



## HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Thursday, December 7, 2017

Community Meeting Room

Palo Alto Civic Center

250 Hamilton Avenue

7:00 PM

REGULAR MEETING

### ROLL CALL:

**Commissioners Present:** Alhassani, Chen, O’Nan, Lee, Stinger

**Absent:** Brahmbhatt

**Council Liaison:** Council Member Kou

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

### I. ROLL CALL

Chair Stinger: Good evening, welcome to our December HRC meeting, and we’ll begin with roll call.

### II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS

Chair Stinger: Any agenda changes, requests or deletions.

### III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Stinger: I see no speaker cards.

### IV. BUSINESS

#### **1. History of City response to vehicle dweller issue in Palo Alto including responses to recent increase of recreational vehicles along El Camino Real.**

Chair Stinger: We’ll begin with Item One History of the City response to vehicle dweller issue in Palo Alto including responses to the recent increase of recreational vehicles along El Camino Real. I really appreciate you coming, this is a really complex issue, there’s a lot of history and I appreciate you taking the time to brief us.

Mr. Rob de Geus, Deputy City Manager: Thank you, Chair Stinger, and good to see everyone. My name is Rob de Geus; I’m one of the Deputy City Managers. I’m joined here with Captain Zach Peron and I’d say first just thank the Commission for all the work that you do. I’m really impressed these last couple years, especially with the depth of breath of work of this Commission so we definitely appreciate that very much. Yes, as you said, we’re here to talk

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about the vehicle dweller issue, particularly the El Camino increase in RVs that we've seen this year. I'll say first that this is not a new issue. This has been around for a long time and it's not an issue just in Palo Alto. It's a regional issue and it really gets to the issue of housing and the lack of housing. You all know this being on the Commission, we have a crisis – a housing crisis that really needs every city in the region to understand the issue and coordinate a variety of responses to build additional housing. The city is very involved in the homeless services and investing in homeless services, as you know, through CDBG and HSRAP and our Housing Voucher Program and case management in partnership with the county, our street outreach and food and mental health and a variety of other services that we're engaged in. Our primary strategy is to try and work on homeless issues in partnership with regional and county efforts and not trying to go it alone as one city necessarily. Any case, specifically to the RVs parking along El Camino you can park along there and you can stay there for 72-hours in one location so that's allowed and people certainly take advantage of that law. What was not entirely clear to us is in the spring we saw this sudden increase in a short period of time over one hundred percent increase in RVs lining the streets. The police are not proactively enforcing the 72-hour parking rule. The Police Department is a very responsive department that has many, many issues and other issues that they need to focus on so it's really complaint driven so when there's a complaint, we respond. When we saw this large uptake in vehicles parking all along El Camino throughout the city, the complaints increased significantly as well and then that resulted in the city having to address it or do something about it. The city's approach at that time was first to meet internally with Community Services, with the Police Department, with the City Manager's Office and think through what we might do about it. Our first thought and this is what we did, is work with our homeless service providers and our contractors that work with the homeless in our community and meet all the people living in the vehicles and do a couple of things. Try to understand what their needs are, share local resources and regional resources to help those needs and also let them know that we are receiving complaints about those vehicles that are staying here for longer than a three-day period. We took several weeks in doing that and the next step was the Police Department began really an extended notification period to let folks know that they do need to move their vehicles every three days, Zach can talk a little bit more about that. That began in June I think or in early summer and then if you want to just walk through that extended notification period.

Mr. Zach Peron: Hello everyone, I'm Caption Zach Peron with the Police Department. I command our Field Services Division which encompasses patrol, traffic, and special operations. I'm also our department's spokesperson as it turns out. I think first it's important to understand what the state law actually says and this is a state law that applies throughout the entirety of California. It simply says that a vehicle, very loosely defined, cannot remain on a public roadway for more than 72-hours without moving. There is a City of Palo Alto Municipal Code that exactly mirrors that state law so when Mr. de Geus says that this is not a Palo Alto issue that is unique to our City, rather it's a regional one, it is, in fact, a state-wide issue. We could go to San Diego, we could go to Redding, and we could go to Lake Tahoe and speak with police agencies and Human Resources Commissions there that are probably having the same conversations that we're having here tonight. With that as the background of what the law says, what Mr. de Geus says is absolutely true. We've taken an approach to this, historically I've been here 20-years, and this has been an issue that occasionally pops up over the course of 20-years of my career. Our response has been similar the entire time which is we take a very hands-off approach. We are

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acutely aware of the state law but we're also very sensitive to the needs of some folks that may be in fact living out of their vehicles. So, the enforcement aspect of this law allows us to write a parking ticket, it also allows us to tow any vehicles that are in violation of the state law. Just the same as police in any other city would so the way that we've approached this historically and recently with this current case has been with enforcement, either a citation or tow, as an absolute last resort. That is consistent with how we have approached this issue for the entirety of my career. Back on the night of June 27<sup>th</sup> into the 28<sup>th</sup>, we created an informational flyer and our officers put those flyers on every vehicle or trailer that was parked on El Camino between Medical Foundation Way and Stanford Avenue. So, we didn't go further south than Stanford Avenue and that night there were informational flyers places on 103 vehicles or trailers. The recreational vehicles have been the ones that have received the most attention but it's not just RVs, it is passenger cars, it is vans, it is trailers, it's all sorts of vehicles as you guys are aware. We gave that a little bit more than a week and then we went out a second time on July 5<sup>th</sup> and we posted the same informational flyer in the same spot. We found that over the course of that week, now we only had 65 vehicles there down from 103 and of those 65; only 38 of them had received the first flyer a week prior. That informational flyer was not a threat to tow or sight but rather simply to educate people about the law because while we'd like to think that everyone is acutely familiar with the California Vehicle Code and the 40,000 laws that are in it. I probably know about 150 of them and only routinely enforce about 20, to be honest. We found that educating people about what the law actually says was the best course of action. So, hey, if your vehicle is not moved once every 72-hours, you are subject to tow or citation. Clearly, with those numbers, it moved everything in the right direction. Over the course of the next couple weeks, through July, we continued doing causal counts overnight when staffing allowed. The numbers were continuing to go down so on July 20<sup>th</sup> our patrol officers went out and posted a different informational flyer with a little bit more strongly worded language that included the word-final warning. These went to any of the vehicles that had received the initial informational twice so these were essentially folks that the vehicles themselves had received now three warnings that informed them about what the law was and the action that we could take. On August 1<sup>st</sup>, we went back and placed formal 72-hour tow notices on the vehicles that had received all three of these that were still there. There were only four of them that we posted that night, it could have been more, staffing only allowed us to post these tow warnings on four. This towing warning is on very bright red paper and it's very serious looking and no one would read this flyer and think that we weren't serious. It says that in no uncertain terms we've posted your vehicle for towing, we're going to come back in 72-hours, and if it has not been moved or driven we're going to cite it and/or tow it. Of the four vehicles that received those notices, when our officers returned 72-hours later, all four of them had been moved. So, again we're educating, we're following our procedures and we're gaining volunteer compliance from the vehicle owners which is our first priority. Over the course of the rest of August, I had directed the patrol, as time allows, go out and post those 72-hour notice forms on the vehicles that had received the three informational flyers. On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, we went out and there were four vehicles that had been clearly in violation of the 72-hour ordinance and we wrote parking tickets to those four vehicles. We also, that same night, posted new 72-hour tow warnings on ten other vehicles but when we returned 72-hours later, they had also been moved. Again, we got voluntary compliance so that was on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. Over the course of the rest of August and throughout September, we were monitoring the situation, didn't need to cite and/or tow and vehicles whatsoever but officers kept monitoring. On October 1<sup>st</sup> we went out and posted more formal 72-hour tow notices on six

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vehicles that had previously received all those informational flyers but they were back. So, to be clear, these were vehicles that hadn't been parked there the whole time but rather they'd moved and returned and we're giving them another warning and we're giving them that warning based on evidence that they hadn't moved. When I say that, I mean the vehicles are up on jacks or there were plants growing underneath the cars up through the concrete and of those six vehicles, three of them wound up moving right away. However, three of them we actually wound up towing and that was on October 25<sup>th</sup> so those three vehicles, two were actual RVs and the other was a trailer that didn't have a vehicle attached to it. Of those three, they are the only ones that we've towed the entire time. They were not occupied by anybody and for all intents and purposes; we believe that they were the true definition of abandoned vehicles, which is what this law was designed to take care of. To date, no one has even come in to claim the vehicles so I think the common perception of some in our community was that we were towing people homes. While that certainly could potentially be the case, it was not the case with those three vehicles that we've towed. Since then, since October 25<sup>th</sup>, we have not cited or towed any additional vehicles. We're continuing to monitor the situation and there are still some vehicles out there when you drive down El Camino, you'll see them. Simple because they are there does not mean they are in violation of a law. What you need to understand, which many people don't, is that you could park your RV on that stretch of El Camino and you could park it there for 71-hours and 55-minutes and then drive around a half mile is what the law requires. Come back and park it in exactly the same spot and stay for another 71-hour and 55-minutes and you're not violating the law. To somebody who's driving that route every day, they may see the vehicle, assume that it has not been driven, assume that it's in violation of state law and assume that the city is turning a blind eye or not taking enforcement action and that couldn't be further from the truth. I think that our approach has been varied measured, it has been enforcement as a last option, and it's been more of an educational approach that we've done. Which is again, not unique compared to what we've done over the past 20-years that I've been a police officer here. The other thing to notice that as this issue gained more significant media attention over the course of the summer as it called more attention to the issue that in turn generated a higher number of complaints from the public. We got an increased number of complaints from people who said well, I saw that news report about RVs at this location. Just so you know there's also an RV parked by my house which is down here. That, again, is not necessarily a violation of a law but instead we handled those complaints as we had forever which is our Parking Enforcement Community Service Officers respond to those complaints. We have an abandon vehicle hotline that people can call in and leave a complaint about a vehicle that they believe is abandoned. Our Parking Enforcement Community Service Officers post that 72-hour warning on it and the vast majority of time when they return 72-hours later, the vehicle has left. This is not an issue that is unique to El Camino; it's not an issue that's unique to Palo Alto or Santa Clara County. In fact, so far in 2017, we've had 1,199 abandoned vehicle complaints to our department, citywide from January 1<sup>st</sup> through November 30<sup>th</sup>. That's an uptick from 2016 but even in 2016 we had over a 1,000 of these complaints. To be very clear, those come in from all across Palo Alto and we have our personnel that go out and response to each and every one of those. Again, enforcement is really the last option so I think that's a quick summary of what our approach has been, especially along El Camino, since the summer and up to current.

Mr. de Geus: I think from there we're happy to answer any questions. That at least gives you an idea of how we handled this particular increase and how we are ongoing handling people living

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in vehicles challenge that we face.

Chair Stinger: Thank you very much. I think this is a hard issue and you really covered it with a lot of clarity and detail that was very helpful to me. I'll open it up for questions; do you want to start Mehdi, please?

Commissioner Alhassani: Thanks for much again for that report. You mentioned that there was something that happened that we saw one hundred percent increase. Do you know what caused that increase in RVs to be parked there?

Mr. de Geus: We really don't know that it happens over time. It comes in waves from time to time. I'm not aware of a reason that we can point to, we obviously noticed it and then we had to respond to it because of the complaints that started to come in.

Commissioner Alhassani: Then my – antidotally I live nearby, I've seen less RVs there. Even though it's actually relatively easy to work around the law to prove you're not abandoning your car but most folks have said I'm not going to deal with it and they moved away. Is that you're a sense of what happened?

Mr. Peron: It's hard to say for sure. It would be irresponsible of me to speculate but what I can say is people probably generally aren't excited to come back to their vehicle and find a note from the Police Department on their car so that could be the case. I mean they could just decide well, we're going to go somewhere else. Maybe they watched the media attention and saw the amount of community negativity about it that came out and just figured we'll go somewhere else. It may honestly just have been some people that were spending the summer in this area and were passing through town. We have no way of knowing for sure.

Commissioner Alhassani: How much is the first citation for violation?

Mr. Peron: I'd have to check. I think – I want to say it is \$46.

Commissioner Alhassani: Thanks so much.

Mr. Peron: Welcome.

Commissioner Lee: Thank you for coming. I'd be very interested to know what sort of observations you glean from some of your outreach to folks who are living along El Camino. Are there any particular trends or things that you overserved in meeting these folks?

Mr. de Geus: That's a good question. It's pretty sad situation really, I think what I am observing and I'm sure you are too. These people that are living in vehicles have jobs and they actually work but they cannot afford a home in this region. Some of them do have a home but it is 3-hours away and they are a service worker or a construction worker. Just for their quality of life issues, they need to stay in a vehicle during the week and go home over the weekend. Also, observing over time that it's getting worse, that there are more and more people are looking to this as an option which is a concern. I wish I had an answer, I do think it's something that we all

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need to be talking about together with both counties and additional counties and each city. That's really where we can make a transformative change if there's a truly collaborative effort among all cities to actually do something with respect to the housing.

Commissioner Lee: Given the reasons for folks that are living on El Camino as you observed, were you able to connect them with an appropriate agency or service that could assist with their particular situation that might allow them to not be parked along El Camino.

Mr. de Geus: Minka can probably help more than me. She's a little bit closer to it but the problem is they really need housing and that's very challenging to solve that problem. If they need food, if they need medical support or services, they need a place to store something that we are able to provide.

Ms. Minka van der Zwaag: I would concur with what Rob said. So, the outreach workers when we did the concerted effort early in the summer and I know the caseworkers that we have in Palo Alto do ongoing outreach to vehicle dwellers, not just along the El Camino Real, and offer their services. Most of the time people are aware of the services. Sometimes if they are passing through town, they do appreciate the local resources that they can access but most of the time it's the real housing need that is the linchpin and that is the most difficult. We have a rich service community, the food, clothing needs, employment help, mental health, physical health services, those we have a handle on addressing but the housing is a real need.

Commissioner Lee: It sounds like it's mainly a housing issue, not solvable by existing services. For the minority there are things that you might be able to address through the services, are you finding that outreach actually results in them connecting with them?

Ms. van de Zwaag: Sometimes they know the services and they say to the caseworker thank you very much, I know about them. We don't know if at a later time they decide to avail themselves to the services or if they don't. There are also folks out there that do decide to just live on an ongoing basis in their trailers and prefer that over living in a fixed dwelling unit. That's for reason of personal preference that might be some mental health concerns that might inhibit their ability to do so. It's a variety of issues and you know the case managers do their best to do the outreach, to gain the trust of the individuals, to actually have them open the door. A lot of them when we did the outreach didn't even want to open the door and they very clearly said outreach. It was very clear that they weren't PD or any other staff that they were purely there to provide information to them and they either weren't home or sometimes they felt like they were home but not opening the door. So, it's quite a complex issue and the manner in which there is a screening tool that the county is using and most social service providers are using to screen people for housing to get into the queue. At this point, a lot of that is you have to have a certain level of vulnerability and you have to have a certain score on that index to be considered for certain programs. That is also an issue that people may be willing to look for housing but due to the scarcity of housing available, a lot of them are going to people who are more vulnerable on the streets.

Commissioner Lee: I'd be interested in knowing what conversation the City Manager's Office has had with some of the other nearby cities and if you've seen any trends out of that or if there are any current plans that result from those conversations?

Mr. de Geus: There is an association of City Managers that meet monthly with all the cities within the county and this is a topic that's been discussed. I have not heard however a solution or any major effort to look for a solution. Now I could have missed something but I'm not at those meetings. Minka is also involved with some regional committees and other things and I'm not sure if you've heard anything Minka, at the county level of this particular issue?

Ms. van de Zwaag: Not cross-jurisdictional. I know the county with the increase of Measure A funds or just the increase of homeless service funds is really leaning into this cities. I am not as aware of more cross-jurisdictional work.

Commissioner Lee: I'm wondering if the uptick in our region Palo Alto can be attributed to folks migrating from another cities that perhaps had their own spike and started enforcing and if you've seen any trends like that by engaging with other cities?

Mr. de Geus: We have and that's exactly what happens. We see in Mountain View recently has been trying to be even a little more open to allowing RVs to be there overnight and now have become a magnet for more than they can handle. This speaks to the very problem of anyone city trying to, with good intentions, make a positive difference. It's not effective and it becomes unfair for that particular city. That's not a very satisfying answer but what remains is we need to have some regional leadership here where each city owns their part of the issue.

Chair Stinger: I'd like to turn to the resident's side for just a second. I thought I really knew this issue and I found your presentation was very informative. I wonder what the nature of the complaints is. Is it there ever a public health hazard? Is there some communication of the issue or of the facts that you present to us that would help the residents understand your strategy and be sympathetic and supportive of what you're doing?

