

WEST HOLLYWOOD HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES – OCTOBER 13, 2009
PLUMMER PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

I. CALL TO ORDER

The West Hollywood Human Services Commission was called to order by Chair Chuck Henry at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 13, 2009, in Art Room 2 of Plummer Park Community Center, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Commissioner Davis.

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. City staff members included Daphne Dennis, Social Services Administrator; David Giugni, Leslie Isenberg, and Jeff Book. Council Deputy Ivor Pine 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

Minutes of the September 8, 2009, meeting were approved.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ivor Pine, deputy to Councilmember Lindsey Horvath, introduced himself and said their office looked forward to working with the Commission. He served previously on the staff of Los Angeles City Controller Laura Chick.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF HEALTHCARE DEBATE

Jeff Book, the commission secretary, reviewed the current status of the federal health care debate, and provided a handout listing likely elements of the eventual reform, issues still being debated, the procedural steps remaining before a reform is adopted, and key participants in this closing phase of the legislative process.

He said the reform is likely to prohibit denial of insurance for pre-existing conditions. Topics still being debated include whether to create a non-profit, publicly-created option that would compete with other insurance companies as a way of restraining costs; how to fund the program; whether employers will be required to provide insurance to employees; and to what extent the government should subsidize the health insurance premiums for low- and middle-income persons.

B. DISCUSSION WITH EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

The Commission met with Lorri Jean, CEO of the Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Center; Jeffrey Bujer, co-executive director of the Saban Free Clinic; and Vivian Sauer, associate executive director of Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles.

The guests discussed how the economic downturn has affected their agencies, including loss of public funds and decreases in private support, as well as increased need for many services. They also discussed what methods they follow to collaborate with agencies, and how these relationships enhance their performance. And they discussed the specific role that contracts with the City of West Hollywood have in the overall work of their agencies.

Commissioners posed a number of questions in discussion with the guests, including how the anticipated federal healthcare legislation would affect their agencies, and how the City and the Commission can provide additional support to their work. Lorri Jean said that periodic assessments of community needs are very helpful, and Commissioner Henry said that input from the agencies, and how questions can help them, should be considered when the City conducts its next needs assessment.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. VULNERABLE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROJECT

Daphne Dennis spoke about progress in securing supportive housing for the most vulnerable homeless people, through Shelter + Care housing subsidy vouchers.

B. SHELTER PLUS CARE

Daphne Dennis spoke about the application for Shelter + Care supportive housing vouchers, which will be submitted to the County of Los Angeles Homeless Authority for five-year funding. Staff has been working with Los Angeles County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky's office and also with United Way.

VI. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION

Commissioner Sims noted that Oct. 12 marks the 11th anniversary of the 1998 murder of Matthew Shepard near Laramie, Wyo., and asked that the meeting be adjourned in his memory and in support of his mother's effort on behalf of federal hate-crimes legislation.

Commissioner Davis noted that the November meeting will include election of officers for the Commission.

Commissioner Cislowski spoke about the Family Summit planned for Oct. 24.

Commissioner Zangrando said his home was burglarized a couple of weeks ago, and thanked the Sheriff's Department for their prompt response, which led to recovery of the stolen items.

Commissioners Henry and Zangrando spoke about the General Plan updating process, which recently focused on a transit element, as well as differences among the east, west, and mid-city parts of West Hollywood.

VII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Leslie Isenberg spoke about breast cancer awareness events taking place in October.

Daphne Dennis said the deadline to receive letters of intent for augmented social services funding, targeted especially at agencies that have been cut back by other government agencies, is 4 p.m. on Oct. 27. Recommendations will be brought to the November meeting of the Commission.


Daphne Dennis also provided dates for regular (not H1N1) flu shots at the Senior Center in Plummer Park, and at the Iranian Jewish Community Center at Temple Beth El.

VIII. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no additional items from the public.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m. in memory of Matthew Shepard, and in hope for adoption of a federal hate-crimes law that includes sexual orientation.

Signed: 

Steven L. Davis

Attest:

