



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

Thursday, June 8, 2017
Community Meeting Room
Palo Alto Civic Center
250 Hamilton Avenue
7:00 PM
REGULAR MEETING

Commissioners Present: Alhassani, Chen, Gordon Gray, Lee, O’Nan, Acting Chair Stinger

Absent: Brahmbhatt

Council Liaison: Kou

Staff: Minka van der Zwaag, Mary Constantino

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

I. ROLL CALL

Acting Chair Stinger: Welcome to the Human Relations Commission meeting of June 8th. Mary, roll call?

II. AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, DELETIONS

Acting Chair Stinger: Any agenda changes, requests or deletions to the agendas in front of everyone? Ok.

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Acting Chair Stinger: I’ll move onto oral communications. Are there oral communication cards? Thank you, Mary. Let me just give a brief introduction to oral communications. We are really pleased to have you here. I just want to reinforce that we can listen. Since it’s not an agenda item, we will not respond but we are really happy that you are here to speak to us. I’ll read a name and I’ll ask you for 3-minutes and then follow up with the second person. Thank you. The first card that I have is Robin McCloskey. Robin?

Ms. Robin McCloskey: I am going to differ.

Ms. Kiran Gaid: I’m Kiran Gaid.

Ms. Minka van de Zwaag, Human Service Manager: Can you please go over there?

Acting Chair Stinger: Are you speaking to an agenda item?

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Ms. Gaiind: No, just to the oral communications. Good evening everyone. My name is Kiran Gaiind, and I am a resident of Palo Alto. I've lived here for about 5 ½ years and I'm a concerned member of the community that is very happy for your involvement and the City's involvement in passing Policy 428, on behalf of our immigrant communities which we believe is a very strong policy across the state and really puts Palo Alto in a place of being a leader in Cities across our country to protect immigrant rights. We do believe that, as members of People Power, that there are few adjustments to this policy that would help to strengthen the clarity of the policy for both the police force and for our immigrant communities. I personally have worked very closely with different immigrant communities as a public high school teacher in different high schools in the Bay Area. So, I have worked very closely with immigrants here who with the correct protections really do work hard and are able to leverage the rights to really go to college and make a very valuable contribution to our society. It's important to me, as someone who has worked in that capacity, to see that our immigrants are protected in every possible way especially our young people and our families. I would like to ensure that our immigrant families are always feeling protected and safe so that when they do have a need, they openly reach out to our police for the protection that they know they can safely receive and that there is no interruption to that relationship that should be based on trust and safety. In addition to that, just personally and through my personal networks and I know many people here, I'm also a daughter of immigrants and I know lots of families here who are directly affected by this. Also, who are contributing greatly to our City and I would like to see that continue because we are a place of diversity. I think we have a lot of pride in keeping things that way for all of our immigrant families. I'd like to just advocate that any tweaks that would just help strengthen this policy and whatever you can do to really promote that and support those changes, that we would be ever so grateful for that contribution. So, thank you.

Acting City Chair Stinger: Julie Noblitt

Ms. Julie Noblitt: Hi, there. I am Julie Noblitt. I've lived in Palo Alto since 2002 and I'm here with my colleagues from People Power to speak in support of some changes to Policy 428, which as my friend just said, is really fantastic. It comes close, as I understand it, to the ACLU's recommendation for such a policy and so really what we are asking for is a disambiguation of some of the language in the policy. I'll just say that my husband is the son of immigrants who came here to Palo Alto in the 50's and I was disturbed to hear this year that since my husband does work as an intern therapist at Gunn High School, an incidence of immigrant kids getting harassed at Gunn High. It just brought home to me that our current administration has made ordinary citizens feel comfortable engaging in behavior like that and unless our Police Department is really strong and air tight in enforcing the rights of immigrants to not be unduly harassed or turned over to immigration inappropriately. Then some of us are unsafe and if some of us are unsafe, then we are all unsafe. Thank you very much.

Acting Chair Stinger: Harvey Alcabes.

Mr. Harvey Alcabes: Hi, I am Harvey Alcabes. I've been a Palo Alto resident since 2003 and also, I work in Palo Alto. Like my colleagues here, I just wanted to both comment that Palo Alto does have a very strong policy and as a resident, I feel proud of that but I would love to see it be even stronger and more airtight. I have many co-workers and neighbors who are immigrants and

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as far as I know, most or all of them have legal documentation but I want them to feel fully welcome. Also, that they are in a community that welcomes and supports immigrants of all kinds. So, anything that Palo Alto can do to make it clear to everybody that we fully support immigrants is good for all of us. Thank you.

Acting Chair Stinger: Beth Mills.

Ms. Beth Mills: Hi, I am Beth Mills and I've lived in Palo Alto since 1985 and I also taught in the Palo Alto schools for 23-years at Juana Briones School. First, I want to just say that when that ban went into effect and everyone rushed to the airport, I had such a terrible feeling because I remembered that in the late 1930's, there was also a ban in America. So many of my family died in Europe because they were Jews and they were not let in here. There was a quota that they never changed, even though millions of people were in need at that time and so it just brought back to me this terrible scene of families with young children and having nowhere to go and all that. It was very emotional for me. I'm also here because I have worked with a number of undocumented families when I was still teaching; I am retired now. Their situations always were deeply troubling to me. I had one little boy who was here and one day I was leaving the building that I worked in and there were glass doors there. I saw him, sort of during recess, standing outside the door and just standing there. When I went out, I said, hi. Why don't you come in? He said I can't open the door. I said you can't open the door? So, I took a look at him and he had a broken arm. He had been in school already 4-hours with a broken arm and he hadn't said that he was in pain. I hadn't noticed which was pretty bad. His mother had taken him to a healer because she was afraid to go to a regular doctor with him and in the end, our principle actually paid for him to get his arm set at PAMF and that worked out. Then another family that I am very close with who have six children, two of whom I have taught, they are now all legal except the mother and that is because she was deported once when her children were still much younger. Now several of the girls are college graduates and they are an amazing family. All of the older kids have gone to college and have degrees. One of the kids is at Williams College now but anyway, this family was deported and of course, she had all these children so it took her a while but she came back in illegally and because of that, she can't go and try to get documents; at all. Once you've done that, you're pretty much finished if you've come back in a second time illegally, once you've been deported. Right now, she is just wondering what's going to happen and her youngest is 11 now and she told me that she's having nightmares and afraid that her mom is going to be picked up and taken away. I just have a concern about this in general and I just wanted to say quickly that we all feel the current policy is excellent. We've been told that it's the best in Santa Clara County but there are these few things, that in our meetings we notice, that are still a little vague and we're hoping that the City Council and the Mayor and you guys will have a look at it to see if we can tighten it up a little bit. Thank you.

Acting Chair Stinger: Vincent Sullivan.

Mr. Vincent Sullivan: Good evening. I too am a Palo Alto resident since 2010. I also went to Palo Alto High School starting in 1979 and I am here also to express my support of Policy 428 and the recommended tweaks to it to further strengthen it. I'll just say that from what I've observed, it interferes with the connection between people and the police force. To have them viewed as agents of ICE and that the community would actually benefit, in my view, from

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having a policy that clarifies that the local police are not ICE agents. That's all.