Mr. Peron: I think the best way to answer that is whenever we get an inquiry from the public about an issue like this, we do our best to inform people about the issue like I've tried to do with you tonight. So, that's officers interacting with people if somebody has an email complaint about this or they provide a phone number, then we give them a callback and we'll explain the enforcement approach that we have. Which again, the first component of it and the primary component is education so there's hasn't been any widespread outreach that we've done to educate the public on this issue. I'm not sure what that would accomplish necessarily but it's handled on a case by case basis. As far as the public health side of things, we'll occasionally get complaints from people that the folks in the RVs are dumping human waste in a storm drain or something like that. In our experience, while that may happen sometimes, we've never issued somebody a citation for it because we're not observing that behavior ourselves. I know that the City's Public Works Department was going to do an education campaign with the folks that were along El Camino about storm drain options and where there were free dump sites for human waste in the area. I'd have to defer to Public Works for the answer to how that outreach went but there are a number of places regionally where people can go to dump their human waste from

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RVs. Most of them also have holding tanks where they're able to contain the waste and then move it and empty it in a legal manner.

Chair Stinger: I don't want to continue on that thread. I just thought that when I read the articles in the press, I don't see a counterbalancing statement of your effort and I think that's warranted.

Mr. Peron: Yes and thanks for bringing that up. I know that when this issue really came to life in the middle of the summer, I did a number of press interviews and so did the City Manager's Office. We sent a number of emails back and forth with the Palo Alto Weekly which ran a number of articles about it. We gave them the same information that I've shared here today so I personally had explained to all our local media outlets our approach and what they choose to publish or not publish, obviously, we have no control over. The city's viewpoint and the City's enforcement as a last option definitely was a message that we put out there to the press. You're welcome.

Commissioner Lee: Related to the Chair's question regarding sanitation and have you observed a public safety issue or potential issue as a result of so many vehicles being parked along El Camino or in other places around the city?

Mr. Peron: We haven't. Again, it's on a case by case basis so whereas there may be an occasional complaint from somebody about someone who may be in an RV or in a vehicle who may be creating some sort of a disturbance, those are few and far between. I mean if you consider that we had the height 103 vehicles back at the end of June, it would bear to reason that occasionally getting a call would be expected from that number. There's definitely no prime trend or anything that we've seen that's associated with this or other public safety hazards other than crime.

Commissioner Lee: I was wondering if I could also get some clarification, you had mentioned that the city has an ordinance that mirrors the state law. Is there a reason why the city would have that in place? Is it a requirement that city's adopt something similar to it as opposed to just letting the state law stand on its own?

Mr. Peron: That's a great question and I don't know the answer to it.

Commissioner Lee: Do you happen to know, does the city ordinance mirror perfectly the state law or it more or less restrictive? Well, it probably couldn't less restrictive but is it the same or more restrictive than...

Mr. Peron: It's the functional equivalent so it's 72-hours as an abandoned vehicle on a public roadway. It's quite honestly that simple as written in the law.

Commissioner Lee: If there was not a mirror city ordinance, what would be required of the Police Department under just the state equivalent?

Mr. Peron: The same expectation that the Municipal Code requires. The vast majority of time that our officers are out conducting traffic enforcement via a stop sign or a red light or speeding,

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they are enforcing state law so that is what we do. We also enforce the city law but if the city law didn't exist, we would still have the state law that somebody could point to and say this vehicle is in violation of that specific law. We would still take the same action that we take now with the Municipal Code.

Commissioner Lee: The city would still have discretion in terms of to what extent it enforces particular measure given the available resources available right?

Mr. Peron: Correct and in the grand scheme of the number of calls for service to which we respond, we're not responding police officers to these complaints. We're responding Parking Enforcement Community Services Officers who work during the day who monitor the abandon vehicle hotline. We often will tailor our patrol response procedures based on the types of complaints that we get and 1,200 complaints almost in the span of 11-months is not something that we turn a blind eye too in my opinion.

Commissioner Lee: Is there a way for you to quantify the cost in either money or staff time to actually go and provide these flyers and do the citations and do those patrols? Is there any way to quantify that cost?

Mr. Peron: Not that I could give you today but of our Parking Enforcement Community Services Officers, one of them full time is dedicated to this on a daily basis. So, whatever that cost would be for that one full-time Parking Enforcement CSO, you could roughly approximate that.

Commissioner Lee: So, there isn't an additional resource that you are deploying necessarily just to address this spike?

Mr. Peron: That's a good question so for the El Camino incident, we had patrol officers go out overnight and place all those flyers. So, you're talking staff time for a couple of hours sporadically over the course of several months but those are still officers that are on duty anyway. Midnight shift guys that are out working that would be responding to calls for service and they are just doing this as part of their normal duties. What we're trying to target the 72-hour violations, it's easiest for us to place flyers on vehicles in the middle of the night when we figure if people were just visiting and using our businesses, they would not be there at 2 o'clock in the morning.

Commissioner Lee: The reason I ask is that given there may not be many public safety or health and sanitation issues, I wonder if the community would want to dedicate X amount of resources to actually enforcing these laws as opposed to dedicating them to other enforcement actions. I'd be very interested in knowing how much time has been spent on it thus far in light of that.

Mr. Peron: I can get you the cost for salary and benefits for the one Parking Enforcement Community Service Officer.

Chair Stinger: I think we do have the ratio of complaints, the magnitude of the complaints that you've received so there's an indicator of community interest and concern. I think you have given us a scope of how you handle it. I think, if there are no other questions, I would really like

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to thank you. I'm sitting here thinking I wish there was some just beautiful ending we could have to say and now we have a work plan going forward but I'm sorry, please, Council Member.

Council Member Kou: Very quickly Rob, what other cities have a RV plan for RV dwellers? Santa Monica? What other cities or counties do you know of that might have something already in place?

Mr. de Geus: I know Santa Barbara has a program...

Council Member Kou: Oh, Santa Barbara.

Mr. de Geus: ...and the city of Eugene has a program that is funded and resourced where they have a specially designated area for people living in their vehicles. I think they provide certain services to the vehicles that are there. I'm not aware how effective and successful it's been. Minka might have more information.

Ms. van de Zwaag: I'm not sure, I know that those programs have waitlists and they all have very specific rules for the folks need to be qualified to be in there. They need to follow very specific rules, in by a certain time, out by a certain time, certain behaviors will have them evicted from the program and that is managed with a local non-profit that oversees the program. I believe there is some community or civic funds that go to it but in the case of Santa Barbara that manages that program.

Council Member Kou: I was just wondering if the Commission might be interested in just learning more about those cities that do have it implemented and to see what are all the rules. What are the guidelines? What are the conditions? What is the funding? I don't know if the Commission would be interested in that but I just thought maybe that might be something to look at.

Mr. de Geus: A little background before Council Member Kou, you were on the Council and probably before some of these Commissioners where on the Commission, we did do a pretty deep look into this issue. We had a big problem at the Cubberley Community Center which did have some major legal issues with people parking overnight, many of them. There was crime and other things occurring and at that time we looked at Santa Barbara and we looked at a number of other options. We also looked at working with local churches to see if they would be open and interested in allowing vehicles to stay on their property and maybe they have some access to bathrooms. We didn't end up getting the interest in making it work so we have gone through that process once before. I just wanted to let you know about that.

Council Member Kou: I remember that but it just seems like the situation has ballooned right now and I wonder if there's some other change of heart or a different look at things. You know, it's good to also give the Commission the history of what had taken place in prior years.

Mr. de Geus: It's very tough one...

Council Member Kou: It is a tough one.

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Mr. de Geus: ... and when we went through that process, we did make some recommendations to the Council and the Council adopted them. They are still happening now and that is actually housing homeless people with the support of the county with housing vouchers. We're paying for extensive case management and the county is providing housing vouchers. We've been able to house how many people so far with that program?

Ms. van de Zwaag: Well, over 17 people. There's been some changeover or even further benefiting the program they've been housed in other programs where that program provides case management which opens up more slots in our program. The greater benefit of that program is a lot of the people that were housed early on, are still housed so that's close to 4-years later which is very unheard of. Not unheard of but is a wonderful success rate that someone and the terms of this contract is they had, because of the funding source, to have some kind of current record and for those folks to still be housed successfully 4-years later is a huge accomplishment of that program.

Commissioner Lee: When you had reached out to the churches previously, what was the nature of their reluctance to participate?

Mr. de Geus: I think it was a variety of things. I mean think everybody wanted to help but then once we get into the details of what it means and access to facilities and how many, it just became too cumbersome. Eventually they just sort of where not interested, this was going to be too complicated for them to make it work.

Council Member Kou: Actually, if I may? I also heard from some of the churches that it was actually neighbors and parishioners that also complained about it. That there's smoking, there's late night talking, sometimes there's drunkenness and then, of course, there's using the bathrooms, sometimes outside. So, there are these kinds of things that need to be worked through but I think instead of just cutting it off, perhaps a dialog could happen and some sort of agreement done. I don't know, I mean there is something to explore but this is if the Commission is interested.

Commissioner Lee: Are there any previous reports on the cities effects that you could provide to us just so that we have some of that historical knowledge of all the efforts that you have already done.

Ms. van de Zwaag: I can provide this with some staff reports from when it was discussed at Council and Policy and Services in the past.

Commissioner Lee: I want to thank you for all your efforts and I know when we did our On the Table conversation, I spoke to at least two RV dwellers and they had only nice things to say about the Police Department. So, I was pleasantly surprised to hear that so thank you for that.

Mr. Peron: Thanks for letting us know.

Chair Stinger: I'll let go that for my table. We heard good responses and a lot of positive comments, I was surprised. We like living here. Captain Peron, Rob, thank you very much for

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your time. Thank you for being so thorough and I would appreciate the staff reports. That would be a great way to continue. Good evening.

## **2. Status update on FY2018 work plan projects.**

Chair Stinger: I think we can do this quickly as a discussion. I'll mention each work plan if the responsible people could just give an update. Specifically, any resources or assistance that's need from the rest of the Commission or any questions that you have that staff might be able to help with and just in terms of time I don't want to take a lot of time to elaborate on each proposal and I guess a lot of these are mine. The Council referral, we are planning to summarize our recommendations in seven areas. That was something that we wanted to finish in quarter two, we're going to extend that to quarter three so that we have a chance to speak to the City Attorney and be more direct in our recommendations to Council on analysis of SB-54 and SB-31; regulation – state regulations on immigration control and registries, gender identity, assessing the needs of the LGBTQ community. Commissioner O’Nan and I are working on that. I’ve been talking to the county and we have a date March 29<sup>th</sup> to run a hearing – a listening session with allied groups and we’ll come back with more in January. Inclusive public engagement, there are actually I guess three components to that. Commissioner Chen and I are working on a leadership training program for new immigrants. I’ve reached out to some community partners on Welcoming America Week in September and we look like we can have a collaboration to make that a strong event. Do you want to brief us on the third element?

Commissioner Alhassani: Yes, so for the community dinner, I’m still aiming to have it in the Q.1 of spring of next year. I reached out to a speaker and said I’ll make it work around your schedule so that I could try to get the speaker come but I think in the coming weeks we’ll have to make a decision and let’s book a venue in Palo Alto. I also need to talk to Commissioner O’Nan about some ideas in putting it together.

Commissioner O’Nan: I’m in.

Chair Stinger: Next element I’m going to differ to agenda item three and citywide learning, that’s Commissioner Brahmhatt who is out tonight. So, unless there are any questions or concerns, I know that’s a quick brief but I know we need to reserve some time for item three.

Commissioner O’Nan: What about the CEDAW?

Ms. van de Zwaag: That’s item three.

Commissioner O’Nan: Oh, that is item three.

Chair Stinger: Ok.

Vice Chair Chen: Let me just mention one thing, I really need some leads to who the contact within the organization for training for the new immigrants. I really need the program so if Minka or...

Ms. van de Zwaag: Right, I think the three of us should probably meet. I just wrote myself a note

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of when to involve the City Manager's Office in that. If this is something that the HRC is just going to be doing on its own as it's program or if it's going to be a city involved in that way. If the Vice Chair can just set up a time to meet with me in January, we can talk about next steps.

Vice Chair Chen: Ok, very good.

**3. Consideration of updated recommendations in relation to Council Resolution #9653- Reaffirming Palo Alto's Commitment to a Diverse, Supportive, Inclusive, and Protective Community.**

Chair Stinger: Moving onto the Council resolution, specifically focusing on CEDAW. Do you want to take this conversation?

Commissioner Lee: Sure, I was hoping to be able to present a memo and specific recommendations on CEDAW to the Commission this evening. After some deeper reflection and conversations with the Chair and staff, we decided to revise it a bit and take some more time to consider exactly what we want to present to the Commission before we come and asked for it. So, I wanted to provide an update of what we've learned today. I think the Commission is somewhat familiar with CEDAW. It's a UN convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. It was passed back in 1979 by the General Assembly and the US is one of a handful of counties that haven't ratified the treaty. So, across the US there are Cities for CEDAW group whose goal is to adopt the principles and efforts on a city by city basis in lieu of any national action on the item. It's very unlikely that the Senate would ratify it in the current climate and so the Cities for CEDAW has been working on the city and county level to get cities to first pass a resolution in support of the principles of CEDAW, which Palo Alto did back in 2002. Typically, the next action is to pass a CEDAW ordinance and that ordinance consists of designating a task force oversight body to conduct a citywide gender analysis. That analysis consists of looking at citywide policies, programs, initiatives, employment practices, resources and grants that provide sort of everything the city does taking an examination of that and looking through a prism of all women being treated fairly and equally. Are women having access to all of those resources in an equal fashion and so it has three components, again as I mentioned. It does need an oversight body authorizing an analysis and providing funding to conduct that analysis. So, that's what the ordinance does is quite a bit of the heavy lifting because while doing the analysis itself -- during that evaluation of all those different things that the city does and then coming to specific recommendations as to what should be to address gender issues in our particular jurisdiction. Me and Commissioner Gordon had taken a look at some of the other jurisdictions that had done this and most of the cities that had done it previously and who have been doing it for a while are significantly larger. So, San Francisco was one of the first cities to adopt an ordinance but obviously, they are significantly larger and have more resources than Palo Alto. We weren't really able to identify any cities that were similar in size to Palo Alto which had completed their analysis and that we're further along in the process. So, as a result, I think some of the questions that we need to address as Commission is to what extent do we want to predefine what that analysis looks like versus leaving it up to a task force to investigate and steer its own direction. To what extent do we need staff and other financial resources from the city to conduct that analysis? How much time do we need to do it and just everything that's involved with that? I'm hoping that we can, as a Commission, discussion folk's initial thoughts on it. Any open questions that we would need to address prior to making a recommendation on

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CEDAW with the hope that at the next meeting we come with a bit more information that enables the Commission to feel comfortable about making a recommendation. I would imagine that recommendation would look like asking staff to look into what an analysis might look like, what would be involved in doing it and determining that first, prior to deciding whether we want to go ahead and actually do the analysis via enacting a CEDAW ordinance. I think that's where we are right now; I think we do have some folks from the public who have been working on this issue for significantly longer than I have. I think if they would like to say anything or if there are any particular questions that we'd like them to answer, I'm sure they would be more than happy to do so.

Chair Stinger: I would invite you to speak. Maybe you could fill out a speaker card and we would appreciate if you could give us some scope of what the cities for CEDAW – a little bit of your experience with other cities or with other communities and some of the outcomes. I've been impressed as I've been reading the ordinances and the resolutions as the ones that I've read seem to strike a nice balance as I read them to becoming advocates for principle then drilling down to something that's meaningful and relevant to the locality. I think it opens up a door for us to make a statement but make a statement with some legs on it. I would like to asked help me, Sejla? Sejla, I'm sorry, would you like to come...

Commissioner Lee: Maybe they could join us at the table in case we have some follow up questions.

Chair Stinger: There are two mics. Would that be ok Minka?

Commissioner Lee: Do you want to join?

Ms. Constantino: No, we need to get you on the...

Ms. van de Zwaag: You need to be recorded.

Chair Stinger: If you could introduce yourself.

Ms. Shelly Kosak: My name is Shelly Kosak.

Ms. Sejla Avdic: Sejla Avdic.

Chair Stinger: You are both with the City for CEDAW intuitive?

Ms. Kosak: I'm actually with the United Nations Association, the Mid-Peninsula Chapter and with that a whole bunch of different groups are working together with – we're starting to build a task force right now. It's including an AAUW, WILPF and other local non-profits that are women or peace and justice issues. We're just getting underway and the cities for CEDAW movement and women associated with it have been going on in Palo Alto for several decades actually. We are obviously young and recent converts but the people who really could sit here who have been doing it for 30-years are still in our community. They are just older and in fact, Helen who couldn't come tonight is just not feeling well but she went to Beijing and some of the

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major events that have been a part of the whole CEDAW movement since it fell apart in the 1980s when the US didn't ratify it. There was Mexico City and then there was Beijing and so a lot of women in this community are part of it, it's just that nothing has ever gotten – there's been no footing. We started with that resolution in 2002 and then there was no push to move onto an ordinance and like Steven is talking about, the big problem is that you do need a gender you need a gender equality analysis to happen. In places like LA, they used Saint Mary Mount College, one of the colleges and so the whole gender equity study for the City of Los Angeles was done through that University with that help. I don't know what they paid for that or whether there was pay or how much money was associated with that but there are other ways to go about finding the information that we need locally for our city. I mean we can ask Stanford or we can ask Santa Clara County. In fact, Santa Clara County, as Steven knows the county actually just agree unanimously on an ordinance and it was the Santa Clara County Law Department that wrote it for them. So, there are resources all around us, we just need to kind of tap into them and get the help that way I think.

