

WEST HOLLYWOOD HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES – JANUARY 12, 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, January 12, 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 Commissioner Davis.

B. ROLL CALL

Present: Ruth Cislowski, Steven L. Davis, Debra Farmer, Charles Henry, Shirley Roberts, Hywel Sims, Mark Zangrando.
Not Present: None.

Commissioners Zangrando and Cislowski joined the meeting in progress. A quorum was present at all times. City staff members included Sam Baxter, Director of Human Services; Daphne Dennis, Social Services Administrator; David Giugni, Leslie Isenberg, Craig Rhea, and Jeff Book.

On behalf of the Commission, Commissioner Farmer welcomed Sam Baxter to his first meeting as Director of Human Services.

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 Dec. 8, 2009, meeting were approved on a motion by Commissioner Davis, seconded by Commissioner Henry.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments from the public.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. DISCUSSION WITH EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

The Commission met with Terry Goddard of Aid for AIDS and Andrew Diamond of AVIVA Family and Children's Services. This is part of a series of meetings with agency directors about the effects of the economic situation as well as changes in government funding of their programs.

Terry Goddard said that Aid for AIDS, which merged recently with the Serra Project, had lost a residential AIDS facility grant, but had anticipated this in preparing their current budget, and therefore were not forced to make cutbacks because of it. He said the agency operates four group homes and 96 units of permanent housing, and continues to provide direct financial assistance. About 85% of their budget is from government funding, with 8% from private sources, and 5% from foundations. About 1% of the budget is from the City of West Hollywood.

Andrew Diamond spoke about the longstanding relationship between Aviva and the City. They recently closed a six-person facility in Van Nuys due to underfunding, but continue to provide a wide range of services despite economic conditions. The director of Aviva's SAFE (Student Aftercare for Enrichment) program related a story about helping a child with Russian-speaking parents.

Commissioners discussed the agencies' activities and prospects with the executive directors. Terry Goddard asked how the City is faring, and Daphne Dennis said that although there are expectations of internal cutbacks, there has been no decrease in city funding for social services.

B. LETTER OF INTENT RE-ISSUE

Daphne Dennis reported that the City Council had adjusted the timeline for the Letter of Intent for augmented social services funding, setting the release date on Dec. 22, 2009; the due date for applications on Jan. 21, 2010; the report to the Commission on Feb. 9, 2010; and the item to Council on March 1, 2010. An additional figure of about \$7,000 has been added to the amount available, due to contract savings.

C. GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY REPORT

Commissioner Zangrando spoke about the most recent meetings of the General Plan Advisory Committee, and provided handouts of several of the presentations made there. Topics included the inclusion of a central city zone in planning discussions. Final meetings of the advisory committee are in February.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. REHABILITATION OF 1234 HAYWORTH

Rose Olson, director of housing for West Hollywood Community Housing Corp., and Lise Bornstein of Killefer Flammang architects spoke about the renovation of the 48-unit apartment building at 1234 Hayworth, which was purchased by WHCHC in May 2009, and is in undergoing transformation into housing for lower-income seniors. If applications for state and federal assistance are approved, construction is planned for 2011, with occupancy possible in 2012. The plan calls for improving appearance on the street, redesigning for handicapped access, adding common areas, and using sustainable and environmentally sound design principles. Those who were forced out by the prior owner's development plans will have first chance to return, if they meet age and income criteria.

VI. ITEMS FROM COMMISSION

Commissioner Davis said the Hate Crimes task force will meet Jan. 21 at the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station.

Commissioner Henry asked about scheduling the social event with executive directors, and Daphne Dennis said this will follow the last meeting with the executive directors.

Commissioner Henry asked for the next RFP for social services contracts to include a question asking agencies to identify the number of West Hollywood residents who receive agency services that are not funded by the City of West Hollywood.

Commissioner Davis expressed appreciation for the city holiday party.

VII. ITEMS FROM STAFF

David Giugni was named employee of the year at the city holiday party.

Feb. 10 is the Senior Valentine Dance at House of Blues.

There will be a General Plan workshop on Jan. 30, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Plummer Park.

Two members of the Senior Advisory Board – Shirley Kaplan and Mike "Rocky" Mansdorf – passed away recently.

The City of Los Angeles may cut all DASH bus service to West Hollywood, as well as their downtown routes.

The Homeless Connect program is Jan. 27-28.

Ken Genser, who served for 22 years on the Santa Monica city council and was the current mayor, died this week. Commissioner Sims recalled his support for the Santa Monica AIDS Project and asked for the meeting to be adjourned in his memory.

VIII. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no additional items from the public.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m. in memory of Mayor Ken Genser.

Signed: _____


Steven L. Davis

Attest: _____