Acting Chair Stinger: Robin McCloskey

Ms. Robin McCloskey: You're not rid of us yet. Hi, everybody. I am Robin McCloskey. My husband and I moved to Palo Alto in 1992 when he became a Postdoc at Stanford. We're the parents of two teenage boys and I'm actually a parent of an immigrant. One of my children is adopted from overseas and the night of the election, he asked me, will I be sent back to Ethiopia tomorrow? I said no but the level of fear, even among people who are here legally, I think is extreme. I can't even imagine what the level of fear must be like for those who don't have papers and who don't have families who were born here. As my colleagues have said, this policy is great but I think it could be greater. I think Palo Alto is seen as a leader, not only here in the Bay Area but across the country so let's really lead on this. Let's make something that people can look at as an example for the rest of the country. Thank you.

IV. BUSINESS

1. Welcome to new Human Relations Commission member

Acting Chair Stinger: Well, we will begin the business part of our meeting with good news. We have a new Human Relations Commissioner to meet. Thank you very much for joining us. Congratulations.

Commissioner Lee: Hi, thank you. Did you want me to give a short introduction to myself?

Acting Chair Stinger: Yes, that would be great.

Commissioner Lee: Hi, my name is Steven Lee. I am a relative newcomer to Palo Alto. I've been here about a year and a half now but I am about a 15-16-year resident of Santa Clara County. I grew up down in West San Jose and went to Leland High School. I previously served for 3-years on the County's Housing and Community Development Commission doing CDBG and home funding for them. I also served on Human Relations Commissions in Davis and Durham, North Carolina where I went for college and then law school and then did CDBG funding in Davis as well. It's part of their Social Services Commission so I am excited to bring some of my different perspectives to this body and from what I've heard so far, this seems like a really hard-working body and so I am really excited to be joining a body that is so enthusiastic and willing to get work done.

Acting Chair Stinger: Welcome. We're excited to have you. I think a typical sentence is that it's always nice to have new people join and get new ideas but when they are new ideas from experienced people, it's a double win so we are really happy to have you join us.

2. Presentation by Michelle Schroeder, Supervising Attorney, Senior Adults Legal Assistance.

Acting Chair Stinger: I'd like to ask Staff to introduce Michelle Schroeder as part of our learning series.

Ms. van de Zwaag: We're really glad to have Michelle. Why don't you come on up and you can

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sit there and we'll have a nice microphone. Michelle is with us tonight and you are used to seeing Georgia Bacil so I sent an invitation to Georgia. She said she couldn't make it but I said it's really nice for us to be able to see the depth of the organization at SALA from perhaps a different perspective. So, Michelle is one of their supervising attorneys and she will be giving us just a short overview of SALA. Just a short overview on that will help Commissioner Lee but to really spend some time on the issues that they are seeing in the community with the individuals that they see. I think the timing is good, given that three Commissioners are working on elder abuse event and maybe this presentation will help in that planning but welcome, Michelle.

Ms. Michelle Schroeder: Thank you. Good evening everyone. I imagine that you can all hear me.

Ms. Schroeder: Good evening. Thank you very much for the invitation to address you this evening. I am happy to be here. First, I have a few handouts about SALA. I guess I'll just pass them this way. There's a brochure about SALA and there's a couple of articles. One is about good legal health for older adults, promote independent and healthy aging and I'll pass that along and an article about steps to take to prevent elder abuse, which is our topic this evening. SALA, Senior Adults Legal Assistances, as most of you know is a non-profit agency that provides free legal services to senior citizens who live in Santa Clara County. We were founded in 1973 and our mission is to support older persons in their efforts to live safely, independently and with dignity. We have no means test; we're not allowed to use a means test under the Older Americans Act, which is our base federal funding. However, we do target elders who are low income or at risk of abuse. In order to be eligible for our services, people have to be at least 60-years old and residents of Santa Clara County. We have a fairly small Staff of four Staff attorneys; myself, the supervising attorney – actually five Staff attorneys, one is part time, our director and then two-part time support Staff so we're not real large. Although we do employ a number of volunteers to help us interview our clients. We see most of our clients by appointments at various senior centers throughout the County. We go everywhere from Palo Alto to Gilroy. Here in Palo Alto we have appointments at Avenidas and also at Stevenson House. For home bound clients, we will do telephone consultations or home visits if that's necessary and appropriate. For certain types of urgent cases, people can call us on the phone because sometimes it actually does take a while to get an appointment. The services are popular so if someone has an urgent matter, they don't have to wait for an appointment. They can call instead and we'll try to expedite it for them. We will consult with clients on any legal issue that they bring to us so that they can come for their half an hour appointment about anything that they want to talk about. For many of those clients, we're giving them advice and possibly a referral. We do specialize in certain cases, which are explained in the brochure but basically, very briefly, the areas that we focus on are public benefits such as Social Security, SSI, Medicare and MediCal and planning for incapacity so doing documents such as power of attorney and advance healthcare directives. Certain housing issues, we give a lot of advice and do brief service and landlord/tenant issues. So, people facing eviction and people who have questions about their rights in subsidized housing. We also do some work in the area of fair housing, which is housing discrimination and finally, addressing issues of elder abuse, is also unfortunately, one of our specialties. It's had to be because we see a fair amount of elder abuse. Elder abuse is a fairly broad topic. There are a lot of situations that you can apply that label too. Elders are vulnerable to many different kinds of abuse so we're talking about physical, financial, emotional and physiological. It could include assault or threats of assault. Neglect, abandonment, isolation, theft

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of property or assets, identity theft and the perpetrators of the abuse are unfortunately, many times family members or friends and sometimes caregivers, paid or unpaid. Sometimes tenants, unscrupulous business people, strangers. There's unfortunately a long list of people who can take advantage of our elders. I'll tell you a little bit about the typical case that we see at SALA. Our typical case is a senior citizen living independently in his or her own home, who is being abused by an adult child or grandchild that is living in their home with them. That's our typical classic case. The person that is doing the abusing usually has some issues of their own. Perhaps they are addicted to substances or perhaps are dealing with mental health issues of their own. For whatever reason though, they are causing havoc in the home of their elderly relative. Most of the cases that we take involve some sort of physical contact or the threat of physical abuse. Threats such as I'll kill you or I'll burn the house down, are fairly common in these cases. Since Minka asked me to talk a little about what we are seeing not only countywide but in Palo Alto, I've interspersed a few examples. I went back and looked at some of our Palo Alto cases over the last couple of years to see what we've seen and we did actually, a couple of years ago, have a case like this from Palo Alto. I won't give to many details so as not to inadvertently identify her but she was in her 90's and living with a relative. That relative knocked her down and grabbed her cane, which of course could be very dangerous when you're in your 90's. In addition to the threats of physical abuse, we also hear about various methods of intimidation, verbal abuse or isolation from other family members. For instance, the perpetrators will say things like you're so stupid; I will put you in a nursing home, screening telephone calls, and that sort of thing to the point where the elder is afraid to come out of their room. They are hostage in their own home and even threats to pets. We've had cases like that and that could also be part of the emotional abuse and intimidation. That is our typical of what we would call physical or threat of physical abuse case. We also see quite a bit of instances of what you could classify as financial abuse. Unfortunately, in these cases as well, most of the time from what we see, the abusers are family members. They might be abusing authority under a previously executed power of attorney. So, in other words, perhaps they were appointed to help the elder manage their affairs and instead, they are using that to benefit themselves. They may have persuaded their senior relative to sign over the deed to their house or put them on the title. The home, of course, for most of our elders is going to be their most valuable asset that they own so that is frequently involved in cases of financial abuse. We've also seen cases of identity theft and now with online banking, for instance, that's become even more of a common thing. I remember one case and this wasn't Palo Alto but I remember one case where a granddaughter was basically accessing her grandmother's bank account online and I don't think that the senior even knew what she was doing. She didn't really have any idea and before long, she found out that the granddaughter had been taking money out of the account. In addition to impersonating her and applying for loans and so forth; credit cards. We even had one case where the son not only persuaded the senior to sell his home and then he pocketed the proceeds. He ended up putting him in a dementia care unit, against his will. Even though he didn't have dementia and that's a long story so I won't go into it but even that sort of thing does happen. Acquaintances, tenants, unrelated caregivers, we also have issues or cases where people such as these are preying on the elderly. Sometimes the elder is lonely and will be persuaded by a younger "friend" to give them money. Sometimes elders will rent out rooms in order to make ends meet and with the housing crisis, that's becoming more and more common. If they don't do screening well, they could end with someone who is abusive. We have actually had to go to court to get restraining orders to get people like that out of homes. Elders are not only abused by tenants but we actually had one case, this was down in South County,