Chair Stinger: One of the questions I might have is if the county is doing a gender analysis under CEDAW, would that include Palo Alto?

Ms. Kosak: That's a very good question, that's a very good question. It would be on their five pages and I don't know how they are going to do gender equity in an entire county. I don't know how they would go about that. I know the City of San Jose is also undergoing an – there are people building an ordinance there as well. I personally don't think that they are exclusive because the county can have a different oversight than a city and the City of Palo Alto could have its own. I don't think they cancel each other out I don't think.

Chair Stinger: One of the things that I'd like to ask that we consider in the next month is, as we've already said, the amount of work that we're either taking on or asking staff to take on. So, when I ask the question about the county, if they're doing that, that might – back up a second. I think there's a lot to be gained by having a focus on gender in Palo Alto but I want to be sure that the CEDAW process is warranted. There might be other avenues that we could take. We might drill down on a particular issue so a question I have is how much are we asking of ourselves? How much of that is redundant that the county is doing?

Commissioner Lee: If I could elaborate on that. I think to some extent there might be some overlap and some possibility to collaborate with the county. Certainly, there are some aspects that only the city itself could do or the city would empower a third party to do so a lot of these cities own practices and policies and procedures. Certainly, it wouldn't be something that the county would evaluate. They might evaluate county specific operations or needs within the county as a whole but things that happen at an institutional level in the City of Palo Alto as an institution would certainly not be captured by a county effort.

Chair Stinger: That would be my assumption but I'd like to test it so that we have a good handle on what we're asking for. In your experience, can you talk to us about some of the outcomes that you've seen that have been particularly impressive?

Ms. Avdic: There's one city where they mentioned – let me go over my notes.

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Ms. Kosak: I think part of what would be useful for Palo Alto is simply that because our city is not struggling with a lot of the things that actually 30 articles of the treaty go over. Some of them are about just basic human rights that's why all of the 189 counties in the world that have adopted it, is the very minimal amounts needed to be met for most women. Obviously, we aren't dealing with those things here; access to healthcare or just kind of very survival issues. What we're talking about is, as Steven's excellent memo that he wrote in preparation for tonight, was discussing about equity in the City of Palo Alto. Sejla was telling me about so many of her peers that are looking for work and that are in job interviews at big high-tech companies are actually being asked questions about whether they plan on having children and questions that are inappropriate, that are discriminatory and yet there's no public local institution that they can take those complaints too because one doesn't exist here. So, that's a very real thing about women in our society that are being unfairly treated but it's subtle so having some kind of CEDAW based ordinance alive in our city would be a very powerful tool to make sure that that wage and gender parity is met in our society; which is obviously a goal that we would want.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Can I ask a question in regards to that? When a city has a CEDAW Ordinance, does the Oversight Committee, that is required as far as CEDAW, do they become the entity which hears those types of complaints from...

Ms. Kosak: The community.

Ms. van de Zwaag: ... the community, ok.

Chair Stinger: Let me ask the question again because I want to make sure that I understand it. The Oversight Committee that writes the resolution could that be different from the ongoing, long-term monitoring?

Ms. Kosak: Yes, I think so. I don't think it has to be – I think each City can do – I mean the way that CEDAW Ordinance is implemented in San Francisco is not the same as the way it's implemented in LA. So, you could make it unique to your city and your needs I think.

Chair Stinger: So, Commissioner Lee, you asked very carefully how we want to organize the Oversight Committee or taskforce and I think we have two Committees that we're looking at; one to author the ordinance and then the other to maintain it over the long term.

Commissioner Lee: I mean I think we're at the stage now where we would like to have – well, where I am at right now, I'd like the staff to be directed by City Council if they feel appropriate to actually go and draft an ordinance and help us figure out what sort of options we have in terms what that analysis would look like and what resources might be available? Then based on that research, determine if and how we move forward on what our ordinance actually looks like. Was that responsive to your question?

Chair Stinger: And more.

Commissioner Lee: Ok. To give maybe one example of something that a task force could look into, I mean assuming there are so many things that they could look into, is if they wanted to

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analysis the number of women represented on city appointed Commissions. For instance, they might unsurprisingly find that women are drastically underrepresented and take steps to figure out why is that the case and what steps can the city do to increase women representation on those point policy bodies. There are certainly so many other things that they could do in terms of domestic violence type matters or making sure that grants issues by a city are benefiting women, at least equally, to other proclamations and such. So, there are so many different ways, different topics that the task force could look into. If I could, Santa Clara County did pass their ordinance earlier this week and they listed in their ordinance some general topics that would guide the work of their CEDAW task force. If I could read them just to give the Commission a sense of one jurisdiction's ordinance. The work of the CEDAW taskforce shall be informed by the following statements which reflect CEDAW principles. The first one is economic prosperity and the county is committed to eliminating discrimination against women and girls in Santa Clara County regarding employment opportunities and other economic opportunities. That could certainly be with respect to employment opportunities within the county itself and probably more generally speaking. The second one is gender race violence, the county is committed to taking appropriate measure to prevent and redress sexual/intimate partner violence, dating violence, stalking, and harassment and trafficking of adults and minors. That one, I would imagine, might speak to determining whether the county offers sufficient services that address that particular issue or it might involve how the police is or is not responding to those sorts of issues. The third one is health care; the county is committed to taking appropriate measure to eliminate discrimination against women and girls in a provision of healthcare. That's obviously something more applicable to a county as opposed to a city. The fourth one is affordable housing, the county is committed to taking appropriate measure to ensure women and girls have adequate access to adequate and affordable housing. Again, that might an evaluation of these services and opportunities the city or county can provide to ensure that women are benefiting equally from those or determining to what extent their needs are being fulfilled. The fifth one is education and leadership, taking appropriate measures to improve women and girls to have access to all forms of education and leadership opportunities. Again, that could be programmatic things or it could be ensuring that women have an opportunity to advance in the county or they have leadership opportunities so that they can assume a management position. Then the final one is access to justice for women and girls, taking appropriate measures to support the application of a gender lens where appropriate to policies and practices related to justice-involved to women and girls. They laid out those six general commitments or statements; however, you'd like to read them, and charged the taskforce with using them to guide their work. Certainly, we could do something similar; we could make ours broader than that or more specific than that. There is really quite a bit of flexibility but really the aim of Cities for CEDAW is to get cities to commit to doing something. That's mainly conducting a gender analysis in whatever form, using whatever resources it deems appropriate to that community. I think yes, we should do this. Let's figure out how we want to do that but let's get started doing it. I think as a Commission we determine to what questions do we need to answer now in order to get an ordinance underway versus what questions can we leave for the taskforce to actually accomplish. Hopefully, that provides some more clarity as to what CEDAW is all about at the local level but I would appreciate feedback from the Commission so that we can come back at the next meeting with some either additional information or specific recommendations so we can move forward as a City.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Just for clarification, the recommendation from the HRC would be that

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Council considers enacting...

Commissioner Lee: Consider...

Ms. van de Zwaag: Consider an ordinance.

Commissioner Lee: ...or ask city staff to look into or – yes.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Right so that wouldn't be the HRC drafting the ordinance or approving an ordinance, it would be asking the Council to consider.

Commissioner Alhassani: From a process perspective, is it that you ask the city to consider making an ordinance and then, in turn, a taskforce is launched, the gender analysis is done, is that what triggers those two steps?

Commissioner Lee: So, the way that many jurisdictions have done it is the ordinance itself creates a taskforce and authorizes the gender analysis itself but in places like LA, for instance, I believe the Mayor's Office as a Mayor) intuitive said, we're going to go do this analysis with Saint Mary's or whatever that other University is. There are different ways to do it but generally speaking, you enact an ordinance that creates taskforce and authorizes them to go and do the analysis. Then from that analysis is the heavy lifting, then a big part of the effort. They would then come back at some period in time with specific additional recommendations as to policies that should be changed or other initiatives that could be undertaken by the city to address these CEDAW principles. The initial task would be to ask staff to look into an ordinance and the ordinance itself would begin the work.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Right because you're not coming to them with the actual ordinance.

Commissioner Alhassani: Right that's...

Ms. van de Zwaag: So, it would be to start that process.

Commissioner Lee: Even once we get an ordinance in place that would begin the work of figuring out what we want to do to actually address and live up to these CEDAW principles.

Commissioner Alhassani: Typically, what does the scope of these gender studies look like as in – we have talked about a lot of different issues today already addressing violence and workplace interviews. What kind of guidance do you look at something specific or do you look at everything?

