

WEST HOLLYWOOD HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES – DECEMBER 9, 2008
COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The West Hollywood Human Services Commission was called to order by Chair Chuck Henry at 6:05 p.m., Tuesday, December 9, 2008, in the Community Conference Room at City Hall, 8300 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood.

A. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The pledge of allegiance was led by Commissioner Cislowski.

B. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Ruth Cislowski, Steven L. Davis, Debra Farmer, Charles Henry, Shirley Roberts, Hywel Sims, Mark Zangrando.

Not Present: None.

A quorum was present at all times. Staff members present included Daphne Dennis, Social Services Administrator; Leslie Isenberg; and Jeff Book.

C. **POSTING OF AGENDA**

The secretary reported that notices for the meeting had been posted as required.

D. **PROCEDURE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

Persons desiring to address the meeting were asked to complete a request form.

II. **MINUTES**

Minutes of the October 14, 2008, meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Sims, seconded by Commissioner Farmer, with Commissioner Cislowski abstaining.

III. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no speakers.

IV. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. **HOMELESS CONNECT DAY**

Leslie Isenberg reported on West Hollywood Homeless Connect Day, held Oct. 22-23, which involved identifying and contacting as many homeless persons as possible in West Hollywood, and connecting them to services if possible. On this outreach occasion, there were a total of 90 persons contacted (83 male, 7 female; 81 ages 18-60, and 9 over 60; 50 Caucasian, 27 African-American, 11 Latino/a, and 2 Asian). Almost 2/3 of those contacted accessed the SOVA Food Pantry as a result of the outreach.

Ann English of PATH discussed reasons some homeless persons do not choose to access services, and talked about an upcoming PATH staff training.

Commissioner Zangrando asked about the food program at St. Victor Catholic Church. Leslie Isenberg said the church distributes vouchers for food, and that 30 to 70 persons gather there to pick these up. The property is adjacent to a school, and community members sometimes communicate concerns to the city.

Commissioner Sims asked whether there was evidence of increased demand as a result of national economic conditions. Daphne Dennis said staff has talked with SOVA about this, and although SOVA reports increasing utilization of its program, it has so far been able to meet the demand.

B. RETIREMENT BENEFITS FOR AGENCY STAFF

Daphne Dennis provided a chart showing which social services agencies doing business with the city provide retirement benefits to their employees, and what those benefits are. Some permit employee donations to retirement plans; others match those donations, or have separate pension systems. The city requires that contract agencies provide a health plan or a stipend for health costs to positions that are funded in whole or part by the city. Commissioners said they want to explore retirement issues with agencies during the next funding cycle.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DISCUSSIONS

The Commission discussed plans to meet with executive directors of social services agencies, and whether such meetings should be stand-alone conversations with the executive directors, or group meetings at which they could also talk with executive directors of agencies that are similar either in mission or size. Commissioners Cislowski, Farmer, and Henry were designated as a committee to develop a schedule of meetings and to prepare questions to be asked.

B. PLANNING & COORDINATION MEETINGS

Daphne Dennis presented information about upcoming planning and coordination meetings for social services agencies. Commissioners will attend those they are able and interested to attend.

C. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR AGENCIES

Daphne Dennis said staff has met with Public Safety staff to outline approaches to social services agencies on their emergency preparedness for their own staff and for their clients. More information will be forthcoming in the new year, and will focus on prompting agencies to assess their readiness and their role in the city's overall emergency preparedness.

VI. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Daphne Dennis said an update on transit programs will be coming to the Commission,

including information on planned purchase of more accessible CityLine vehicles, and possible changes to the Taxi Coupon program. She also noted that Councilmember Duran has been meeting with No on 8 groups to assess the results of the election.

VII. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION

Commissioner Sims said he is learning about senior services in Wales due to illness of his father, and that he will be away during the January meeting.

Commissioner Davis spoke about the World AIDS Day event.

Commissioner Farmer asked about the Craft Fair, and Daphne Dennis said it had been very successful and raised \$600 for the scholarship fund.

Commissioner Zangrando said he had been unable to attend a recent Halloween review meeting because it coincided with a Prop 8 protest. The review committee will interview many commission members and others involved with the city.

On behalf of the Commission, Commissioner Henry thanked staff for their work during the year.

VIII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The floor was opened for nominations for chair. Commissioner Davis nominated Commissioner Henry. This was seconded by Commissioner Farmer. There were no other nominations. Commissioner Roberts moved to close nominations and declare Commissioner Henry elected. This was seconded by Commissioner Sims, and approved.

The floor was opened for nominations for vice chair. Commissioner Roberts nominated Commissioner Farmer. This was seconded by Commissioner Sims. There were no other nominations. Commissioner Davis moved to close nominations and declare Commissioner Farmer elected. This was seconded by Commissioner Cislowski, and approved.

IX. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no additional items.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

The next regular meeting is at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 8, 2009, at West Hollywood City Hall.

Signed: _____
Steven L. Davis

Attest:

JBook