

WEST HOLLYWOOD HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES – MARCH 9, 2010
WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL

I. **CALL TO ORDER**

The West Hollywood Human Services Commission was called to order by Chair Deb Farmer at 6:00 p.m., Tuesday, March 9, 2010, in the Community Conference Room of West Hollywood City Hall, 8300 Santa Monica Blvd.

A. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The pledge of allegiance was led by staff.

B. **ROLL CALL**

Present: Steven L. Davis, Debra Farmer, Charles Henry,
Shirley Roberts, Mark Zangrando.

Not Present: Ruth Cislowski, Hywel Sims.

A quorum was present at all times. City staff members present included Daphne Dennis, Social Services Administrator; David Giugni, Leslie Isenberg, Craig Rhea, and Jeff Book.

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 Feb. 9, 2010, meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Zangrando, with Commissioner Henry abstaining due to absence. The minutes of the Feb. 16, 2010, meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Henry, seconded by Commissioner Roberts.

III. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no comments from the public.

IV. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. DISCUSSION WITH EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

The Commission met with David Grunwald of Alternative Living for the Aging, and Mitch Kamin of Bet Tzedek Legal Services. This is the last of a series of meetings with agency executive directors about the effects of the economic situation as well as changes in government funding of their programs.

David Grunwald introduced himself as the new executive director of ALA, which was previously led by Janet Witkin. He said the agency has recently completed a comprehensive strategic plan, after extensive interviews and discussion. He said they have a reserve of \$2 million, an annual budget of \$1 million, and had to use reserves to cover \$300,000 in shortfall in the last year. They have initiated more ambitious foundation grant requests, have no intention of reducing their staff or program, and may expand. This year the annual dinner will be renamed in memory of Janet Witkin, and the 13 past presidents of the board will be honored.

Mitch Kamin said Bet Tzedek provides direct services to about 12,000 people per year, in addition to educational and policy work. They had a 19% drop in income this year, and reduced their budget by 16 to 17%. They experienced significant salary reductions, even while experiencing a significant increase in demand for services. They have sustained all key programs, and are still moving forward under a strategic plan adopted in 2007. The annual budget is now about \$7 million, and there is a \$4.2 million endowment.

Both spoke about developing cooperative relationships with other social services agencies.

Commissioners discussed the agencies' activities and prospects with the executive directors. David Grunwald discussed why ALA is planning one-bedroom units in their Fairfax project. Commissioner Henry said it was unfortunate that Bet Tzedek did not have a representative at the last meeting of the Commission, during consideration of augmented funding.

B. ANNUAL REPORT ON SUBSIDIZED TRANSIT PROGRAMS

Joyce Rooney reported on the city's subsidized transit programs, including bus pass subsidies, City Line fixed-route service, Dial-a-Ride, and taxi coupons.

Commissioner Henry asked for a review of the criteria for the taxi coupon program. Commissioner Davis said it would be good to make sure the program is reaching the people who really need the service.

In response to a question from Commissioner Zangrando, Joyce Rooney described the complementary relationship between the city's transit programs and Access, which is a county program targeted at people eligible under the criteria of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Commissioner Henry also asked for a review of the great per-ride cost for Dial-a-Ride, in comparison to taxi coupons.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. PROPOSED CALENDAR FOR RFP

Daphne Dennis presented a proposed calendar for the Request For Proposals (RFP) process for providing social services in 2010-2012. The calendar suggested a public hearing on priorities (special meeting) on April 7; a priorities discussion and approval of the RFP document on April 13; City Council priorities discussion and approval of RFP document on May 3; release of the RFP and bidder's conference on May 5; proposals due on June 2; rescheduling the June 8 Commission meeting to June 22; Commission review of RFPs with applicants on June 22; staff recommendations and public hearing (special meeting) on July 6; Commission recommendations (special meeting) on July 8; cancel August 10 meeting; City Council action on September 7; and commencement of 2010-2011 programs on October 1.

After discussion, this schedule was approved with one change. Instead of Commission recommendations on July 8, that will be done at the regular July meeting date, July 13.

Commissioner Henry said he would like data on all services provided to West Hollywood residents by the applicant social services agencies, regardless of funding source. This will be added to the RFP as a form.

Commissioner Henry asked why the city was on a 2-year funding cycle for social services, given the timing of the community needs assessments. After discussion, Commissioner Henry moved to make this year's recommendation to Council a recommendation for a 3-year cycle. This was seconded by Commissioner Davis and approved.

With regard to input from advisory boards, it was decided to request that an inquiry about recommendations be placed on the agenda of the advisory boards, with staff, and commission members when possible, attending to seek the input in person. Commissioner Zangrando said the visit to the Russian Advisory Board should include an interpreter.

VI. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION

Commissioner Henry asked if Commission minutes are being posted on the city's website. Staff will check on this.

Commissioner Farmer asked if there is a farmer's market on the west side of the city. There was an experiment with one at West Hollywood Park, which was not successful, and there is, or was, a regular one on Melrose Place, in Los Angeles.

Commissioner Farmer asked about progress on the youth scholarship program, and Craig Rhea said that three were given last year, and five this year, for a total of eight.

VII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Daphne Dennis commented on Women's History Month.

VIII. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

Ruth Tittle said the March meeting of Lesbian and Gay Advisory Board is Thursday this week.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Signed: _____

Steven L. Davis

Attest: _____