Commissioner Lee: I think, generally speaking, correct me if I am wrong, but the goal is to take concrete – I'll read from my draft memo. Take concrete steps towards addressing barriers for equality for women and girls in all areas of society. Including but not limited to discrimination in the political, social, economic, and cultural fields. So, assuming as a city a lot of that would maybe focus around the political aspects and the social aspects as it intersects with the social services we provide to our citizens but certainly economic and cultural as well. It has a very

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broad reach and it's really up to each jurisdiction through the analysis to figure out what would we like to focus on and what are the issues that we are seeing in the community and how do we want to go about addressing them? I know that's not particularly useful but it would really be up to the community to figure that out. Part of the question that we are struggling with is to what extent we, as a Commission, need to figure that out in advance of asking for an ordinance that begins the gender analysis. To what extent do we want to define that as opposed to just blanket says we'd like to conduct this analysis so go and do it and while you're doing it kind of define what you want to do.

Ms. Kosak: There's actually a really good document that the Columbia Law School produced on this topic. It probably would answer any questions of this kind so I could get copies to everybody if that would help because it's a wonderful document. It would help fill in all of this because this stuff has already been thought out and answered but it's in these huge documents by law schools that I haven't memorized.

Ms. Avdic: We have full-time jobs so it's hard, it takes hours to go through these documents.

Ms. van de Zwaag: I think speaking from staff perspective, I think what we're really looking at, I personally, and I realize that difference cities have different issues and so forth. What I'd be interested in seeing if and when we bring this forward to our Council is hey, to be a CEDAW City, you need to do these three things. A gender analysis, these are the six things that a gender analysis usually includes. To go to Council and say hey, it could be 57,000 different things because you know we have all these focus areas, that's going to go nowhere and if it involves a gender analysis of the entire community, is it just the city and our programs and services? I really urge the HRC to have that type of clarity at least as a first step in what you're looking for and that's the kind of clarity I'd like to see for the staff report. We are concentrating on the gender analysis of these three areas, what that would include would be looking into these seven things because without that lack of clarity, our Council will not know what to do with it. It is an impressive list from the County of Santa Clara but if we went to Council with that. They are wonderfully intelligent people who deal with a lot of issues but if you're bringing ten issues to them, then each of those can have an analysis that asks 50 questions. There needs to be a little more focus to the Council if and when it goes to them.

Commissioner Lee: I think that's something that I struggle with. I mean there are so many specific things that I would like to see the analysis to be done and I laid those out in my draft memo. I wouldn't want to pre-judge or pre-determine what the taskforce does because certainly other taskforce members might have different ideas. I mean if staff's recommendation is that we really come with more specific sense of what the analysis would focus on then I mean we could have that discussion as a Commission to refine...

Ms. van de Zwaag: I would definitely suggest a focus area that initially would be your initial focus area that you could recommend to the Council. We're interested in city services programs and staff hiring practices. I'm interested in seeing this document but I think it needs to be a little more specific and just say and these are the typical kind of questions we would ask in the type of analysis; otherwise, it just becomes too big.

Commissioner Lee: I guess connected to that, my question for the Commission would be how

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would we prefer to go about doing that? I could certainly come with a list of things that I specifically would like to see and use that as a discussion point for the Commission or I think the Chair might prefer that we add another member to this Committee now that Commissioner Gordon has departed. We could as a Committee come up with a list for the Commission to consider or I'm trying to get a sense of how the Commission would like to proceed with that based on staff's advice.

Chair Stinger: Either from Commissioner Lee or from CEDAW subcommittee or a group of two Commissioners, I think the whole Commission needs to really weigh in on what our focus is. There are so many issues that affect women and it's so important that we focus in on the one or two priorities and I think it's something that we all need to weigh in on. We may have a list prepared for us so that we have a starting point. We are different ages, different genders, work in different environments, and I think we could all bring something to the table and I want that discussion. In fact, that was where I was going to go next, I think there are two levels of questions that would help me feel comfortable going forward in January. One is what our study areas are, our focus areas and what is the work involved? So, then if I ask Council for staff time, I know that I'm making a legitimate request.

Commissioner Lee: Like how much staff time or what the time frame would be for – ok.

Chair Stinger: I do have another question for you. Is there a stamp of approval? I mean if we just wrote -- like one of the ordinances that I looked at was an ordinance from the City of Honolulu and I just thought that it was a nice balance of principles and action items. How did they become a CEDAW City? Did they submit it to an organization that said...

Ms. Kosak: It's good whether they're signed off on it or not. The Cities for CEDAW is simply a grass root organization so in the State of California we have two strong organizations that are promoting Cities for CEDAW. One is the Women's Intercultural Network who's lead by Marilyn Fowler and there's also the CWA, California Women's Advocacy or Association, and they are both, in their way, trying to help California Cities get Cities for CEDAW. You simply need to be a representative in the community. You become an activist basically which Steven put at the beginning of his memo, the City for CEDAW initiative website and their website gives you everything you need to know about how to encourage the discussion in your community. I think each one, as you said Honolulu, all the cities that I've looked, there are so many different cities and they all come at it in a different way. What we want in our city. The people who really know this information, we do need to follow the template, don't we?

Commissioner Lee: I mean I think they offer templates as a starting point but I didn't get a sense of it was necessarily required.

Ms. Kosak: No.

Commissioner Lee: The only requirements were mainly the analysis and an oversight body and funding or at least those are the three components that they recommend.

Ms. van de Zwaag: But there's not a registration with an entity.

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Commissioner Lee: No.

Ms. van de Zwaag: So, it's just an adherence to a principle.

Ms. Kosak: Correct, correct. In Berkeley, we were in contact with many of the people who actually got their ordinance up and running. I think what you're saying about giving something large to a city body and asking them to do something with it. It took almost 10-years for the City Attorneys to actually draft and get things going. It took a long time and it was a very painful process so each city handles things differently so we obviously don't want to go that route.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Who else is in the process other than Santa Clara County, San Jose, what other cities around California are in process or contemplating?

Commissioner Lee: When you say in the process, you mean in process of developing an ordinance or in the process doing the analysis?

Ms. van de Zwaag: Either.

Ms. Kosak: The list of the number of cities who have resolutions is very long now in California but in terms of ordinances, I don't know.

Ms. van de Zwaag: So those cities have done what Palo Alto did just without the ordinance, we are symbolically in support...

Ms. Kosak: That's right.

Ms. van de Zwaag: ... but the list that is actually having an ordinance is...

Ms. Kosak: Less.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Ok so the HRC would really be or the city would be turning a path that maybe isn't chartered yet.

Commissioner Lee: I could certainly come to the next meeting with a more concrete plan for the Commission to at least consider. That way we go to the Council with a specific recommendation and again, that's sort of my – I apologize for that. My initial draft, I didn't want to impose too much of my own bias into it. I wanted to leave it flexible but after some further thought, I think I should come with a more specific recommendation and use that as a way to spark conversation and refinement at the Commission level so I can certainly put that together.

Ms. Kosak: Did you submit your draft to the rest of the Commission?

Commissioner Lee: No, we decided not to circulate it around.

Chair Stinger: I would – besides the question of workload...

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Ms. van de Zwaag: Chair, could you please turn on your microphone.

Chair Stinger: Thank you. Besides the two questions that I previously asked, I would like to confirm the minimum that we would be expected to complete to call ourselves a CEDAW City? I mean I understand the three elements but...

Commissioner Lee: I think as Shelly was mentioning there really isn't any criterion that someone would judge us under to be a CEDAW City. I mean they have a list of all their cities that have done some sort of initiative, either a resolution or an ordinance. I don't think they necessarily go through and judge each one and say this is a CEDAW City. Though certainly if a city tried to pass something as CEDAW and it was drastically not like totally the opposite, they would probably say so but I think they just list everyone that has taken some steps towards...

Chair Stinger: I just wanted confirmation of that.

Ms. Kosak: Well, we would have an ordinance. The City would actually have an ordinance that was CEDAW based so that would be the proof. How in depth or how broad and how much it covered, again depending on each individual City's needs but the main test would, of course, be that we have an ordinance passed.

Commissioner Lee: And that is references in some way CEDAW.

Ms. Kosak: Yes.

Ms. van de Zwaag: That's a question that I had. So, the ordinance isn't so much CEDAW, it's to the principles that CEDAW is bringing forth. The ordinance is that we are now a CEDAW City, the ordinance is be it resolved that the City of Palo Alto does not discriminate against – I mean I think that type of clarity would be helpful because I know that there is a lot of anti-discrimination languages just that the city follows in hiring and contracting. I think that clarity of if there are sample ordinances if it's adherence to CEDAW in its principles or just that language I think would be helpful. Also, it would be I think, interested in what the hiccup in Berkeley was, was after they did the gender analysis or they couldn't get the language together to bring to Council to even start the gender analysis; I think I'm curious about that.

