

WEST HOLLYWOOD HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 10, 2013
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The West Hollywood Human Services Commission was called to order by Chair Ruth Cislowski at 6:05 p.m., Tuesday, September 10, 2013, in the City Council Chambers at 625 N. San Vicente Boulevard, West Hollywood.

A. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Rob Bergstein.

B. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Rob Bergstein, Ruth Cislowski, Steven L. Davis, Andrew Oldershaw, Jimmy Palmieri, Anne-Marie Williams, Mark Zangrando.

Not Present: None.

A quorum was present at all times. Staff members present included Elizabeth Savage, Director, Department of Human Services and Rent Stabilization; Daphne Dennis, David Giugni, Corri Planck, and Jeff Book. Councilmember Jeffrey Prang was also present.

C. **POSTING OF AGENDA**

The secretary reported 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 form.

II. **INSTALLATION OF NEW COMMISSIONER**

Rob Bergstein was sworn in as member of the Commission by Councilmember Jeffrey Prang, who described the new commissioner's background of service to the community and the city. Councilmember Prang thanked Commissioner Zangrando, who is moving to San Diego, for his years of service and his contributions to the city.

III. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of July 9, 2013, were approved on a motion by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Zangrando, with Commissioner Bergstein abstaining.

The minutes of the meeting of July 16, 2013 were approved on a motion by Commissioner Zangrando, seconded by Commissioner Davis, with Commissioner Bergstein abstaining.

IV. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no items from the public.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. RENT STABILIZATION AND HOUSING ANNUAL REPORT

Andi Lovano presented the 2012 annual report of the Rent Stabilization and Housing Division. Among the items noted were the impact of the state's dissolution of redevelopment agencies; the City's support of SB 391 (De Saulnier), which would create a \$75 fee on recording of real estate instruments, which proceeds to the California Homes and Jobs Trust Fund; the Building Block educational series; and the steps to update the housing element of the City's comprehensive plan. The three leading reasons that people contact the Division are eviction, maintenance, and lease issues.

Commissioners discussed dangers of soft-story buildings; changes that followed the passage of the 1995 Costa-Hawkins changes to rent control; what the recent community study showed about income groups in the city; and issues shared by the city's Social Services and Rent Stabilization divisions.

B. 2013 RFP PROCESS REVIEW

Commissioners were invited to review the recent RFP process for social services programs and suggest things they liked or which could be improved in future cycles. Daphne Dennis said applicants would also be asked.

Commissioner Oldershaw said the time given to receive and review proposals was adequate. He liked that commissioners divided up the proposals so that each proposal received detailed consideration. He suggested that the 7 1/2-hour meeting with agencies on June 25, 2013, might be better held as two meetings, and that presentations by agencies could be shortened, rather than more time going to agencies with the most representatives present.

Commissioner Davis liked having publicly noticed subcommittee meetings to review proposals, which he felt helped the Commission's final consideration go more smoothly.

Commissioner Zangrando liked dividing up the proposals so that each would receive detailed consideration.

Commissioner Palmieri liked the publicly noticed subcommittee meetings.

Commissioner Cislowski said holding the long meeting with agencies in the daytime was an improvement over holding it in the evening. She said that in speaking with agencies, it was important to remember that some are entirely new to the process.

Commissioner Williams said it was good to have in-person presentations of

the proposals in addition to the written materials, and felt that remarks by commissioners sometimes could also be shortened.

Daphne Dennis said all the members of the City Council were appreciative of the time and effort that commissioners expended in reviewing and making recommendations regarding the proposals. About \$4.2 million was allocated to the programs this year.

Commissioner Bergstein said he had read the minutes of the last few meetings and watched the video of the last meeting. He also thanked the commissioners for their work in the social services process.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

David Giugni presented information about the Affordable Care Act, which became law in 2010. In addition to expanding eligibility for Medi-Cal, open enrollment for insurance exchange plans will begin on Oct. 1, 2013. He said training will be available to certify people to assist with enrolling participants.

Commissioners discussed ways to engage the community in the opportunities presented by the Act. Suggestions included: working with media partners such as Weherville and WeHo Confidential; using social media; having a graph that simplifies information about the law; targeting groups that typically do not have employer-based insurance, including wait staff and consultants; putting an emphasis on the elimination of insurance denials based on pre-existing conditions; using attractive elements to bring people in to hear about the Act; emphasizing that the changes are not only to benefit the very poor, but many others as well, by citing the actual income figures that apply to the Act's subsidies; and going to where events are already happening.

VII. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Palmieri expressed concern about reports of PATH residents being denied adequate meals and forced to deal with temperatures up to 87 degrees at night. Daphne Dennis said there had been inexcusable instances recently and that steps were being taken to prevent them from recurring, as well as renewed interest in how agencies deal with internal emergencies such as missing staff or broken equipment, as well as with larger emergencies such as earthquakes. A representative from PATH will be invited to speak to the Commission.

Commissioner Williams brought greetings from former Commissioner Ponsella Gratton, who was the first person of color to serve on this Commission.

Commissioners expressed regret that Commissioner Zangrando is moving to San Diego and cannot continue as a member. They thanked him for his expertise and feeling in the work of a Human Services commissioner, and for having helped them when they were new on the Commission. Commissioner Zangrando thanked staff and Commissioners, and said the work of the Commission illustrates how different West Hollywood is from many other places.

VIII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

David Giugni distributed an updated transgender resource guide, compiled by Corey Roskin, providing health care and other information. He said the HIV prevention providers group will meet at 10:30 am on Wednesday, Sept. 18, at City Hall.

Daphne Dennis thanked Commissioner Zangrando for his work over many years. She noted the West Hollywood Book Fair will be held Sept. 29, said the Community Study received an international prize, and welcomed Commissioner Bergstein.

IX. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no additional items from the public.


X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Signed:



Ruth Cislowski, Chair



Date