

WEST HOLLYWOOD HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES – MAY 11, 2004
COMMUNITY CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The West Hollywood Human Services Commission was called to order by Chair Ruth Cislowksi at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, May 11, 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 Mackler.

B. **ROLL CALL**

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

A quorum was present at all times. Staff present included Lloyd R. Long, Director of Human Services; Daphne Dennis, Social Services Administrator; Diane Kahn-Epstein, David Giugni, 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**

The minutes for the meetings of April 13 and April 21, 2004, were approved, on a motion by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Griffin, with Commissioner Mackler abstaining due to absence with regard to April 13.

III. **ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC**

1. Judith Gordon, the new executive director of NCJW/LA, introduced herself to the Commission.

2. Kevin Kurth of Being Alive thanked the Commission for its support of this organization.

3. Howard Jacobs, Rent Stabilization Commissioner and chairman of the board of Being Alive, provided an update on that organization's activities, including providing nine newsletters per year to a readership of about 10,000 people. He thanked the Commission for their support.

4. Dorothy Higa, principal of West Hollywood Elementary School, thanked the Commission for their support and updated them on how it is used at that school.

5. Pat Dachenhausen, principal of Laurel Elementary School, thanked the Commission for their support and updated them on how it is used at that school.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. LA SHANTI REPORT

Jim Flood, interim executive director of LA Shanti, provided a brief update on that agency's activities.

B. USE OF SOCIAL SERVICES CONTRACT SAVINGS

Daphne Dennis presented alternatives for reprogramming of \$23,472 in contract savings from the 2002-03 grant period, such as including the amount in the RFP process for 2004-06, or allocating the funds to particular agencies for the purpose of meeting urgent needs of constituents.

After discussion, Commissioner Davis moved to recommend to the City Council that \$11,236 be allocated to Jewish Family Services, and \$11,236 to Aid for AIDS, for urgent needs of constituents, with \$1,000 to remain in the Social Services Division budget for purchase of food vouchers, bus tokens, and taxi coupons for emergency needs of constituents. This was seconded by Commissioner Griffin.

The motion was unanimously approved, with the understanding that all agencies would be notified of the availability of the funds at the two designated agencies, and that basic information about how the funds are expended will be provided to the Commission, especially with regard to any recurring landlord/tenant issues that may arise.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAM PRIORITIES 2004-06 AND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DOCUMENT

Diane Kahn-Epstein and Daphne Dennis reported on the possibility of a separate planning and allocation process for child care and school-based programs, based on current funding as well as an additional \$231,775 in child care impact fees

received by the City. The process would aim to develop a comprehensive plan for educational enhancement at schools which serve West Hollywood residents.

After discussion about the history of child care and school-based funding by the City, Commissioner Davis moved, seconded by Commissioner Mackler, to agree with the concept of a separate planning and allocation process for child care and school-based funding.

Commissioner Henry said the concept was ill-defined and that there was not enough information provided to justify taking funds out of the comprehensive planning process prior to evaluating and balancing community needs and apportioning social services funding based on that evaluation.

There was a brief recess.

The motion was withdrawn, and Commissioner Mackler, seconded by Commissioner Roberts, moved to recommend to the City Council that a planning and allocation process separate from the Social Services funding process be undertaken for child care and school-based programs in conjunction with the City's determination of expenditure on child-care impact fees.

Discussion continued regarding whether projected school funding would be withdrawn from the 2004-06 contract process, and held separately so it could be allocated in a subsequent process.

Commissioner Roberts withdrew her second. After discussion, Commissioner Gratton seconded the motion, and the question was called. The motion was approved on a vote of 5 to 2, with Commissioners Cislowski, Gratton, Griffin, Henry, and Mackler in favor, and Commissioners Davis and Roberts opposed.

Commissioner Henry moved for staff to present a recommendation regarding the timing of a separate planning process, and a comparison showing its relationship to the current planning process. This was seconded by Commissioner Mackler, and approved.

There was a brief recess.

Social services staff continued providing overviews of local needs, including legal assistance, affordable housing, seniors and people with disabilities, food, social support, case management, transportation, and HIV/AIDS programs.

A subcommittee on the RFP process reported 11 priorities: (1) Seniors, (2) HIV/AIDS, (3) Nutrition, (4) Medical and Dental, (5) Counseling and Substance abuse, (6) Disability, (7) Living Assistance, (8) Homelessness, (9) Employment, (10) Legal, and (11) Immigrant.

By consensus, child care and school-based programs were added in the priority list between Items 5 and 6, with subsequent items renumbered accordingly. With this amendment, the Commission acted by consensus to recommend the release of the Request for Proposals document for 2004-06.

VI. ITEMS FROM THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Roberts spoke about the Laurel senior housing project, which was approved at a recent Council meeting by a vote of 3-1-1.

Commissioner Davis thanked staff for an earlier packet, and Commissioner Cislowski said these may be coming early for some time, in order to give commissioners more time to determine if they need additional information before the meeting.

Commissioner Gratton wondered if we need to focus more funding on substance abuse counseling, particularly with regard to a rising HIV/AIDS infection rate.

VII. ITEMS FROM STAFF


There were no additional items from staff.

VIII. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

Kathy Watt of Van Ness Recovery House spoke briefly.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Signed: 
Ruth Cislowski, Chair

Attest:

