Vice Chair meet with the Mayor and Vice Mayor. Commissioner Savage stated that the HRC wants to know what the Council knows specifically “What do they want to see the HRC to do or what the HRC is not doing. The HRC is open to listen to their direction.”

Chair O’Nan stated in the more distant past the HRC was a mystery to Council but for the last few years Council is more aware of the HRC’s role in the community and would like to use the Study Session to remind Council of events the HRC has attended or has sponsored so they are aware that the HRC is active in the community and when the HRC approaches Council with requests or information about the needs in the community that Council understands that the HRC speaks from experience. The HRC has to leave room to get feedback from Council so they have direction from us where the HRC should apply their energy.

Commissioner Alhassani stated that it is important to discuss the upcoming Landlord event.

Council Member Wolbach reported that Council will be discussing the shuttle on Monday night and even if the HRC does not go into depth it is important to make sure that Council be reminded how much broad and important work that the HRC did with the outreach of the shuttle survey because that is an important topic.

#### **4. Update and discussion on the topics of future HRC community forums**

Chair O’Nan stated that the HRC has had a great track record with successful events and it is time to start planning future events for summer, fall or before we get into the holiday season. Chair O’Nan stated that the HRC had brainstormed in the past and one issue that is extremely important in Palo Alto is mental health because there has been a lot of discussion on teen



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suicide but mental health is a stigmatized condition where people are unable or unwilling to admit when they need help. Depression is ramped including among the elderly and as a Commission we could raise awareness, bring resources together and make it safe for people to come out and talk and learn about this very sensitive topic because in the twenty-first century people will talk all about their hernia operation but will not say that they are depressed. Because bringing things in the open makes it easier for people and families to get help so she would like to propose to have a forum some time later this year. Chair O’Nan stated that she had a great discussion with Vice Chair Alia Malik of the Mountain View HRC and they discussed having a joint event between the two HRC’s on diversity and inclusion because Mountain and Palo Alto have a lot in common. The event would be a festival event to bring people together and share culture and music and getting to know each other.

Chair O’Nan stated it would be beneficial to plan a celebratory event in the fall. Chair O’Nan stated that World Music Day started as a city sponsored event and the scope was limited to music of all backgrounds and cultures.

## **5. Update on the planning of a community forum on “Being Different Together, Experiencing Palo Alto, Perception or Reality”**

Commissioner Stinger stated that all are invited on Wednesday, March 30 from 7-9 to a Community Forum Implicit Bias Being Different Together Experiencing Palo Alto Perception or Reality and all are very excited with a great key note speaker Dr. Joseph Brown from the Diversity and First Generation Office in Stanford. Dr. Brown will talk about new research on implicit bias and will be followed by a panel of civic, community, professional and spiritual leaders talking about successes, barriers, strategies and having a discussion on what can be done to make our city more welcoming. There will be comments from Council Members Wolbach and Berman. Commissioner Stinger added the planning process has been a learning experience and that it is important to have a good steering committee.

Ms. van der Zwaag stated that all Commissioners received an electronic copy of the flyer and asked that Commissioners share it in their social circles. The event will have a community participation project sharing some key learning, wishes or dreams for Palo Alto and what they commit to do personally from the key learnings and writing them on post it notes. Commissioner Stinger stated she was very excited to start the project because she was very motivated from the community forum that Pastor Kaloma Smith of AME Zion Church had last summer and some of the outreach that followed the forum. The forum will have speakers who are enthused, positive and energetic and have a lot to share and hope everyone will take advantage of their wisdom.

Commissioner Stinger stated that there is one area in which the Commissioners can help. The event is going to have a community participation piece and for that there will be easels in the room and as people leave they will be asked to put Post-it Notes about what moved them, what they hoped for themselves and what they hoped for the city. Commissioner Stinger asked the Commissioners to write they were moved by or touched by and then the notes will be placed on boards and shrink wrapped and displayed in the hallway between the lobby and Council Chambers of City Hall. Commissioner Gordon Gray added that some of the groups listed in the program would be having tables in the back of the room which include Peninsula Peace and Justice, Project Sentinel, Palo Alto Housing, and YMCA.

## **6. Update on the Palo Alto shuttle community meeting**

Chair O’Nan stated that there was a Palo Alto shuttle community meeting today at 3 p.m. and another one tonight which conflicted with the HRC meeting. She attended the 3pm meeting with staff and Commissioner Chen. Many of the attendees were seniors. The Transportation staff did a great job explaining the results of the shuttle survey and it revealed that the main reason why people do not ride the shuttle is that it does not go where people want the shuttle to go. The staff was very open to rerouting the shuttle and looking at the service gaps in the city. The results were very well explained by presenting maps where the shuttle currently goes, where the shuttle is proposed to go and where the top destinations are. There were questions and answers allowed and the attendees were able to make comments about the maps and stick the comment notes on the maps. The shuttle changes are still in the planning stages and when there were questions regarding the changes or additions it was said that everything is still on the table and nothing is set in stone. Chair O’Nan added that there were couple of things that she hoped would be included because she feels there is a northerly bias in the community because there was a lot of talk about getting people to the downtown but when we talked to seniors, especially living in south Palo Alto, they do not want to go to downtown but want to go south to San Antonio Shopping Center, Mountain View Senior Center and to Costco. These are folks with limited incomes who want to take care of their business and are not interested in go to Stanford Shopping Center. Chair O’Nan stated that she is still concerned that PAMF was not one of their target destinations but Stanford Health Care was because we heard from people who wanted to go to medical appointments in PAMF and especially seniors with limited abilities and the seniors would love to have a shuttle to reliability take them to their medical appointments. Ms. van der Zwaag stated that she was very impressed with the staff presentation and the variety of draft shuttle routes planned and the outreach they did for the meeting and they very kindly thanked the HRC for their extra outreach to seniors and especially English limited seniors. The HRC’s collaboration with the Transportation Division has been very positive on this effort. Ms. van der Zwaag stated that the shuttle changes will be going to Council on April 25 at 10:00 p.m.

## **VI. Reports from Officials – Chair O’Nan**

### **1. Commissioner Reports**

Commissioner Gordon Gray stated that she attended the Project Safety Net meeting regarding the Center for Disease Control’s (CDC) Epi-Aid Investigation Program, Epidemiologic Assistance, where the County Public Health Department made a request from the CDC to help them figure out the patterns and trends causing the epidemic of teen suicides in Palo Alto.. The California Department of Public Health requested the meeting on behalf of the Santa Clara Public Health Department. The meeting was held on February 25 and the Epi-Aid Officers, as part of their investigation, wanted to know what the city was doing in terms of the programs. The meeting included the City Manager, law enforcement from San Mateo County Sheriff’s Department, Caltrain Public Affairs, city staff, Project Safety Net (PSN) volunteers and Public Health Department staff and Council Members Wolbach and Berman. Law enforcement talked about track watch, the detection and deterrent system using artificial intelligence where they can see the behavior of people who could be suspect in terms of what they plan to do. Teen programs through the Recreation Department were discussed highlighting the many programs for teens to empower them such as Makers Programs which includes 1,000 high school and middle school children, a Teen Arts Council with 125 members with a Slam Poetry event, Palo Alto Youth Council, Palo Alto Strong

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with a \$100,000 grant, mindfulness yoga and writing. There is a free training schedule on Question Persuade Refer (QPR) on how do you talk to someone who are suicidal.

Commissioner Chen stated that she attended the event Institute for Local Governments Immigrant and Integration Convening for San Mateo and Santa Clara County Regional Leaders and there was data presentation on the contribution immigrants have made in California and the country. The data included statistics such as 51% of the population speak a language other than English in their home and a majority of school children in lower income households under five years old one have a parent who does not speak English. The presentation included ideas on how to coordinate between local government and schools in order to get more immigration inclusions in service networks and outreach strategies.

Commissioner Alhassani stated that he visited Youth Community Service, a HSRAP agency, in action at a Gunn Service Day which was facilitated by 200 students doing community service. Some students went to a food bank in East Palo Alto, some went to Gamble Gardens and some students went to a Half Moon Bay park. It was a great event Youth Community Service is celebrating a 25 year anniversary.

Chair O’Nan reported she and Commissioner Savage had the opportunity to serve on a Palo Alto Police promotional panel for Officers who are applying to become Agents or Agents applying to be Sergeants. During one part of the process the officers have to answer questions and a panel reviews them. The panel is composed partly of law enforcement from outside agencies with maybe one personnel from Palo Alto Police and one civilian. It was very impressive to see the qualifications of staff on the Palo Alto Police Department. It was good to have the opportunity to see how the police department works and how seriously the promotional process is. Commissioner Savage added that the promotional process is an annual event and the officers go through a rigorous process with a written exam and oral panel. The panel gave their recommendation to the Police Chief and it is ultimately his choice who to promote but he takes the panel’s suggestion into account.

## **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS (April 14, 2016)**

- a. Follow up on future community forums
- b. Debrief on Implicit Bias Forum
- c. Study Session
- d. Update on Landlord Event
- e. Speaker series on immigrant

## **ADJOURNMENT**

1. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm