

City of Alameda, California
SOCIAL SERVICE HUMAN RELATIONS BOARD
THURSDAY, August 26, 2021
Approved MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Board member Kristin Furuichi Fong called the meeting to order at approximately 7:01pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Board members Dianne Yamashiro-Omi, Kristin Furuichi Fong, Priya Jagannathan, Samantha Green, Scott Means, and Tony Lewis.

Absent: Vice President Sarah Lewis (excused).

City staff: Lois Butler, Amanda Gehrke, and Eric Fonstein (Secretary to the Board).

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3-A 2021-1238 Review and Approve July 22, 2021 Draft Minutes

A motion to approve the minutes of July 22, 2021 was made by Board member Means and seconded by Board member Yamashiro-Omi. Ayes: Vice President Kristin Furuichi Fong, Board members Yamashiro-Omi, Jagannathan, Green, Means, and T. Lewis. Nays: none. Motion passed 6-0.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Joshua Altieri, Community Relations Manager with the Alameda Housing Authority (AHA) announced the opening of a housing voucher program waitlist for both the Housing Choice Voucher Program as well as the Project-Based Voucher Program for projects located within the City of Alameda. The waitlist opens on September 10 at 8:30am, and will close September 20, 2021 at 12pm. Staffed application centers will be located at the Mastic Senior Center, the Alameda Library on Oak St., Alameda Boys and Girls Club, and the Alameda Point Collaborative, as well as informational sessions and community outreach. For more info on the Wait List, including answers to frequently asked questions, please visit http://www.alamedahsg.org/housing_services/2021_housing_wait_list.

5. AGENDA ITEMS

5-A 2021-1239 Recommendation to City Council that City Council, Board and Commission Meetings Are Scheduled to Ensure Maximum Public Participation without Special Accommodations for Specific Religious Holidays

Staff member Eric Fonstein informed the Board of the July 20, 2021 City Council direction to SSHRB to consider a policy recommendation regarding the scheduling of public meetings on religious holidays. Mr. Fonstein reported that no other neighboring governments have formal policies, except for Christmas, as it is a national holiday, and that public rely on the regularity of scheduled meetings. Staff recommended a policy where

public meetings are scheduled to ensure maximum public participation without special accommodations for specific religious holiday. Mr. Fonstein introduced Deputy City Attorney Stephanie Vollmer, who answered clarifying questions, and invited discussion.

Board members expressed the difficulty of making a recommendation that would impact all public meetings without understanding the needs of the public. Three options were discussed: 1) surveying each Board and Commission at the beginning of each year to determine potential scheduling conflicts, 2) each Board or Commission surveying their attendees separately to determine the potential conflicts of each group, or 3) a general survey that is shared with the individual Boards and Commissions surveying thereby maximizing public participation.

Board member Means put forth a motion to recommend to City Council that City Council and other Boards and Commissions who hold regular meetings survey themselves to determine the greatest level of public participation, seconded by Board member T. Lewis. Ayes: Vice President Kristin Furuichi Fong, Board members Yamashiro-Omi, Jagannathan, Green, Means, and T. Lewis. Nays: none. Motion passed 6-0.

5-B 2021-1240 Recommendation to Review and Provide Feedback on a Draft of The Road Home: A 5 Year Plan to Prevent and Respond to Homelessness in Alameda.

Staff member Amanda Gehrke provided a status report on the Homelessness Strategic Plan (HSP) and introduced consultants Amanda Wehrman, Director of Strategy and Evaluation at Homepage, and Aram Hauslaib, Senior Staff Attorney for Homepage, who presented an update on the strategic planning process. Homepage consultants are seeking feedback from the Board and expect to present a revised draft to SSHRB in September, then to City Council in October, 2021. Ms. Wehrman presented the current draft, highlighting the following key segments:

- The data in Alameda show a 13% increase in homeless count from 2017-2019, and highlight that certain demographic segments of the population are disproportionately at-risk for housing instability or homelessness.
- Identified needs informed the three overarching goals and supporting strategies that aim to secure a housing future for all Alamedans, increase access to homeless emergency response services, and mobilize the citywide response to homelessness. Strategies include short and long term housing solutions, flexible resources for diversion, prevention, and housing retention, a strengthened homeless response infrastructure, and community engagement and education.

Ms. Wehrman thanked the Board for their time, answered clarifying questions, and sought feedback on the presentation.

