

WEST HOLLYWOOD HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES – DECEMBER 10, 2013
COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ROOM

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The West Hollywood Human Services Commission was called to order by Chair Steven L. Davis at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, December 10, 2013, in the Community Conference Room at City Hall, 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood.

A. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chris Worland.

B. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Rob Bergstein, Ruth Cislowski, Steven L. Davis,
Andrew Oldershaw, Jimmy Palmieri.

Not Present: Barbara Meltzer, Anne-Marie Williams.

A quorum was present at all times. Staff members present included: Elizabeth Savage, Director of Human Services and Rent Stabilization; David Giugni, Leslie Isenberg, Cortez Jordan, Clavon Jubrey, Stephanie Martinez, Corri Planck, Marina Rabinovich, Suzy Salazar, Olivia Walker, and Jeff Book. Council Deputy Michelle Rex 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. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the November 12, 2013, meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Bergstein, seconded by Commissioner Cislowski.

III. **ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Laurie Lang, CEO of Project Angel Food since August 2013, introduced herself to the Commission and spoke about the long working relationship between the City and the agency. Commissioner Bergstein noted he was one of the first to cook for Project Angel Food at the time of its creation.

IV. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Without objection, the Commission took up Item IV. B. first.

B. RECREATION SERVICES UPDATE

Olivia Walker, Recreation Services Manager, provided the Commission with an update on public programs, services, and activities provided by the Division, which follows the motto "Parks Make Life Better." She introduced the division's leadership group, including Cortez Jordan, Clavon Jubrey, Stephanie Martinez, Marina Rabinovich, Suzy Salazar, and Chris Worland.

Suzy Salazar spoke on the Division's use of ActiveNet for online registration, which has been available for about a year and a half. It has been popular with users, with about 61% of registrations now done online.

Chris Worland spoke about programs at West Hollywood Park, including Tiny Tots (from 18 months to 5 years old, in two groups, with parent participation in the younger group); Day Camp; sports programs for children; Book Fair; AIDS Walk; CSW and the LA PRIDE festival; and the Halloween Youth Carnival, which is a separate event from the Oct. 31 Carnaval on Santa Monica Blvd.

Clavon Jubrey spoke about programs at Plummer Park, including the Teen Center, Senior Center meal program, tennis facilities, soccer, ESL classes, and events such as Victory in Europe, National Night Out, the Russian Cultural Festival, and Movies in the Park.

Cortez Jordan spoke about aquatics programs including the Gators Swim Team; lap swim available seven days a week; about 35 active lifeguards during the summer season; water aerobics; group and private swimming lessons. Almost 1,000 people participated in swimming lessons this year.

Marina Rabinovich spoke about the Farmers Market, now 27 years old, with agricultural as well as non-agricultural vendors, and about the Community Garden on Detroit and Lexington, which has 33 plots and is open daily from 8 am to 7 pm for personal use, not for profit.

Olivia Walker spoke about the Division's work on special events, including the presentation of Debbie Reynolds at the 2013 West Hollywood Book Fair.

Commissioner Cislowski said that programming for younger children has declined at the Book Fair in the last few years.

A. REPORT FROM PATH

Joel Roberts, CEO, and Shannon Legere, homeless assistance program director, provided information from PATH.

Joel Roberts spoke about the 20-year relationship between PATH and the City. PATH developed from the West Hollywood Homeless Organization, which became Foundation House, and then PATH. He said a major trend over the years is that the people seeking assistance are less likely to be people who lost their jobs and were in temporary need, and more likely to be long-term chronic homeless. He also noted an ongoing decline in public funding for emergency housing, with about half of funds for this currently being

contributed privately, due to cutbacks in government funding of shelters.

Shannon Legere spoke about shifts in housing policies, and that many people are dealing with chronic health issues, including mental health and substance abuse, which is requiring a change in staffing patterns. They are seeking to provide staff with “mental health first aid” training as well as development in non-violent crisis intervention.

