

**Social Service Human Relations Board**  
**Minutes of the Special Meeting, Thursday, December 4, 2013**

1. **CALL TO ORDER and ROLL CALL**

President Biggs called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Present were members Radding, Watkinson, Robles-Wong, and Blake. Absent were Vice-President Villareal, and member Williams.  
Due to the absence of member Williams, item 3-B will be continued until our next meeting.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting, September 26, 2013, were approved as presented.  
M/S Robles-Wong/ Radding Unanimous

3. **AGENDA ITEMS**

3-A. **COMMENTS REGARDING THE NEEDS STATEMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PUBLIC SERVICES NON-HOUSING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-15**

Claudia Young, CDBG staff presented a PowerPoint on this year's CDBG process (**attached**).  
While there had originally been an anticipation of up to a 17.3% reduction in 2013-14 funding, the actual reduction was in the neighborhood of 5%.

**SPEAKERS:**

**Ebony Brown**, ALAMEDA FAMILY SERVICES director of their site on the West end at Third and Atlantic made a presentation on the need for senior services, that would include counseling and referrals to services regarding their housing and other basic needs. With issues such as disability, illness, and mobility, many seniors are vulnerable and in need of a broad range of safety net services.  
Staffing level for these services is currently only 12 hours a week and does not include staff time for home visits.

**Francel D'Andrea**, with Legal Assistance for Seniors shared that their agency provides guardianship services, legal representation, advocacy for seniors, and counseling regarding health law and public services. They are Alameda's local H I C A P program, and, while they do receive some funds from the county, are in need of additional funding to adequately serve the city of Alameda.

**Liz Varela**, Executive Director of Building Futures with Women and Children made a presentation regarding three of the services provided by their agency.

In 2013-14, they received a \$5,000 grant to reinstitute Alameda's Domestic Violence Task Force. Task force members include representatives from the Alameda Police Department, The Alameda Point Collaborative, Alameda Hospital, Alameda Family Services, SSHRB, and Building Futures. In October, as part of their

Domestic Violence Awareness Month activities, they launched an awareness campaign, which included banners, posters and a resource flyer. They are now developing plans to launch an awareness campaign in February, which will focus on Teen Dating Violence. She added that this leveraging and collaboration has helped balance budget cuts.

This year, Midway Shelter celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, 13 of those years under the management of Building Futures. The shelter has 25 spaces for women and children, and is usually at capacity. They are a service-enriched program that provides case management, assistance with identifying permanent housing, and referrals to other services. In recent years, it has become harder to place people in permanent housing. Building Futures was hit hard by sequestration, and has also experienced 20% funding cuts from the state and the county. While they appreciate the extraordinary local support they receive from the community, they will need continued CDBG funding to keep their doors open.

Building Futures also received 2013-14 funding to provide rental assistance for residents of Alameda. To date, they have served 15 households, and are on track to meet their goal of serving 42 individuals this fiscal year. In conclusion, she shared that it is very important to keep families in housing because it is much more difficult and more costly to find housing for a family once they have become homeless.

President Biggs thanked all of the speakers for sharing information regarding their programs and the needs related to the services they provide.

The discussion that ensued included noting that this is the first year that comprehensive, safety net services for seniors had been expressed by providers. It was noted that a homelessness prevention focus has shown to be both a viable and cost-effective plan to help keep Alameda families self-sufficient and housed.

A motion was made and seconded M/S Radding / Robles-Wong -- Unanimous  
“to continue to recommend only one area of need: **preserving and strengthening Alameda’s "Safety Net"** and to recommend that funding be directed to services for families and individuals (including seniors) who are vulnerable and in crisis, through programs that provide food, shelter, case management services, personal safety services, and homeless prevention services such as short-term rental and utility assistance. In addition, it was recommended that demographic priority be given to the residents with the greatest need and fewest resources.”

It was agreed that President Biggs and staff would craft a letter to the Mayor and City Council that would also include other areas of focus identified in this discussion.

### **3-B. REPORT BY MEMBER WILLIAMS ON SB 48, THE FAIR EDUCATION ACT** **CONTINUED**

### 3-C. **WORKGROUP PROGRESS REPORTS**

A joint meeting of the Human Relations and Alamedans Together Against Hate Workgroups came to a tentative agreement that the Human Relations Workgroup would focus on developing a survey and identifying proactive projects to help cultivate mutual understanding in the community, and that the Alameda's Together Against Hate Workgroup would continue their work in areas of discrimination, and with the relationships with the school district and the LGBTQ community. In the event of a hate crime or other significant human relations issue in the community, both workgroups would come together to to work on the issue.

#### 4. **BOARD/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA** – NONE

#### 5. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS** - NONE

#### 6. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8 o'clock. M\S Watkinson\Robles-Wong UNANIMOUS

Respectfully submitted by:

Jim Franz  
Secretary