Board members expressed appreciation for the thoroughness and quality of the presentation. Following is a summary of recommendations:

- Gather more specific data on Alameda's unhoused seniors, families with children, and if they are Alameda natives/long term residents, as it will directly inform the housing and other services needed;
- Have the City request specific data points on future Point in Time counts;
- Provide more specific and thorough mental health support recommendations as it relates to homelessness prevention. Ms. Wehrman clarified that references to support in the report include whatever support each individual may need, including mental health services. Mr. Hauslaib added that the housing first model, is a low

barrier model, inviting all unhoused into the system, followed by support for disabilities, mental health, substance abuse, and other services;

- Support for the recommendations around public Wi-Fi;
- Encourage a prioritization of transitional housing facilities;
- Suggest pursuing Targeted Case Management, a MediCal billing system through the county;
- Suggest defining short-term, medium-term, and long-term action steps;
- Suggest more public notification of the existing Homeless Hotline;
- Suggest changing language to focus services on the “population with the greatest representation” instead of specifically stating “single, adult males”, to allow for the possibility of this group shifting in the future;
- Suggest providing a two-page summary of the report, and hyperlink the key points within the executive summary to supporting sections;
- Integrate more quotes from community members with lived experience;
- Have translations of the executive summary available;
- Consider moving strategic plan details to an appendix while keeping the full background within the body of the report.

Public member Sister Patricia Nagel’s email comments were read into the record. The comments suggested including Article 25 of the Declaration of Human Rights (“everyone has a right to adequate housing”), in the introduction to this report, as well as a request to define “affordable housing” in the report. Further, Sister Nagel suggested including landlords as responsible parties along with property owners, and prioritizing landlord and property owner non-discrimination education early on in the implementation of the strategic plan.

Ms. Wehrman appreciated the Board’s feedback, and will return at the September SSHRB meeting with a revised draft before the anticipated October presentation to City Council.

5-C 2021-1241 Election of Officers

Board member Yamashiro-Omi put forward a motion to elect board member Sarah Lewis as President of SSHRB, seconded by Board member Means. Ayes: Board members Furuichi Fong, Yamashiro-Omi, Jagannathan, Green, Means, and T. Lewis. Nays: none. Motion passed 6-0.

Board member T. Lewis put forward a motion to elect board member Kristin Furuichi Fong as Vice President of SSHRB, seconded by Board member Yamashiro-Omi. Ayes: Board members Kristin Furuichi Fong, Yamashiro-Omi, Jagannathan, Green, Means, and T. Lewis. Nays: none. Motion passed 6-0.

5-D 2021-1242 Review and Approve Changes to the SSHRB Rules and Procedures Section C-2 Regarding Election of Officers

Staff member Fonstein presented a review of proposed changes to the SSHRB rules and procedures, section C-2, to simplify the election of officers. Mr. Fonstein answered clarifying questions.

Board member Green put forth a motion to approve the proposed changes to the existing SSHRB rules and procedures section C-2 regarding election of officers, seconded by

Board member Means. Ayes: Vice President Kristin Furuichi Fong, Board members Yamashiro-Omi, Jagannathan, Green, Means, and T. Lewis. Nays: none. Motion passed 6-0.

5-E 2021-1243 Review and Revise the Draft 2022 Work Plan for the Social Service Human Relations Board

Staff member Fonstein presented revisions of the draft 2022 Work Plan for SSHRB based on the Board's comments at the July 22 SSHRB meeting, and invited discussion, with the goal to approve the work plan at the Board's October retreat.

5-F Workgroup Reports

- Homeless Action Plan Workgroup: No updates to report aside from item 5-B.
- Youth Mental Health: No updates to report, due to quarterly meetings.
- Domestic Violence: Staff member Fonstein informed that reported incident statistics for June - August are higher than last year. Repeat DV offenders continue to represent a significant portion of the DV statistics. Men Creating Peace is collaborating with local agencies to create a proposal for a pilot program that provides outreach to offenders and victims, partially to repeat offenders.

6. STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

6-A Homelessness Updates and Initiatives

Staff member Butler provided the following updates:

- Feed Alameda – The program, which had run out of funding on August 11, was extended by the City Manager through September 8, and a request for extension will be brought to the City Council on September 7 to extend the program through mid-October.
- Transitional Housing Program – Staff received direction from the City Council at its July 20 meeting, to pursue research on transitional housing. Staff expect to present recommendations to the City Council this fall.
- Encampments – Cleanup at Jean Sweeney Park and Civic Center Garage are scheduled for August 31. Cleanup and outreach efforts continue, particularly at the Main Street encampment and the Encinal boat ramp area. The City is continuing to relocate residents, offer outreach services, and clean up encampment areas.
- Homeless Housing Assistance Program (HHAP) Funding – No updates to report.

6-B Community Service Awards

Staff member Fonstein provided information on the virtual 2021 Community Service Awards, notified the Board that nominations are now open, and sought volunteers from SSHRB to assist with planning.

6-C SSHRB Retreat in October

Staff member Fonstein provided updates on the October Board retreat.

7. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA

None.

8. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Vice President Furuichi Fong adjourned the meeting at 9:03 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Eric Fonstein, Board Secretary