In discussion with Commissioner Palmieri, Shannon Legere described a typical day for a person staying at PATH, including being encouraged but not required to leave the facility during the day. They discussed the lunch sign-up system, how bedbug elimination and prevention is handled, and what happens when lunch is inadequate or not available.

Commissioner Cislowski spoke about funding changes, and said conversation was needed on what deliverable services the City should be expecting from PATH, given the context of other funding that the City cannot control.

Commissioner Oldershaw and Shannon Legere discussed how PATH evaluates and responds to mental health issues, and what criteria are applied to determine a denial of services. She said services were denied if a person was belligerent or abusive, or jeopardized safety for other people.

Commissioner Davis said services for the homeless are changing, and expressed concerns about accessing services at late hours, and about the adequacy of meals.

C. LAGLC SENIOR PROGRAM

Kathleen Sullivan, director of the senior program at the LA Gay & Lesbian Center, spoke about higher mortality among seniors who don't have friend groups and a sense of community. The senior program provides many opportunities for community every month. She spoke about development of senior and youth housing; outreach in West Hollywood; and partnering with other agencies, including PATH, Gay & Lesbian Elder Housing, the West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation, and Jewish Family Service. She said the Center works with about 3,000 volunteers per year, and especially welcomes them for the Senior Center's holiday party, Cinco de Mayo, and Día de Los Muertos.

D. HOMELESS SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE

Commissioner Davis said the Dec. 9, 2013, meeting of the Homeless Services Subcommittee was well attended, with Commissioners Bergstein and Williams, subcommittee members, also present, along with Commissioner Palmieri for part of the meeting, and representatives from Housing Works, the West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation, Gay & Lesbian Center, PATH, and Friends Research Institute.

This meeting focused on the outreach component of homeless services. Upcoming meetings will focus on other aspects. Leslie Isenberg said the

Sheriff's COPPS team (Community Oriented Policing & Problem Solving) will participate in upcoming meetings. The subcommittee hopes to report to the Commission by February.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. ATTENDANCE AT OTHER MEETINGS

Staff provided a schedule of upcoming Planning & Coordination meetings with social services providers, and a calendar of City board and commission meetings. Commissioner Cislowski moved to postpone consideration of the item until the January meeting. This was seconded by Commissioner Bergstein and approved.

VI. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Oldershaw said classes for his graduate studies conflict with the Commission's meeting schedule, and asked about the possibility of changing the Commission's regular date of second Tuesdays. Staff said changing the date would require an amendment to the Commission bylaws, which are set by the City Council.

Commissioner Palmieri spoke about #BOOM!, the alcohol- and drug-free New Year's Eve experience being held at West Hollywood Park Auditorium from 9 pm to 2 am on the night of Dec. 31, 2013.

Commissioner Bergstein asked about remarks by a former Disabilities Advisory Board member who said she had been mistreated by personnel of Access Services. Leslie Isenberg said Access took the complaint.

Commissioner Bergstein asked for a reported recent uptick in suicides in the City to be placed on the agenda for discussion.

Commissioner Bergstein said a group with information about early cancer detection through awareness of dense breast tissue would like to speak to the Commission. He provided staff with the contact information.

Commissioner Davis said he would like to revisit the possibility of City funding for Project Chicken Soup, a social services provider which was not chosen for funding in the recent RFP process. He would like to see if the Commission is interested in recommending that the City Council allocate \$50,000 to this provider.

VII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

David Giugni spoke about clothing collection being organized, and about the City providing some transportation on New Year's Eve, as well as information about parking alternatives.

Elizabeth Savage spoke about the grand opening of the Courtyard at La Brea, to be held at 11 am on Monday, January 27, 2014.

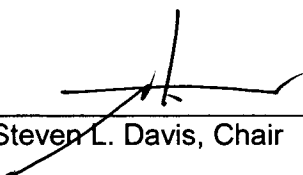
VIII. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no additional items from the public.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Signed:



Steven L. Davis, Chair

5-9-15

Date