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where the elder was taken advantage by his landlord, which was a switch. He was renting a room in this gentlemen's home and he was by himself. His daughter lived a couple 1,000-miles away and he was clearly needed and this gentleman ingratiated himself. Anyway, the elder ended up paying for his divorce attorney; it's a long story. That sort of thing happens as well but in Palo Alto specifically, last year we had a case where an 86-year old was being taken advantage of by one of these "friends", that he had allowed to live with him. She would convince him to buy her things and interfere with his caregivers. That's another thing that happens often, if the perpetrator is interfering with the caregivers, then that can pose quite a serious detriment to the elder as all. If nobody wants to come to the home because of this obnoxious person, then that definitely impacts the elder. Anyway, in this particular case, this "friend" was interfering to the point that concerned family members and called SALA for help with the restraining order. That is usually the remedy that SALA can pursue, is a restraining order to remove the abuser from the home. Even if they are not an abuser that's actually living there, we can ask for a stay away. Now, of course, there is also abuse by financial institutions or businesses. We see things like high pressure sales tactics, people who were selling annuities, reverse mortgages, that's almost at a completely different area but also one where elders are very vulnerable. They can be talked into unsuitable investments or mortgages. If in addition to being a senior citizen, they also belong to another marginalized group such as an immigrant community. That can compound their being vulnerable. In fact, right now we have a Palo Alto case where our client was part of an immigrant community and she trusted one of her own, so to speak. Someone who is also part of that community, who happened to be a life insurance salesman, and she asked him for a help in rolling over a 401k and ended up with a life insurance product that she did not ask for. So, we see that as well. Yet another area, broad area of financial elder abuse would be scams and everyone is familiar with this. Where you get these phone calls saying oh, you've won a foreign lottery, just give me your bank account numbers so that I can deposit money or you'll get a call saying or your grandson is in jail in Mexico and you need to wire money to bail him out. Then also, something that has been in the news I believe, are the IRS scams. Where people will call and say they are from the IRS. In fact, we actually had a Palo Alto client come in this past year with a concern about this. She said that she had been called by someone who said that they were from the IRS and that they had opened a case on her and that she should make payments to them. Fortunately, she did not make any payments and our volunteer who saw her at Avenidas, I believe, assured her that this was a scam. That she should not have any more contact with these people and that if the IRS wanted to interact with her, they would send her a letter. They would not call her. The way we address cases of elder abuse at SALA is to petition the court for a restraining order. Many times, though in financial elder abuse cases, that's not going to solve the problem because restraining orders are great for getting abusers out of homes and keeping them away but in cases of financial abuse, usually the remedy that is being sought is a return of the funds or whatever it was that was taken from the elder. Unfortunately, a restraining order is not going to help with that and doing that is often very complicated. For one thing, if it's scam, I mean obviously you don't even know who you are looking for. Even the police have trouble tracking these people down. Maybe a relative who took money from you or something like that, then the money might be gone; long gone and you're not going to get it back and even if there is a way to get it back a report to the police can be helpful. If the DA feels that they can prove that a crime has been committed then they will go after the person and seek restitution. If the DA doesn't feel that they can't prove their case, then there are the civil courts that are open to elders but usually that's requires an attorney with experience in litigation and the cases are very time

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consuming and can be expensive to put on. In fact, SALA being a small non-profit, we really don't have the resources to do those cases. We have referred some to private attorneys but even that can be difficult. Again, there has to be at least a possibility of recovery or no attorney will want to take the time to even look at the case. In terms of the prevalence of finance abuse, I've read some things about finance abuse increasing. Certainly, we believe that's the case and a lot of it has to do with with the growing senior population. In addition to the fact that as people age, there are documented changes that can sometimes occur. Obviously, we want to be careful. We don't have to be ageist about it and just assume that people are less capable as they age but it is a fact that as people age, they can be a little bit less discerning in terms of what to do with their money. In fact, I read one statistic that said that 32% of people over 85, so we are talking about the very elderly, 32% of those people have some form of dementia. As you can imagine, unscrupulous people have figured this out already and so I suspect that financial abuse is probably rampant and much of it probably goes unreported. In terms of gaps in services of how to address these issues, of course, funding for programs like SALA is always helpful. In addition to programs like SALA, I believe that there is a great need for more case managers and social workers because a lot of elders are pretty isolated. Of course, as they become frailer, they become even more isolate. If they can go to a senior center or community center then that's great where they get connected but if they become physical frail, they may be going out less and become even more vulnerable. They just need more help and if there is someone looking out for them like if they have involved family members that have the resources and the time to do that, that's great. If they don't, then an involved case manager who can check in with the elder and help resolve any problems before they become really big problems, I think is invaluable. Also, I would think that educating groups of seniors to try to recognize some of the dangers, before they become victims, I think is very important. We try to give a lot of presentation at nutrition programs and so forth and try to remind people that they don't have to feel pressured to sign things that they don't understand. If they are being asked to sign things, we invite them to come to SALA, to one of our appointment so we could talk it over with them. Figure out if it's a good idea or not to do what they are contemplating doing. Also, being warned about perhaps thinking twice about letting people live with them, either for rent or for free because that can also create a whole lot of problems that they might not anticipate. I think education is also a way to address some of what we are seeing. That's basically all that I have and I'm happy to answer questions.

Commissioner Chen: My questions are that you had mentioned that elder abuse happens in independent living. What about people or elders who live in nursing homes or assisted living? Are they getting taken care of to avoid elder abuses?

