

WEST HOLLYWOOD HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES -- JANUARY 13, 2004
COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL

I. CALL TO ORDER

The West Hollywood Human Services Commission was called to order by Chair Ruth Cislowski at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 13, 2004, in the Community Conference Room at 8300 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Commissioner Henry.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Ruth Cislowski, Steven Davis, Ponsella Gratton, Dr. Bill Griffin,
Charles Henry, Peter Mackler, Shirley Roberts.

Excused: None.

A quorum was present at all times. Commissioner Roberts joined the meeting in progress. Staff present included Lloyd R. Long, Director of Human Services; Daphne Dennis, Social Services Administrator; Diane Kahn-Epstein, David Giugni, Elizabeth Savage, 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. INSTALLATION AND PRESENTATION

Commissioner Charles Henry stated and signed the oath of office, and was installed as a member of the Commission. Commissioner Henry is Director of the Office of AIDS Programs and Policy for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

On behalf of the Commission, Commissioner Cislowski presented Commissioner Mackler with a plaque in honor of his service as chair.

III. MINUTES

The minutes for December 9, 2003, were approved, on a motion by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Griffin, with Commissioners Henry and Mackler abstaining due to their absence from that meeting.

IV. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no items from the public at this time.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. YEAR-END REPORT ON SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAMS

Daphne Dennis presented the year-end report on social services programs, noting that there are increasing impacts on people who are homebound, on frail seniors, and on people with disabilities. These topics will receive additional attention in the next RFP for social services.

She said staff is recommending that funding for LA Shanti/Wendy's Hope be terminated for reasons provided in the report.

Elizabeth Savage commented on the city's review of agency budgets and financial data. Site visits focusing on fiscal controls are conducted, compliance with the city's accounting handbook is required, and written notices to correct deficiencies are issued when necessary. In response to a question from Commissioner Henry, she confirmed that the audited financial statements from all of the city's funded agencies are current.

Commissioner Davis asked whether unexpended funds can be retained for social services reprogramming, and Daphne Dennis said the Commission could request the Council to authorize that.

Public comment was received from: 1. Neil Blacker, executive director of Dispute Resolution Services. 2. Vernetta Tobierre, of Aviva S.A.F.E. Afterschool. 3. Katherine Kobylak, of Women Helping Women Services. 4. Paul Castro of Jewish Family Services. 5. Susan Alexman of JFS's West Hollywood Comprehensive Services Center. 6. Susan Mendlowitz of Partners Adult Day Healthcare Center.

Commissioner Roberts requested salary figures for senior staff at Jewish Family Services, and Paul Castro said he would provide a Form 990, containing this information, to her.

Commissioner Davis asked about the number of participants in the JFS Nutrition program, which is listing an achievement of 49% of goal in that category. Daphne Dennis said Leslie Isenberg is working with JFS Nutrition to expand

attendance. Updated information will be provided to the Commission in February.

Public comment was received from: 7. Dana Cagle of the Gay and Lesbian Center's legal program. 8. Michelle Williams Court of Bet Tzedek Legal Services. 9. Steve Wayland on behalf of PAWS/LA. 10. Carol Henault for Light Up a Library, a project of NCJW/LA.

Carol Henault said Light Up a Library needs assistance in locating volunteers to run the program, including choosing appropriate stories, reading them to students, and helping students find books to read. Hours are from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for school programs, and from 2:30 to 4:30 for afterschool programs.

Public comment was received from: 11. Joel Roberts of PATH. 12. Dylan Gailey of GLC youth services. 13. Rosalyne Blumenstein of LA Shanti's Wendy's Hope and Emotional Support Services programs. 14. Roy Becerra of LA Shanti. 15. Ximena Morgan of LA Shanti's CITY Project.

There was a brief recess.

When the meeting resumed, public comment was received from: 16. Xavier Martin of Jewish Vocational Services (WHEST). 17. Joya Parenteau of Project Angel Food. 18. Tiffany Horton of GLC. 19. Jeff Bailey of GLC health education and prevention. He noted that 1,700 people -- a record -- attended Club Freedom on New Year's Eve 2004. And lastly, 20. Paul Gore of Los Angeles Free Clinic.

Commissioner Henry asked if any agencies are on a fee-for-service basis, and Daphne Dennis said none currently were, but some programs operate in a way that could accommodate that. Commissioner Henry asked about evaluations of agencies which underperform despite expending 100% of funding, and Daphne Dennis said that it varies by the type of agency and service provided, but that in some cases a fee-for-service basis may be a good approach. Commissioner Henry said he would like to know hours of operation for the agencies, and raised the question of why HIV-related agencies seemed to have lower performance numbers than other programs.

Commissioner Roberts moved to ask Council to hold unexpended funds for future social services reprogramming. This was seconded by Commissioner Davis and unanimously approved.

Commissioner Roberts moved to approve the staff recommendation accompanying the year-end report (regarding termination of funding for Wendy's Hope), with the additional step of placing LA Shanti on probation. This was seconded by Commissioner Mackler, and unanimously approved.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VII. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Mackler said that Councilmember Abbe Land would like to see more participation in First Five L.A., and that a new group is being formed to address health issues of youth ages 6 to 18.

Commissioner Henry asked staff to assess the impact that Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposed budget would have on West Hollywood constituents, and noted that the planned cap on ADAP, the state's AIDS Drug Assistance Program, would directly prevent Los Angeles County residents living with AIDS from receiving the medical treatment they require.

Commissioner Cislowski asked to schedule a quasi-retreat or special meeting to discuss funding priorities and goals for the upcoming year. This will be planned for a future meeting, possibly in late February.

VIII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

There were no additional items from staff.

IX. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no additional items from the public.


X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Minutes approved March 9, 2004



RUTH CISLOWSKI, Chair



JEFF BOOK, Secretary