



CITY OF
**PALO
ALTO**

HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION ACTION MINUTES

Thursday, February 11, 2021

7:00 PM

REGULAR MEETING

*****BY VIRTUAL TELECONFERENCE ONLY*****

Commissioners Present: de Turreil, Regehr, Savage, Stinger

Absent: Smith

Staff: Minka van der Zwaag, Mary Constantino

Council Liaison: Council Member Stone

III. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Public Comment: Aram James, Rebecca Eisenberg

IV. BUSINESS

1. Presentation on City of Palo Alto's Housing Element update working group – Tim Wong, Senior Planner

Mr. Wong presented information on the upcoming update of the City's Housing Element and explained of how members or the community could submit an application for consideration for participating in the working group.

No Action Taken

2. Presentation regarding policy development for renter protection measures – Lauren Bigelow, Partnership for the Bays Future Fellow at City of Palo Alto

Presentation on research regarding local demographics and policies in regards to possible renter protection.

No Action Taken

3. Introduction to issues related to housing insecurity in Palo Alto, presentation and panel discussion.

a. Elizabeth Guzman, Director of Dispute Resolution Programs - Project Sentinel

Ms. Guzman provided insight to calls they receive from the public who are seeking help with rent related issues.

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b. Philip Dah, Senior Director, LifeMoves Opportunity Services Center & Hotel de Zink Shelter

Mr. Dah explained that through LifeMoves' Opportunity Center they provide rental assistance and are part of the EAN, Emergency Assistance Network of Santa Clara County. They provide rent assistance and eviction intervention for folks who live in Palo Alto among several other services.

c. Leah Cowan, local renter

Ms. Cowan is a longtime resident and renter in Palo Alto. She shared her family experience living in a BMR Section 8 unit.

d. Angie Evans, local housing justice advocate

Ms. Evans provided information about the newly formed Palo Alto Renters' Association which is governed by an eight-person steering committee which priorities include a rent registry, public education, tenant harassment and affordable housing.

No Action Taken

4. De-brief on Human Relations Commission Retreat

The Commission further discussed follow up steps regarding the workplan items that were agreed upon at the February 5, 2021 retreat and made a decision regarding the review of the HSRAP applications.

MOTION: Chair Smith moved and seconded by Vice Chair Stinger that the Chair, staff, and up to 2 members of the public who are not current members of HRC (upon agreement of the Chair and staff) shall review and make recommendations to the full HRC regarding FY22/23 HSRAP funding recommendations. Chair Smith moved, seconded by Vice Chair Stinger that the chair staff and up to two members who are not current members of the Commission.

MOTION PASSED: 4-0

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Savage moved, seconded by Commissioner de Turreil to approve the Minutes for the January 14, 2021 Human Relations Commission Meeting.

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

VI. TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR NEXT REGULAR MEETING: Thursday, March 11, 2021

Staff presented that on the March 11 HRC meeting the Community Development Grant Block (CDBG) and the Human Resource Allocation Process (HSRAP) funding recommendations will be brought to the full HRC and with just those two items, the meeting will be lengthy. Staff asked the Commissioners if they would prefer to delay the other proposed items to the April meeting, have two March meetings or have one long meeting. The Commissioners chose to have two March meetings.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:10pm

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