Ms. Schroeder: That's a great question. You are right, I didn't even bring up that topic and there are two ways that you can look at that. In terms of people who are living in facilities, either skilled nursing or assisted living facilities they too can be victims of elder abuse from the outside, say from other members of the community or family members. Then, of course, they can also be victimized by the people that are supposed to be taking care of them at the facilities. In fact, there are several entities that are dealing specifically with the rights of elders who live in facilities. For instance, there are state licensing organizations. There are, in each county, groups such as the long-term care Ombudsmen, who send volunteers or staff to each facility to talk to residents and they certainly are sort of on the front lines. In fact, we have a very good relationship with the long-term care Ombudsmen here in the County. They refer a lot of cases. In

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fact, I just went to speak to their volunteers a couple of months ago and so I always invite them to call me if they have a question about something that is going on that they are not sure about. They refer a lot of case to us and also, there is an organization based in San Francisco that is Statewide called the California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform. They have a panel of litigators, who will take nursing home abuse cases. Usually, those are cases of severe neglect or where somebody is injured because of the negligent of the nursing home workers. That's another form of abuse. We don't get too involved in cases of institutional abuse per say because there are other entities and attorneys who focus just on that. Certainly, if there's some issue of the resident's rights being violated, we'll certainly look into it and do what we can and refer to the appropriate agency.

Commissioner Chen: You just mentioned that 34% of 85-years or older, they are not very clear in mind and then they didn't even know how to talk for themselves. They did raise this problem until it's too late. How do you do that? How do you help them out?

Ms. Schroeder: That's a very good question. You're right, I mean they're not able to talk about it until, like you said, it's too late. So one thing that we do at SALA is that we really encourage younger seniors or seniors who are still fairly capable. We really encourage them to do documents such as power of attorney so that when the time comes, there's kind of a seamless transition. So, that someone can take over because that's the key, is to have somebody watching and if the elder is no longer able to do this on their own. If they have a trusted family member or friend that can just step right in to protect them, then I think that it is a way of preventing elder abuse we feel. That's why we really do encourage people to do these documents. That's really the only thing that I can think of to prevent this.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: I have a question. You talked about educating seniors. Is there anything besides them having to come in and you going over something that they are about to sign that might not be in their best interest. I'm thinking of like a fact sheet or if the IRS calls, they never call. Just know if the IRS calls, it's a scam; like what is a scam? Like fishing. I don't know how many seniors at that stage would be dealing with something like that. Although they might be if they are on the computer. That's a great way to be scammed.

Ms. Schroeder: Yes.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: So, I am just wondering if you do any kind of a communication newsletter or something that goes out, that would be helpful.

Ms. Schroeder: Well, one of the articles that I passed out – it's getting a little bit dated now but it does talk about a lot of the issues that I brought up. It doesn't really focus as much on the financial abuse scams but we do have that and also, there are other resources. I believe there are some State agencies that have put out some really good materials. I can't think – maybe it's the California Department of Consumer Affairs and I think there is an office of privacy protection. There are some agencies that have some good materials that we have been given and we have given out at presentations but it's a good suggestion actually. We probably could make one up ourselves to pass out and just the current scams that are going around and that sort of thing. That's a good suggestion, thank you.

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Commissioner Lee: I was curious as to how have the demand for your services either gone up or gone down over the years? Obviously, the senior population is growing but sort of on a pro-cap or percentage basis, are things getting better or things getting worse? How do those numbers tie to things that are happening on the federal and state level in terms of resources available and stuff like that? Can you give us a sense of things getting better?

Ms. Schroeder: Well, no. The funding never seems to really keep paces with the growth. I personally have worked at SALA for 22-years now and we're just a whole lot busier. I thought we were busy back in 1995 but we're just very, very, busy now. Not only because there are more seniors but fortunately, people are living longer on average. Back in the 90's, we didn't have that many clients in their 90's. We had a few but now it seems that we have more and more and it's not uncommon at all. No, the funding really hasn't kept pace with the demand in our services.

Commissioner Lee: Are there any particular services or non-profit sort of upstream that you feel like additional funding or support of would help bring down some of the demand your services that are sort of downstream? Those would help mitigate the problems before they arise. You really come in after things have happened, right? I mean you mentioned education but other particular services or non-profits that we could be supportive of that help sort of with that pipeline.

Ms. Schroeder: I mean I did mention the case management, although that's a big job. The County has funded a fairly new case management program and they got busy right away. I mean they ended up with a waiting list, I believe, almost immediately because the demand was so great. Yes, probably other than case management it's hard to say because all the other agencies that we work with, like the long-term care Ombudsmen and so forth. Certainly, prevention is important but to a certain extent, you're not going to be able to prevent all of these problems. We're not talking about just elder abuse but the other issues that we deal with. The problems with the public benefit programs and so forth. Sometimes there's really no amount of prevention that's going to totally eliminate those problems but it's a good suggestion. I mean, I certainly appreciate your question.

Commissioner Lee: I mean, do you feel like there's enough support to at least address the issues that are preventable? I mean, the percentage of things that are preventable, are those getting the support that they need?

Ms. Schroeder: Probably not, no. I'd have to think about that actually. I could think about that and I could talk it over with our Director and see if she has any ideas. SALA does do a certain amount of prevention as well. I mentioned the planning documents that we encourage people to do. That certainly is a proactive, preventative measure as well. You know, the Senior Centers and the Community Centers, a lot of them focus on healthy aging and keeping seniors active. I mentioned seniors being connected to the community. I mean all of that is preventive, also clearly. All of that is very useful and beneficial.

Commissioner Lee: Thank you.

Commissioner O'Nan: I have a question about the rise of senior sexual abuse. There have been

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some very, very, disturbing articles recently published on internet media about seniors being sexually abused at their living assistance facilities or even in an ICU unit at a hospital. So, are you seeing a rise in that as well?

Ms. Schroeder: Personally, I have not seen anything like that come through SALA. I mean, yes, that is certainly is very disturbing and that would probably be, again something that would be beyond what SALA would handle because again, licensing. Ombudsmen, in the case of skilled nursing facilities, and of course the police and the district attorney would probably be the ones that would be more focusing on that. I mean, it just goes to the point of as elders become more frail, I imagine a lot of these elders, they may have had dementia or some communication barrier that made them particularly vulnerable, I'm guessing.

Acting Chair Stinger: I was thinking along the lines that might be parallel to your suggestion, Commissioner Lee. We have a lot of classes about how to parent when you are first having young children but we sometimes neglect to say how to age or how to take care of a parent, instead of taking care of the child. Maybe the elder abuse subcommittee should be thinking about ways of incorporating preventative training or awareness training into some of the programs we do. Thinking of a program that Channing House did last year it covered housing and healthy aging and a lot of positive things and it was well received and extremely well done. Maybe there's a place in there to put some preventative measures and some resource literature.

Ms. Schroeder: I agree. I think that's an excellent suggestion. In particularly with family members who are caregivers because it's very overwhelming for them. Even if they want to do the right thing for their family members, sometimes it's hard for them to know what to do and there are a lot of things that they have to navigate. Everything from the caregiving system to the Social Security Administration, to all of these different things. I think anything that you could do to support them and to give them information would be beneficial, certainly.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Chair Stinger, I was going to ask a question as well when Commissioner Lee brought up the issue of what other issues could we maybe have an effect on. It made me think of the touch points in a senior's life. We talked a lot about the Senior Center but I was wondering if SALA has done training for physicians because a primary care physician is often the key person that a senior sees outside of their life. Have they been trained through SALA or do you know a training of physicians on elder abuse issues? I was just even putting that thought out there for our little subcommittee as well.

Ms. Schroeder: Well, SALA has not done any training for physicians that I am aware of. We certainly do a lot of training for social workers, case managers, people involved in public health. I've done presentations for case managers that are associated with the MediCal managed care insurance plans in Santa Clara County. Physicians, no, I have not done any trainings for physicians. Although, I think that is a good idea. I imagine that there have some continuing education requirement and hopefully that is being addressed there. Certainly, that would be interesting combinations to have SALA speak to physicians. I don't even really know how to gain an entree into those groups but...

Ms. van de Zwaag: We could.

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Ms. Schroeder: Oh, ok.

Commissioner O’Nan: I wanted to share that I am a patient at Stanford Health Care and about a year ago, they started this weird script that they have the entire intake personnel do, which is that they are asking you are you allergic to anything and all the normal medical questions. Then all of sudden do you feel safe at home? Then they ask if you fall and they ask all these things but they do nothing with this information. For example, I have fallen numerous times and they never do anything about the fact that I fell. In fact, I fell and broke my foot and they still do nothing about it. So, I finally asked them, why do you keep asking if I fall? The women actually said I don’t know but we have this script and we’re supposed to ask these questions. It concerns me that they get trained to ask the question but then nobody connects the dots and nobody takes that data and actually does anything with it. That is my strong sense, at least at Stanford Health Care.

Ms. Schroeder: That’s interesting. Certainly, all health care providers are what they call mandated reporters of elder abuse. That may be where those questions are coming from, as an attempt to better screen for cases of not only elder abuse from another part but self-neglect and that sort of thing because that’s also considered elder abuse so to speak, that needs to be reported to adult protected services. That’s my best guess to the origin of those questions.

Acting Chair Stinger: Any other questions or comments?

Commissioner Alhassani: Thanks for much for the presentation and thanks for the 22-years at SALA. One of the things that it looks like you guys do really well is you go to where the seniors are. I’m looking at all these locations on the back of your brochure.

Ms. Schroeder: Yes, yes.

Commissioner Alhassani: As the demographics change in the region and that the older population is getting older. Have you guys thought about how people are going to find out about your services if they are not at one of these locations? What are the channels that they can find out? Is there somewhere they can call?

Ms. Schroeder: If they are not able to get out to a Senior Center, as I mentioned before, it really is a focal point. Not only for recreation and nutrition but for a lot of these other services because it’s not just SALA that our appointments there but also HICAP, which does health insurance counseling. There are a lot of services located at the Senior Centers so that’s one of the main reasons that we go there but we also do get a lot of referrals, and I keep bringing up social workers but we really do work very closely with case managers. These are people that very frequently are going into homes of homebound elders and people who don’t get out much. Again, long term care Ombudsmen, those are the folks that go into the skilled nursing facilities so we try to have a good relationship with them. We get referrals even from the court when people go there because they are being abused and they are seeking a restraining order. The court will often refer them to SALA. am just trying to think. Certainly, groups like the Health Trust and Meals on Wheels; they have a lot of our information as well. I’m just trying to think of who else has contact with some these seniors that are not able to get out. We try to connect with as many community groups as possible so that then they will bring our message to other groups.

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There's a group called Agents for Change that focuses on issues for elders and the members of that group are in turn connected to a variety of other community groups and so hopefully the message gets out that way. If you have any suggestions, I am certainly open to them as well. If you have any other ideas about how we can get the message about SALA out.

Commissioner Alhassani: My only thing is just that I think there are a lot of seniors who live in apartment buildings. They might be senior apartment buildings but regular apartment buildings but they live there because it's easier to live in an apartment building than a big house. I wonder if that is an avenue that's going to have a growing population of folks who want to be aware of SALA.

Ms. Schroeder: That's a good suggestion. Actually, when you mentioned apartments, there are actually quite a number of senior living complexes that are independent living and we do regularly speak at those places. In terms of elders who are in just sort of regular apartment buildings, if they have community associations that invite us to speak, then we are certainly more than happy to do that. I know we've gone to mobile home parks and spoken to their associations so there has to be somebody to invite us because we don't do door to door. I mean I know that there are organizations that do that but we really don't have the resources to do that sort of thing. As long as there's some resident group that invites us to speak, we'd certainly be happy to do that and put up flyers on a bulletin board and that sort of thing.

Acting Chair Stinger: Council member Kou, did you have a comment?

Council Member Kou: I was just thinking what places connect with Palo Alto Neighborhoods. They are actually an umbrella group that represents a lot of the neighborhood residential associations and every year, at the beginning of the year, they actually have annual meetings and a lot of times they bring in a lot of different topics. That might be another way to reach out and promote SALA.

Ms. van de Zwaag: The Panda or the CERT group.

Council Member Kou: CERT group.

Ms. van de Zwaag: The emergency preparedness group because they sometimes divide the Palo Alto neighborhoods into sectors and those are the types of folks, even more than the neighborhood associations, that tend to lean into their community and because they sometimes have a plan for their block. They know that so and so lives by herself, she is not able to get out and so forth. They have those block plans because I know you are very involved in that Council Member.

Council Member Kou: Right, which is why I brought it up and it's through the Office of Emergency Services and they have the emergency service volunteers that are very involved within their neighborhood. Then through Palo Alto Neighborhoods called PAN, they actually have a very wide stretch and can probably be connected. The information can be sent to them.

Ms. van de Zwaag: I can send that to you.

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Council Member Kou: Please.

Ms. Schroeder: That's great. That sounds like a great resource, actually.

Commissioner Lee: I was curious as to where in the County you do most of your work and in what areas of the County do you think are underserved? Then the third component of that is how does Palo Alto compare to other parts of the County in terms of a percentage of the larger county, do we have more of a need or less of a need for these sorts of cases that come up?

Commissioner O'Nan: Actually, tacking onto that, I notice that you don't serve Los Altos directly and they have the largest senior population in Santa Clara County. Can you talk to us about that?

Ms. Schroeder: Ok, sure. Yes. The reality is that where we go in terms of the Senior Centers is driven to some extent by the funding because obviously, we don't pay our volunteers but someone has to supervise them and the Staff Attorney. A lot of it depends on the grant amounts and in the case of Los Altos, we don't get any money directly from Los Altos to have appointments there. Although we do serve Los Altos residents because we have appointments not only at Avenidas and Stevenson House but also at the Mountain View Senior Center. We go to the Cupertino Senior Center three times a month so, they are more than welcome to go to any of those Senior Centers but in order to actually set up appointments, usually we would be looking at where we get the funding to go because obviously, we have to pay our bills as well. That said, I mean we are fairly spread out. I mean we certainly come here, we go out to Milpitas, we go to all of the Cities in between like Mountain View, Sunnyvale, and Santa Clara. We're in many, many locations in San Jose and we also cover South County, which is particularly underserved. We do to the Morgan Hills Senior Center twice a month and we go to Gilroy once a month. That's probably one of the most underserved areas of the County because there's just not a lot of services down there and it is kind of like a different world because it takes half an hour just to get from Gilroy to San Jose. Palo Alto, you're certainly blessed with a lot of resources here. Although geographically, you're removed from San Jose so that does affect the ability of residents here to get services that are centered around the County seat, down there. Also, in Palo Alto, there are many, many low-income seniors. I don't have the statistics off the top of my head but I know that Georgia has told me numerous times that a pretty high percentage of the people that we see here in Palo Alto are fairly low income. Downtown there are low-income senior housing complexes so we do see some low income here.

