



HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
Tuesday, May 08, 2012
Downtown Library
270 Forest Avenue
7:00 PM
SPECIAL MEETING

ROLL CALL: Commissioners Present: Bacchetti, Chen, Ezran, Morin, O’Nan,
Staff: Minka van der Zwaag, Debbie Park, Amy Johnson,

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

None.

AGENDA CHANGES, REQUESTS, and DELETIONS:

None

BUSINESS

1. DISCUSSION OF REPORT TO THE FINANCE COMMITTEE OF THE PALO ALTO CITY COUNCIL ON A HUMAN NEEDS ASSESSMENT WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE HUMAN SERVICES RESOURCE ALLOCATION PROCESS (HSRAP).

Public Comment:

Ms. Maureen Breen, representative from Avenidas commented on the draft report. She said it was thoughtful and included practical recommendations. She also appreciated the accurate information. She was however confused by the priorities. The report is also silent about the PACCC and Avenidas relationship.

Ms. Barbara Shufro, from PTA Council said she participated in one of the focus group sessions. She stressed the need for services for children with disabilities. Project Safety Net has worked to get kids connected to their school. She hopes that the HRC will pursue activities for students with disabilities. Ms. Georgia Bacil, Executive Director of Senior Adults Legal Assistance thanked the HRC for recognizing senior services and was pleased to see that elder abuse was listed as an important issue. They have been inundated with cases. She spoke about a particular case in which they assisted a 99 year

44 old man obtain a restraining order against his daughter who was abusing him.

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46 Commissioners Discussion:

47 Commissioner Bacchetti introduced the draft report and named the individuals who prepared it. He
48 summarized the purpose of tonight, and the next special meeting on May 31st which is to review the
49 draft report in preparation of preparing it for the review by the Finance Committee.

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51 The commissioners provided general comments on the draft report:

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53 • It was suggested that Page 3 include a briefer synopsis, which includes more of where we are
54 today.
- 55 • Human Needs. There is no “one size fits all” approach. Service Providers are the best judges of
56 successful practices.
- 57 • Funding: Public funding is critical.
- 58 • Collaboration: This is an important part to providing services, sharing tools, and strategies.
59 There was a discussion that collaboration is very labor intensive but is needed.
- 60 • Recommendations: On page 25. Commissioner Ezran said he liked the recommendation that the
61 Cubberley Community Center house more senior services in south Palo Alto.
- 62 • Commissioner Bacchetti asked if there is a way to direct HSRAP money for quality of life
63 criteria. There was discussion on how to improve the report so it is clearer in this area.
- 64 • Commissioner O’Nan commented that collaboration is less critical than recommending
65 additional funding for HSRAP, which she felt should be the first recommendation. It was
66 discussed that collaboration should not be forced which would create a burden to agencies who
67 are already short staffed.
- 68 • Commissioner O’Nan discussed adding research from the staff intern about other city
69 comparisons.
- 70 • Recommendation #4: Simplifying the HSRAP process. This was heard many times.
71 Commissioner Ezran asked if the report could be more specific and tangible. Staff is committed
72 to making needed changes to the application by not asking for information that they already have
73 on file.
- 74 • Recommendation #5: Clothing was missing from the draft report and will be added.
- 75 • The commentary presents intentions and guidelines to help give guidance in nine areas, not hard
76 and fast recommendations.
- 77 • Transportation recommendations should be handed off to the Planning and Transportation
78 Commission. Commissioner O’Nan said that it is too important of an issue to be listed at the end
79 of the report. She would like to craft a recommendation that reiterates strongly how much of an
80 issue it is and recommend that City Council and Planning and Transportation Commission take
81 this on. She also suggested having a list of emerging needs that could be listed for future
82 available funding.
- 83 • Commissioner O’Nan asked about the funding for PACCC and Avenidas. Both agencies do
84 wonderful work, but in order to stretch the funds, Avenidas is serving a large number of
85 individuals, while PACCC serves a smaller number of individuals and it receives the majority of
86 funding. Ms. van der Zwaag cautioned the commissioners that different programs have different
87 service models and associated costs, so just comparing the numbers served could be an issue.
88 She is also concerned about the gap in services for parents who cannot afford the subsidized
89 program with PACCC. There is a group of children who are home alone and unsupervised.
- 90 • Commissioner Bacchetti expressed the challenge in making a statement when we have no
91 definitive facts. Commissioner Ezran suggested that we add Commissioner O’Nan’s comments

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to pg. 16.

- Commissioner Bacchetti suggested that we make a list of emerging needs to be addressed in the future.

The commissioners discussed the report page by page:

- Report needs a Table of Contents with groupings and titles
- Include a briefer history as previously discussed
- Differentiate between when the report discusses the city and opposed to the county
- Discuss more the invisibility of the poor and needy in the community
- Move other community approaches to be included nearer to the HSRAP History section
- Pg 13, suggest change title as it does not match the discussed section or else adjust verbiage
- Pg. 15, where did the list come from? Is anything being overemphasized or underemphasized?
- Pg. 16, Project Safety Net may be overemphasized
- Pg. 18, add something quantitative so that it is clearer
- Pg. 20 add back in the need for women and children receiving temporary shelter
- List Mental and Physical Health separately
- Include the needs for seniors as they get older, i.e. needs differ between 60 years old and 80 years old
- Pg. 26, outreach to those who need to stay connected

Commissioner Ezran thanked everyone for all their effort in putting together this report, and to Commissioner Bacchetti for writing it. Please send any additional comments to Ms. van der Zwaag. She will follow up with absent commissioners for their comments. May 14th is the last day to submit comments.

At the next meeting, the changes will be reviewed again and the commissioners will discuss how to present the report to the Finance Committee.

1. REPORTS FROM OFFICIALS:

A. Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner O’Nan reported that she met with the Palo Alto Mediation Program who will need to present their new mediators to the program for approval.

Commissioner Ezran reported that he attended the Mayor’s Challenge and played table tennis; it was fun. He also reported on the regional breakfast; they had an interesting discussion. He also reported that he and Commissioner O’Nan went to Mayview Health Center to visit and learn more about what they do. He also reported that on the November 6th ballot there will be a state initiative to ban the Death Penalty because of cost to the state budget. He announced that Sunday, June 17th will be World Music Day in Palo Alto from 3:00pm to 7:30pm.

B. Council Buddy Reports:

None

C. Council Liaison Report:

None

D. Staff Liaison Report:

140 Ms. van der Zwaag reported that there are varying ideas for the future of the Cubberley Community
141 Center. There are 3 subcommittees who have been set up by City Council. She is waiting for
142 confirmation if an HRC member can be on the subcommittee. She will include that information in a
143 future email.

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146 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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150 **CALL FOR AGENDA ITEMS**

151 Continued discussion of draft Human Needs Assessment Report.

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154 **ADJOURNMENT**

155 The meeting adjourned at: 9:28pm.