Ms. Kosak: I'm not 100% certain but I think it was in the implementation, it is the legal implementation of the ordinance. The ordinance was done, it was how they went about; the point with an ordinance versus a resolution is it's not simply speaking about it. It's about having real laws that will then affect things so for the lawyers to take that long was about simply how they were going to legally implement these new rules.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Ok, that's helpful, thank you.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Council Member Kou.

Chair Stinger: Council Member Kou.

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Council Member Kou: I'm glad that you brought that up about how they are going to implement those laws. Now is this upon the city or with regards to employers in the city? The ordinance, does it affect them as well?

Ms. Kosak: The employees or employers in a city?

Council Member Kou: Employers in this city.

Ms. Kosak: It should.

Council Member Kou: It should, right? Then in terms of implementing it, then we need that office that you were talking about of where people who have been discriminated against or feel that they could go and report such a thing, right?

Ms. Kosak: Correct, it's an oversight body.

Council Member Kou: Oversight and is the oversight body city appointed or is it outside contracted or I mean, how does that work?

Commissioner Lee: Generally speaking, the oversight body is some combination of appointed members of the community, staff members, outside experts so basically, another Commission or a sub-body of a Commission or office within the city.

Council Member Kou: Would that be appointed by the Council or by...

Commissioner Lee: It would be up to each jurisdiction to determine how it wants to structure that taskforce. So, like Santa Clara County, they have a taskforce consisting of members appointed by each of the Supervisors and designates to folks from particular offices within the county to send people in addition to members of their Commission on the Status of Women so it's a combination of folks. Again, it's flexible and to clarify, I think if the ordinance was specifically just to say we are interested in doing a task force and doing an analysis, that doesn't necessarily automatically have implications for the private sector. I mean one of the things we might analysis is to what extent are private employers doing X, Y, Z or to what extent can cities support initiatives at the private sector level to help women enjoy the full social and economic benefits. It's not necessarily something that would be binding on private employers in that sense, it's more of let's authorize a study, figure out what's wrong or what we can do better at the city level both institutionally and through our influence, and then from there take additional steps and measures if that makes sense.

Council Member Kou: Absolutely. Yes, I'm always concerned about ordinances without the enforcement behind it and then the teeth and it's again, just something on paper, right? So, I'd like to make sure that part of it is doable – enforceable.

Commissioner Lee: One particular thought that I had in mind and again, this may not end up in whatever we ultimately decide to do but at the intersection of the city and the private sector, one idea I had was as part of the business registration process we include a gender and diversity

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survey to get a sense of to what extent are women represented in the private employers in Palo Alto both at a staff and management level. Again, I'm not sure if that's possible or if that's something that we would want to do but that would help us get a sense of to what extent is women enjoying in the economic and leadership benefits within the private sector within our community. That's one way we could address the private sector without I mean it would be a very low bar. I mean it wouldn't be asking too much, in my opinion, of the private sector but it would allow us to at least have those numbers and find a way to address the larger picture over time. That's one example that we could do.

Council Member Kou: That sounds good and I'm sure that this is going to have to go through attorneys to review and to determine but I think it is very impressive though Steven.

Commissioner Lee: I mean that particular example, I initially recommended that we do that in the ordinance as a requirement but certainly one way we could do it is say, that's a topic that we would like the task force to explore as part of this gender analysis. Then come back a year or so after the ordinance and come with back with specific recommendations to the Council about hey, we want to add this to the business registration thing. Can your analysis and see if we can do it? So, there are two ways you can do it, you could include it in the ordinance or you could have it as part of the work of the taskforce and the gender analysis.

Chair Stinger: Another example that I had read about and I'm not quite sure about the implementation of it but was legislation within a city to say was a salary history law. To say that you can't ask somebody's salary history and so that would allow women to come in at the same pay scale as a male counterpart. There might be examples that we could find. I don't know if that one's but we need to think that through as we go forward. I think...

Commissioner Lee: There might be - sorry, go ahead.

Chair Stinger: No, no, I was going to close so why don't I go back to you.

Commissioner Lee: I was just going to say for that particular example again that could be addressed in a number of ways. You could say as a city, as an employer, we want to make it our policy that we don't ask for salaries and then you could also explore ways that you can encourage or require that from private employers. I don't specialize in that particular kind of law so I can't speak to whether we could do that but there are multiple angles. Certainly, there might be things that you could do as a city, as an employer itself, as an institution versus things that you require of other employers and bodies within the community. I think I have sufficient direction at this point to come back at the next meeting with a more concrete proposal that really defines what the topics or areas of exploration that we would recommend a taskforce to look into as part of the analysis. What sort of commitment would we envision from that body and from staff? I've already started thinking about it in my head as to how we can maybe manage it in a way that is respectful of the city's time and resources. I can bring that in the form of a memo to the next meeting and we can discuss it as a Commission. Hopefully, at that meeting refine it and then pass it along as a recommendation to Council to do something.

Chair Stinger: I think that sums up my request of what I would ask of you. I think my request of

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the rest of the Commission is that we really think through the areas where we would want a CEDAW – a Palo Alto-specific study. Which areas we would like to investigate? I think there are some big areas – topics as Santa Clara County ordinance has outlined; prosperity, violence, healthcare, affordable housing, education, leadership, justice. There may be other topics that we'd like to look at and then there are specific within those but I want to have that discussion about the meat of our proposal. I think I started this way and I'm going to end this way. I think this is an outstanding way for us to make a statement about gender equity but I would like to have something and this is what it means for Palo Alto. This is why we went through the effort and that has to be everybody's assignment for January.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Commissioner Alhassani.

Chair Stinger: I didn't see you, I'm sorry.

Commissioner Alhassani: Oh, no problem. The only thing that I just want because I think what I understand is you're going to come back to us with here are the areas that we're going to focus on to ask the Council to look into. Is that accurate?

Commissioner Lee: I think I would phrase it as if we ask the Council to authorize an ordinance as a taskforce and gender analysis; these are the areas that we'd like that analysis to be focused on. Also, what is the time commitment to do that analysis? What is the expectation from staff and from whatever body that we set up to do it?

Commissioner Alhassani: It's not policy recommendations?

Commissioner Lee: I will try to make it not general but make it very topic specific as opposed to specific recommendations. For instance, one of my initial recommendations was having gender parity on city appointed bodies within 6-years. That one is very specific and something that I personally think is doable and is something we should commit ourselves to doing. There might be topics like addressing sexual harassment which I don't have a specific recommendation on and so most of them would be in that second category of general topic areas that there might be one or two suggestions where I have a specific metric or goal in mind. Obviously, the Commission would weigh in as to whether we want to include that specific goal or make it more general. So, for in that first example say we would like to see gender equity on city appointed bodies' period and then have the analysis look into that. Whereas my preference would be to say we are going to achieve that within 6-years. Again, that's just how I approach things but again, the Commission can refine that.

Commissioner Alhassani: I guess my reluctance about that is it feels like we're throwing out rules without a lot of diligent and data and analysis.

Commissioner Lee: Sure.

Commissioner Alhassani: So, I agree with your second example that you made it broader like we want to focus on hiring practice in Palo Alto. We think it's very important because here's the study that we've done to show this is why it's a big problem in Palo Alto versus other issues.

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Again, to your point that the countries that adopted the treaty, a lot of those issues we don't have here. So, let's focus on the issues that are in Palo Alto and show us why they are issues in Palo Alto and let's dig into those. Then figure out ok, here's what we want to do about it.

Commissioner Lee: I think for the most part most of them are going to be how you describe it. The reason why I had specific goals for city appointed bodies was because I know it's an issue and it's very easy to determine how big of an issue it is. I didn't figure that it was inappropriate for us to set an actual concrete goal to achieve it by in that specific example. So, I said 6-years which are two complete cycles of a Commission. So, regardless how big or small that particular problem was, I thought it was achievable and that we should make that amendment from the upset. Obviously, the vast majority of the topics would be very general and up to the taskforce to explore and then come to a recommendation and metric – oh, metric if it would like.

Chair Stinger: I think there's going to be a philosophical discussion there on how much we want to pre-determine and that would be the question that we would have in January.

Ms. van de Zwaag: You may just want to go and say policies and programs that are, I don't know, a little more umbrella than just very we want to look at the gender equality on city Commissions. You know maybe it should be initially that it's city programs or city staff. I'm not encouraging any of those specifically but I think there should be some more umbrellas and then some suggestions under the umbrellas if they wanted examples of what you had considered. These desperate three things that don't have this common ground, at least initially, I think that would be a little confusing.

Commissioner Lee: Yes, the ideas that I had that were very specific, I would classify them under an umbrella and I probably did have it in my initial draft but I think generally speaking most of them were going to be in that umbrella category.

Chair Stinger: I look forward to that.

Commissioner Lee: I would imagine that would take at least an hour on the next meeting. I mean it's not something that we could do in 20-minutes so if we can plan accordingly if there's interest from the Commission to set aside that amount of time at least in January that would be...

Chair Stinger: We will take the suggestion. I look forward to that in January. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Lee: Thank you for coming out.

Chair Stinger: ... put you on the spot. I appreciate your taking the time.

#### **4. Debrief On The Table events held on November 15, 2017.**

Chair Stinger: Debrief on On The Table. It seems so long ago, that was several dinners away.

Commissioner Lee: That's right, 3-weeks away.

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Chair Stinger: Can I ask you Commissioner O’Nan how you felt about the morning session?

Commissioner O’Nan: Yes, I in concert with Chair Stinger and Vice Chair Chen and staff members Minka and Mary, we hosted a very successful event at Hobeas in South Palo Alto. We had good attendance; we were able to break up into two smaller groups. We divided our own questions based partly on suggestions from Silicon Valley Community Foundation and partly on question that City Staff had developed. We blended the two and confined ourselves to three questions because we wanted to cover things in depth within 1-hour and we think we had some good insights. We did reflect the polarity that exists in the community between people are more focused on advocating for housing and people who feel like we are maxed out and simply cannot accommodate more people here. We urged them to listen to each other with an open mind and not debate or try to change each other’s minds. Simply to be respectful and hear each other out and I think for the most part we were able to achieve that. We sent in a number of surveys by hand that was completed by some participants via snail mail. Other participants were comfortable at taking the survey on their smartphones and I think we had pretty good compliance and attendance with that. On the whole, I think it was a good event. I think it remains to be seen what will happen with this data because as we have discussed, in Palo Alto we have had these types of conversations before and they haven’t always lead to anything concrete happening or changing. I have a hopefulness that this data that we’ve gathered will somehow inform lawmakers or policymakers but as I said, it remains to be see exactly what the long-term outcome will be.

Chair Stinger: Thank you. Did you want to speak Commissioner Lee to your evening session?

Commissioner Lee: Yes so, we had an On The Table conversation at First Presbyterian. I believe it was part of LifeMoves, one of their evening meals and so Chair Stinger joined me there and so we broke up into two groups. My group maybe had 4-5 individuals, four of them primarily engaged in the conversation and the other folk’s kind of listened. Two of them were folks who lived in RVs and two were folks who were homeless so it was quite interesting. It was a lot of listening to individual stories; it was difficult to engage in a conversation with a group even of that smaller size. So, we’d listen to one person’s story and I would try to get the other folks involved but it was very much listening to one person at a time and so I thought it was very insightful. One of the folks who lived in an RV mentioned that he faces substance abuse problems and has a particular lifestyle that he would like to maintain and so that’s why he lives in a RV. Nonetheless, he seemed like an individual who works every day, he just happens to work different hours and doesn’t make enough money to actually afford a place to live in Palo Alto. The other person who lives in an RV had a different situation; they had a job but just couldn’t afford to rent something here. For the folks who didn’t live in RVs, there was a sense that they really do want to improve their situation. They have some sort of skill set but often times their inability to find permanent housing prevents them from tapping into that skill set. One individual had quite a bit of experience as a forklift operator and could make a decent income to support himself if he had permanent housing but because he wasn’t in permanent housing, he had to do jobs that did not tap into that particular skill set. He had 20-years of experience doing forklift operating but he wasn’t able to do that so he took odd end jobs to try to support himself. One thing that was particularly interesting, as folks try to apply for permanent housing, obviously there’s a long waiting list and so agencies can be somewhat selective in terms who

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they provide housing to and so they have particular criteria. So, a lot of these folks would be on the waiting list for 6, 7, 8-years and there might be one thing that disqualifies them from getting housing even though getting into housing would enable them to tap into those skills and actually support themselves. It was insightful; I don't think I left with any particular action plan. I mean I guess that should have been obvious, I mean these issues are complex issues and there aren't any easy answers but it was good to put a face to folks on El Camino who have been struggling.

Chair Stinger: It was a good session, both sessions where good and I congratulate you both for taking them on. Thank you Minka and Mary with your efforts with the city, it was well organized. I agree with both of you that it was a little fuzzier than I might have hoped for and I also think that it was an exercise and civic engagement. As well as hearing about the particular issue and so I'll be interested in Silicon Valley or ...

Commissioner O'Nan: Community Foundation.

Chair Stinger: The Community Foundation and the umbrella organization that they were working with, their report to see what we can learn about housing. Also, what we can learn about civic engagement from their research. I was just going to say one of the quotes that I heard in the morning session that might be a way for me to wrap this up was, we need to own what we are as a city. If we claim to hold values, we need to act accordingly. We need to embrace our place in the work and deal with it. Thank you for everybody who worked so hard on making that a busy day in Palo Alto. Question to staff, will there be a report from the city on the different coffee sessions?

Ms. van de Zwaag: I need to look into that. I know I have turned in my compiled notes from that day so we're still looking into staff and how that would be reported out or how that will help inform future conversations on housing and the implementation of the Comp. Plan.

Chair Stinger: Thank you.

## **V. Reports from Officials – Chair Stone**

### **1. Commissioner Reports**

Chair Stinger: Any other Commissioner reports?

Vice Chair Chen: I have two reports. I went to the...

Ms. van de Zwaag: Can you turn on your microphone?

Vice Chair Chen: I went to the Buena Vista Posada.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Wait, wait.

Vice Chair Chen: I went there early because I had another engagement later in the evening so I went there around 5:30, just the beginning and had half a cup of a hot drink that was very good. Then I saw Winter and then saw a Professor from Stanford, what is his name?

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Commission O’Nan: (Inaudible)

Vice Chair Chen: Then his wife and they had a room for children and they were doing math. So, they doing afterschool tutoring in that room so it was interesting. They were very insistent about day one to find out about HSRAP application and I said talk to Minka as soon as you can so she will probably talk to you. Alright, that was one thing; the second thing is I went to the Art Center to do the Play. I had a picture in there but anyway. I don’t know, when I would start doing that, the camera stopped clicking. I don’t know, I didn’t ask them to be around. After that, I went to this very meaningful exhibit. It’s put on by an artist who came from France and lives in Palo Alto. She’s lived in Palo Alto for 20-years and she went to Iraq. In the north part of Iraq there is a village that is occupied by refugee family and then she started an art project with the children there. She advised and taught the children how to paint big murals on this wall and she took pictures and had an exhibit in the back of the Art Center. It was fantastic. Unfortunately, for some reason, their publicity events didn’t happen so she said to bring some cards to distribute so we’ll just pass them around. Her name is in there and there’s also a website if you want to go and if anyone is interested in contacting her. If you want, there you go.

Chair Stinger: Thank you, thank you very much.

Vice Chair Chen: It’s a very, very good cause. I think it’s helping the children feel proud of themselves and doing something and also beautify the whole community. This is a wonderful thing for her to do, for her to take time and effort to do that.

Vice Chair Chen: That’s a great Commissioner report, thank you.

## **2. Council Liaison Report**

Chair Stinger: Council Member Kou, anything we need to be...

Council Member Kou: I was also going to report on the Posada at Buena Vista. I went later, I did go around 6 o’clock, but I think one of the things that they are very, very grateful to is to everybody in the city who supported the whole entire effort. That extends to the Human Relations Commission as well so just wanted to say they did say thank you to everybody here.

Chair Stinger: We are thankful to see a good outcome.

## **3. Staff Liaison Report**

Ms. van de Zwaag: Just a couple quick things. On Monday night the second round of HSRAP was on the Council’s Consent Calendar that passed unanimously with the Council Members there. Now Mary is doing the fun work of finalizing the contracts or amending the contracts for the agencies that were currently getting funding. Mary and I will both be out the last two weeks of December so if you have any burning issues, you have to get them in by a week from tomorrow. Mary’s in the next week a couple days but just wanted to let you know that.

## **VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, January 11, 2018.**

Chair Stinger: We know we have one agenda item for 2018. We also have an invitation to the

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City Attorney's Office to speak to us on SB-51. They could not come this evening and will confirm either January or early 2018. Other topics? We'll certainly do an update in more detail in January. Anything else? One thing that I'd like to ask for, not for January but I think we're starting to look at questions in a more in-depth way than we have in my tenure. At some time in the new quarter three, I'd like to ask if we can work on process and procedures. If that's it, have a good vacation.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Thank you.

Chair Stinger: Enjoy your holidays.

Commissioner O'Nan: Aren't we going out to dinner?

Chair Stinger: And we're going out to dinner but for the...

Commissioner Lee: Is there going to be karaoke?

Ms. van de Zwaag: We are adjourned.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.