Commissioner O'Nan: We also have a phenomenon in Palo Alto of house rich, cash poor.

Ms. Schroeder: Oh, certainly, yes.

Commissioner O'Nan: Yes, so some seniors may be living on property that is worth millions but they don't want to leave and they really don't have any liquid assets. So, they are very stuck in some ways.

Ms. Schroeder: No, that's a very good point and especially, if they bought their home decades ago with the appreciation. That happens all over the County but particularly here, I am sure.

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Commissioner O’Nan: I think many of them like to age in place and but they are struggling with lack of income and a house that they can’t keep up. The family member that can’t afford to live here, so now the family is dispersed and so we’re getting that phenomenon of the generations getting separated and then seniors getting kind of isolated here in our community.

Ms. Schroeder: Yes, we’ve definitely seen that as well. The whole house rich, cash poor phenomenon also leads to a desire to somehow tap into the equity in their homes, which is why a lot of seniors are interested in reverse mortgages which then leads to potential abuse there if they get into a not so great deal because reverse mortgages can be helpful in some ways but there are also some distinct disadvantages to them from what I understand. People have to be really careful.

Acting Chair Stinger: I was just going to say, last call. You’re it.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: Just a quick question, do the volunteers all have to have a legal background? Do all volunteers with SALA have a legal background?

Ms. Schroeder: Most of our volunteers have some legal background. Most of them are attorneys or retired attorneys. We also, of course, use law students; we have some paralegals although it’s not strictly speaking necessary. If a person has good communication skills and they are interested in learning. Mostly the volunteers do the interviews; they do the intake interviews so they are not really giving legal advice per say at the Senior Center there. They are mainly meeting to get the story and then we follow up with the advice later.

Acting Chair Stinger: Any last questions?

Commissioner Lee: I was just going to say that if you need more volunteers, I have my law school’s Alumni Association here in the Bay Area so...

Ms. Schroeder: Oh, great.

Commissioner Lee: ...maybe if you reach out to me and maybe we can find a way for us to provide some manpower.

Ms. Schroeder: That would be great. We’re particularly looking for people who are able to speak other languages because obviously, we have a very diverse community. We do have Spanish speaking staff but it’s sometimes a struggle for us, as a small non-profit, to be able to adequately serve all the different groups in our community in their language. We do have some volunteers who speak Mandarin and one who speaks Vietnamese but we’re always looking for people who speak other languages.

Acting Chair Stinger: I just want to thank you sincerely for speaking with us and for the work that you do. I think we all have our stories about seniors and parents and it’s a tough road and any help that we get is much appreciated so thank you.

Ms. Schroeder: Well, thank you. Thank you for your support. The Commission has always been

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very supportive and thank you for the opportunity to speak to you tonight.

Acting Chair Stinger: Some food to think about, Jill? I mean Commissioner O’Nan.

3. Human Relations Commission Chair and Vice Chair elections

Acting Chair Stinger: We’re going to go onto elections for the coming year. This is the point where we change. We have new Commissioners on board and I’ve been given a very specific protocol to follow and I will step us through this piece by piece. I’m going to begin by explaining the general duties and responsibilities of the Chair. In my role as Acting Chair, I think I’ve seen the range but if I am omitting something please fill in the gaps. Conduct the meetings, I think the most interesting and satisfying role of the Chair is to be on the Leadership Committee and help set the agenda for the subsequent meetings. Speak to Council when we have a resolution or a letter or a follow-up that we want to present. I don’t think that there’s much more time, maybe an hour or two, more than beyond being a Commissioner and beyond Committee assignments that are required. Is there anything else that...

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: Hour or two a week or a month?

Acting Chair Stinger: About an hour or two a month.

Commissioner O’Nan: There are additional meetings to plan the agenda that’s like a regular monthly meeting so anyone who is in leadership has to be aware of that obligation.

Ms. van de Zwaag: There are just the miscellaneous issues that staff charge with the Chair about that is really dependent on what’s happening.

Acting Chair Stinger: I’d like to open the floor to nominations for the position of the Chair for the year beginning, I guess June 8th. I wanted to say the fiscal year and then I realized that that’s wrong.

Commissioner O’Nan: I’d like to make a nomination. As you all know, Valerie Stinger served as our Vice Chair last year with Chair Greer Stone and Chair Stone subsequently left us to go join the County HRC but in the interim, Commissioner Stinger or interim Chair Stinger has done a fantastic job. I think she is very well positioned to take over as the Chair for next year. I very much think she would be the best person to lead us in that direction so I would like to nominate her.

Commissioner Alhassani: I second the nomination.

Acting Chair Stinger: Thank you. I’d like to accept that nomination. The floor is still open for nominations. I don’t have an item for if there is only one nomination but I suppose we could just

Ms. van de Zwaag: Just close the nominations.

Acting Chair Stinger: ...nomination. I want to be very precise. You told me to follow this very carefully. Can I hear a motion to close the nomination?

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MOTION

Commissioner Alhassani: Motion to close the nomination.

Commissioner O’Nan: Seconded.

Acting Chair Stinger: Do we need a paper vote?

Ms. van de Zwaag: That’s the protocol so you do have a provided piece of paper. Just write the name of your candidate on there and we will collect that.

Commissioner Alhassani: The suspense is killing me. Thanks, Mary.

Acting Chair Stinger: Chair, you have been reelected so congratulations.

Commissioner O’Nan: Congratulations, Chair.

Chair Stinger: Thank you. That may have been making light of it but it really means a lot to me and I’ll do my best to lead in the way that the Commission deserves. We will proceed to do the same process for the Vice Chair. The duties of the Vice-Chair are the same Leadership Council, which helps set the agenda and then backing up the Chair should I be absent. I would guess the same time commitment; an extra couple hour a month beyond the Commission and the Committee work. Beyond the Commission meetings and the Committee work. Can I have nominations for the position of Vice Chair, please?

Commissioner O’Nan: I have a nomination. I’d like to nominate Commissioner Theresa Chen for Vice Chair. Commissioner Chen has been on the Commission for a number of years. In fact, we started together. She’s been a really invaluable asset, especially as we have increased our outreach to various communities in Palo Alto. She has very generously donated her time, translated documents, helped us reach out to the Chinese community that has been very underserved in some ways, she’s formed a great partnership with our Chair Valerie Stinger. They work very well together and I think they would be a great team taking us into the next year.

Commissioner Alhassani: Second the nomination.

Chair Stinger: Commissioner Chen, would you accept the nomination?

Commissioner Chen: Oh, yes, I would like to accept it but I’m a senior citizen and but I’ll do the best in my capabilities.

Chair Stinger: Thank you.

Commissioner O’Nan: I would like to say, I think Theresa Chen would be our best Vice Chair.

Chair Stinger: Do we hear any additional nominations for Vice Chair? Then I will ask for a motion to close the nomination.

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MOTION

Commissioner O’Nan: I motion that we close.

Chair Stinger: I’ll second and ask for a vote.

Ms. van de Zwaag: You have that paper in front of you as well.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Yes, the votes are for Commissioner Chen to become Vice Chair.

Commissioner O’Nan: Congratulations.

Chair Stinger: Congratulations and thank you.

4. Discussion of HRC summer schedule and retreat

Chair Stinger: Ok, we will move on to talk about our summer schedule and retreat. Our next Commission meeting will be July 13th. In August, we typically have the retreat. I don’t want to do a calendar check right now but just do a sort of a macro check; does that suit people to continue with that? Have our regular meeting in July and then a retreat in August? If we did a doodle it would be the third week in August, does that sound, about right?

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: I am going to be on vacation.

Commissioner Alhassani: I have a due date of August 18th or I mean my wife.

Commissioner O’Nan: You’re having another one?

Ms. van de Zwaag: Congratulation.

Commissioner Alhassani: I thought you guys knew that? I thought we talked about this? Yes, it was Deja Vu.

Commissioner O’Nan: I didn’t know you were having another one?

Commissioner Lee: Oh, that what you meant by my due date.

Commissioner Alhassani: I thought you guys knew this?

Commissioner Lee: I was like, you have an assignment due?

Chair Stinger: He does, to be present.

Commissioner O’Nan: The first one was born during our retreat so it’s like Deja Vu.

Chair Stinger: Unlike our former Chair, you don’t announce all these events so we weren’t up and current.

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Commissioner Gordon-Gray: I guess you like August.

Chair Stinger: So, if we plan for earlier in August, would you join us?

Commissioner Alhassani: Yes, that would be fine.

Ms. van de Zwaag: That's when Commissioner Brahmbhatt said that she was gone. Early August till – did she give you a specific date, Mary?

Ms. Mary Constantino: She just said that she is busy but I think she said after the 18th she is available.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Ok. Obviously, she will be back because she has school age children. I would think school starts in the week of the 14th in Palo Alto.

Commissioner O'Nan: I would like to mention too that we have on occasion had to push our retreat out to September and so I think that could be an option as summer vacation schedules just can't be worked out.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Just a reminder, there is a study session the 18th so it may be a good idea just to make sure it's before then because it would be nice to report back to the Council what you're plans for next year are.

Chair Stinger: I think if we work that through during the August retreat, it would be nice to be able to come back in our September meeting to finalize that. I would like to have the retreat prior to our September meeting. Maybe we could try a week or the week before the 14th and then a week after and see how we do on a doodle.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Right. Commissioner Brahmbhatt said that she was gone and she's back starting the 15th.

Ms. van de Zwaag: She's available starting August 15th so which weeks would you like staff to try? The week of August 14th? Just those last three weeks in August, just try...

Commissioner Lee: Could we see if there is any interest in the last week of July?

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: That's two meetings in the same month.

Commissioner Lee: Well, we're probably going to end up having two meetings, right?

Ms. van de Zwaag: Usually, we have the retreat instead of a meeting.

Commissioner Lee: Oh, ok.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Instead of a Commission meeting.

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Chair Stinger: Well, I would...

Commissioner Lee: I'd be ok with two – I'm personally ok with two meetings.

Chair Stinger: We never asked Commissioner when her start date was so I'm not sure. If we had two meetings in July and none in August?

Commissioner O'Nan: That's what we've traditionally done.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: We have done two meeting in July and none in August, is that...

Commissioner O'Nan: I think, maybe could we try the last three weeks starting the 14th, the 21st and the 28th, which would take us into actually the first few days of September? See if sometime in those three weeks we can work it out?

Chair Stinger: Not for me. Two of us are out that week.

Ms. van de Zwaag: The week of the what?

Chair Stinger: 28th, don't try that.

Vice Chair Chen: In August?

Ms. van de Zwaag: First week of September.

Vice Chair Chen: That should be ok.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: After Labor Day?

Ms. van de Zwaag: We'll just try a diverse group of dates. I think what would be helpful to staff is in the past Commissioner's schedules, it allowed them to have some options for weekdays. Is that still a possibility or not because we have new Commissioners and we don't know if their work schedule allows them to take a half day off. If they do, we will doodle both or if they don't, we will just doodle Saturdays.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: Are you able to work on this during the week?

Commissioner Lee: Probably not a half day but I can stay late. I mean I can be here by 5 and that depends on how long you guys normally stay in the evening.

Chair Stinger: What does Staff think of a 5-9 retreat?

Ms. van de Zwaag: Well, that's not any later technically, then a regular meeting.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: 5-9?

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Ms. van de Zwaag: We provide dinner.

Commissioner O’Nan: Yes, if we can do it.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Ok, so we will do some weekend dates and some weeknight starting at 5 pm. Ok. Thank you.

Commissioner O’Nan: Hearty snacks, please.

Ms. van de Zwaag: There will be no hearty snacks, there will be dinner. You all have done a good job of using your budget and my budget over the last year, which I have very gratefully used for the wonderful HRC has done.

Chair Stinger: Thank you. Just in preparation for that, usually what we do is an ice breaker or a team building exercise. Go over our programs from the previous year and then do some brainstorming. I’d like to say some light weight strategic planning like what are the needs of the community, what the ideas, what programs from the previous year do we want to continue, which have run their course and what new programs do we want to start? So, if you can be thinking about what things you’d like to champion in the new year and bring them forward at our retreat.

5. Update and discussion on work plan items

Chair Stinger: Moving onto the work plan items. Do I have any updates from Committees?

Commissioner O’Nan: I can give an update on the elder abuse event. In May, I met with the wise planning committee for the Community Health Fair and they were very open and receptive to the idea of including an event on elder abuse in the fair, which will be held here in City Hall this year instead of in the Mitchell Park Community Center which it was last year. We’re still trying to nail down some of the logistics with them so I’ve had a brief meeting with Chair Stinger and Vice Chair Chen and I will be meeting again this month, to clarify what our goals and format for the event look like. Then we will rejoin the Y’s planning committee and nail everything down with them. Then we will report back but I think we are moving forward and we are feeling optimistic that we will be able to partner with the Y.

Chair Stinger: I’ll just give a quick update that there is a committee and we’ve met to support the Council Resolution Reaffirming Palo Alto’s commitment to a diverse, supportive, inclusive and protective community. The resolution, as you know, is something that I care very much about and we’re in the process of developing a work plan so that we can do a data analysis, if you will work with a summer intern to give us some depth so that we have some grounding to bring some recommendations to Council. We hope to bring an update to Council in our study session.

VI. Reports from Officials

1. Commissioner Reports

Chair Stinger: Moving onto reports from officials, Commissioner Reports.

Vice Chair Chen: Commissioner Gordon-Gray and I were going to give some sort of seminar.

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Commissioner Gordon-Gray: Presentation.

Vice Chair Chen: Yes, presentation and discussion with a member of students from Asian society to talk about basically, they want us to give them some experience on how to organize a meeting, how to present that meeting and then start community events. It's like a 50-minute talk and it will be on Sunday afternoon on June 18th. Then next, we'll be able to report on the progress. It's going to be a fun event to involve youngsters to talk about the issues what we are doing. It's a good thing to do.

Chair Stinger: That's great. I've got a couple things

Chair Stinger: I've got a few things to note. I made notes that this Sunday at 9:30, there's recognition of Pastor Kaloma Smith at the AME Zion Church. I am going to speak to what he has done for outreach in the community. I was pleased to be invited. Then just a reminder that June 22nd, there's the County and City's Human Relations Commission reception and I am hoping maybe we can organize a carpool to attend that.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Yes, former Chair Stone got in touch with me yesterday and he said no one from Palo Alto had registered and he wanted to know why? I said well, going to San Jose at 6 o'clock on a weekday was not a very attractive thing for...

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: 2-hour ride.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Right and you know, I got to thinking about that coming to Palo Alto at 7:30-8AM to our breakfast was not too easy for the folks from San Jose so I just offer that perspective. They would really like to know by tomorrow if you are coming or not.

Chair Stinger: I did send an RSVP to somebody.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Well, then he didn't communicate that with Greer so that's good.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: Oh, are you still...

Chair Stinger: As I understood it from the emails, what they wanted to do was have the different Commissions meet and share ideas. So, I think it would be potentially useful to hear what the other Commissions are doing in terms of topics and what processes they've had good fortune with. In which we've might be able to mimic. Then, the last was just to remind you that July 4th is the Chili Cook-ff from 12-4.

Commissioner Alhassani: Already signed up.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: Commissioner Lee that would be a great opportunity.

Commissioner Lee: I signed up as soon as I saw that email.

Chair Stinger: Oh, good, good. That's what we like. We're not too competitive with the

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Commissions but we do a good turnout.

Commissioner O’Nan: Basically, we own this event. HRC got a turn our people.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: I was going to mention that I saw on the Council agenda that they are going to be voting on our recommendations for the CDBG grants on June 19th. If any of us want to be there, that’s going to be voted on.

Chair Stinger: Do you have an update for us on that in your staff report? Do we need a comment on the – to Council?

Chair Stinger: We know we made our recommendation.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Right, I think that’s really the will of the Commission. I know that you have been a little more proactive with HSRAP because there’s the ability to have an influence on the Council as far as the funding amount. The HRC traditionally has not gone when CDBG has gone to Council but that is not to say that you could not. I think it would be good then, to be in touch with Eloiza regarding that.

Chair Stinger: If it’s ok with the Commissioners, maybe I will contact Eloiza to see if there is anything in flux and if there is communicate it to Minka and Mary. Since Commissioner Alhassani and I am the two people on that Committee, we’ll react to what Eloiza communicates. Thank you. Any other Commissioner reports?

2. Council Liaison Report

Chair Stinger: Council Member Kou, Council liaison report?

Council Member Kou: Nothing to report. I think that’s good.

3. Staff Liaison Report

Chair Stinger: Then Staff?

Ms. van de Zwaag: I just had a couple quick things, two of them were already discussed; the Chili Cookoff and the HRC dinner. Just a reminder, we talked about this last time and I know a couple of Commissioners have let me know that they have signed up but the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, June 15th. I was going to say City Hall but this is on Julian so this is Social Services Admin. I have a couple copies if you did not get them last time. I also wanted to say that our own Commissioner Shelly Gordon-Gray was recognized as a woman of influence and maybe you just want to say a few seconds about that honor that is being bestowed upon you.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: Thank you. Minka. That’s sweet. Yes, the Silicon Valley Business Journal issues an award recognizing the 100 women of influence in Silicon Valley and one of my friends was very generous and gracious enough to nominate me. Then I had two other friends, one of them is a Professor at Santa Clara University. She does a course on gender and engineering and another friend of mine is a writer and she has worked for me for years. I have to say that I was surprised but I have my own business and I’ve been a volunteer for 40-years and I

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put my sheepskin together and they chose me. I had to give advice in 10 words and I'm trying to remember what I said. Oh, ok, I do remember. Speak your truth but think, is it thoughtful, helpful, intelligent, necessary and kind but thank you. Thank you for bringing that up.

Commissioner Alhassani: Congratulations.

Commissioner O'Nan: Yes, congratulations.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: Thank you.

Ms. van de Zwaag: That's all. Oh, that is not all. I will not be here next month. I will be on vacation so one of my colleagues will be here with Mary. I am not sure who that will be yet but I will let the leadership team know.

Chair Stinger: We'll miss you.

Vice Chair Chen: I am not going to be July the next meeting because I will be on my way back from Africa. I will be back the 14th of July.

Ms. van de Zwaag: So will I. Will I see you at the airport?

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: No, see you at customs.

Ms. van de Zwaag: Exactly.

VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NEXT REGULAR MEETING: July 13, 2016

Chair Stinger: Well, for the meeting that everyone is going to miss and for those of us who are still in Palo Alto, topics?

Commissioner O'Nan: I had a suggestion for a speaker. I really enjoyed the presentation we had tonight from SALA and I wondered if we might get a speaker from Catholic Charities to talk about the other side of nursing home residents because they do the Ombudsmen process and it might good to get their perspective. Again, I think it might be a helpful education for all of us in the ramp up to our elder abuse event this fall.

Ms. van de Zwaag: They are also CDBG grantee.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: They owe us.

Commissioner Alhassani: Once suggestion that I would like to make is in response to the group that spoke at the beginning of the meeting. It's rare that you have that big of a group speak on the issue and I feel we would be responsive to it at some capacity.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: So, should we put that on the agenda?

Commissioner Alhassani: I assume so if we are – or...

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Ms. van de Zwaag: You can offer that as Council to the leadership.

Commissioner Alhassani: That's what I mean, yes. Thank you.

Commissioner O'Nan: I'm still interested in pursuing the gender equality issue that was brought up to us a while back or if we want, we could table it until the retreat and see if others are interested in working on it for next year.

Ms. van de Zwaag: That was a discussion in leadership in the past. Do some of these issues that have come up for your consideration, that those would be considered as part of the subcommittee's work on responding to the Council referral. We can speak in leadership and if there is some educational component that could be done ahead of time. As far as an actual official response to that, they wanted to take that up in their deliberation about the Council referral because the HRC has actually received, other than those two, some other folks have emailed me asking for consideration of resolutions as well. I think we have a very active base in Palo Alto who is very passionate about several issues.

Chair Stinger: I think there's a question of how we will consider it but there's not a question that we will consider it so it won't get forgotten. I had a thought and I lost it. We do have the commendation for Dr. Brown. Do you think we could invite him and just do a quick read of it here?

Ms. van de Zwaag: We could. Yes, I'll put that down. I'm still waiting to hear from the Clerk's Office about that.

Chair Stinger: That would be a possibility.

Ms. van de Zwaag: You reminded me of something that I forgot. I have agenized September 18th, that's the same night that we have our study session, just a proclamation in honor of the service of Commissioner Stone and Savage to the HRC and to the City.

Chair Stinger: Ok. If there are any other agenda items or suggestions, maybe you can communicate them to Minka and Mary. I'll take a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Gordon-Gray: Second.

Chair Stinger: Thank you.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.