

Social Service Human Relations Board

Minutes of the regular Meeting, Thursday, January 27, 2011

1. **CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL** Vice-President Villareal called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Present were: Biggs, Dailey, Nielsen and. James

Absent were: Wasko and Holder

Staff: Franz

2. **APPROVAL BY OF MINUTES** The Minutes of the Special Meeting, December 2, 2010 meeting were continued until the next meeting.

3. **AGENDA ITEMS**

3-A. **COMMENTS REGARDING NEEDS RELATED TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PUBLIC SERVICES FUNDING AND FORMULATION OF FY11/12 NEEDS STATEMENT**

VP Villareal introduced Debbie Potter the City of Alameda's Housing Development and Program Manager before starting her presentation Debbie Potter introduced Ron Babiera, the City of Alameda's new Community Development Program Manager. Ron will be working with the board and recipients of public service funds and other Community Development Block Grant funds.

Ms. Potter then took the Board through a PowerPoint which included an explanation of the community development block grant process, and information regarding all of the Public Service sub-grantees and their year-to-date progress towards achieving their goals. (See attached PowerPoint)

She announced the possibility of 10% to 25% cuts in CDBG funding, and noted that cuts of this amount will have a dramatic effect on the delivery of safety net and other services in the city of Alameda. Until official word of possible cuts comes down, and the city will continue to use last years formula based on \$225,000 in public service funding. She also acknowledged that public service recipients use their CDBG funding to help leverage other grants. At the completion of her presentation, Ms. Potter said that she would be available for questions after the public service comment segment of this agenda item.

PUBLIC COMMENT;

- **Anil Pandey**, a representative of **Motherland Nepal**, a new nonprofit organization (2005) in the city of Alameda, explained that they were working to help Nepalese (and Nepalese speaking) refugees and immigrants assimilate into the community and successfully access jobs, housing, and other services. Their presentation was primarily to let the board and the community know that they exist and are very much in need of partnerships, funding, and other resources to help them with their mission. They made their organizations brochures available to board members and those in the audience.
- **Diana Weston**, who will be representative of the **Women's Initiative for Self Employment**, expressed her appreciation for their organizations being a recipient of CDBG funds. She explained that most of the women served by their organization are low income individuals, coming from a variety of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Without the help of CDBG funding, these women would not be able to successfully start their own businesses. (This organization is not a recipient of CDBG funds.)
- **Liz Nickels, Program Coordinator of BFWC**, explained that in partnership with the Alameda Homeless network, operate (Midway, Alameda's 25 bed shelter for Women and Children), and

in partnership with APC, manage Bessie Coleman Court, 50 Units of Housing at Alameda Point, for homeless survivors of Domestic Violence. Building futures also provides the case-management component for the, stimulus funded, HPRP program in mid-Alameda County. To qualify for this funding, the household must be at or below 50% the average median income for the region. Over the past months, this program has helped people retain their or access new housing in Alameda. She thanked the board and the city of Alameda for their continued support, and wanted everyone to know that they need continues to be great. While many received assistance, an even greater number continue to be in need of help, many of these being persons dealing with mental health and substance abuse issues.

- **Angie Watson-Hajeem, Fair Housing specialist with ECHO Housing** explained that the organization has been in existence for 46 years, with its main purpose being the prevention of homelessness. They have been in the city of Alameda for the past three years providing fair housing and landlord tenant mediation services. There are efforts to help people gain or retain housing include providing rental assistance and working to assure that tenants and potential tenants are not victims of discrimination. She thanked the board and the city of Alameda for their continued support and provided both with a copy of echoes recent housing discrimination audit for the County of Alameda. The audit focused on age discrimination, and included city of Alameda homes in their survey. They found that overall age discrimination had dropped from 26% to 18% since their last survey a few years ago. Of course the goal is to achieve 0%, but it is encouraging to see that the complaints have been going down. While it is a companywide audit, the data is broken down according to cities. (A copy of the audit is available for Board members who did not receive one at the January meeting)

Pres. Villareal and other board members thanked Ms. Potter for her presentation, community members for their input, and agency representatives for both their input and the benefits to the community provided by their organizations. In response to questions from board members Ms. Potter explained:

- Recipient agency goals are set as a part of their grant request process, and based on the amount requested. Many sub-grantees also have a longtime history providing services in Alameda, and city staff have a good idea of what the agency can provide and services for the amount they are receiving.
- There is a county-wide TAC (technical advisory committee) that includes CDBG staff from all cities in Alameda County except for Oakland and Berkeley. This group meets to determine the countywide goals for CDBG programs.
- In the event of a 10% reduction in funding, one option would be to simply reduce each public service grant by 10%. The other option, especially if the reduction were greater than 10%, would be to have a discussion to determine how the reduction would be spread between the organizations. The board could have that discussion now, or could revisit the issue once it has been announced if there will be a reduction in funding, and how much that reduction would be.

The board discussion resulted in a desire to have our letter to the mayor and council convey that increasing need for services and potential cuts in funding have the potential to put our safety net of services at risk of being shredded. Language and the letter will indicate that we have moved from concern and urgency to outrage at this possibility. The letter will also include emerging cultural populations as a group needing awareness of and access to services.

A Motion was made and seconded (Biggs/Dailey/ to accept the recommendations of the staff report and to have the board's letter to the mayor and city Council reflect the recommendations discussed and made by the board. Unanimous

3-B. REQUEST FROM PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT FOR BOARD TO REVIEW AND PROVIDE COMMENTS ON:

A. CITY OF ALAMEDA PARATRANSIT SHUTTLE SERVICE MODIFICATIONS

B. CITY OF ALAMEDA PARATRANSIT TAXI SERVICE MODIFICATIONS

Gail Payne –City of Alameda Public Works Department made a presentation regarding proposed modifications to the city of Alameda Paratransit Shuttle Service program and the city of Alameda Paratransit Taxi Service. Last year the Board had the opportunity to make recommendations regarding the Paratransit Shuttle Service while it was still in the planning stage. After conducting a survey of both programs, Public Works is recommending some cuts and Taxi Service, and focusing funds on improving the Shuttle Service. (Staff reports regarding modifications to these two programs are available to board members who did not receive them at the January meeting) that cuts to the taxi service would be primarily related to frequency of participant access to the program, and the changes to the Para-transit shuttle program are related to modifying some routes and adding a new one.

In response to questions from the board, Ms. Payne:

- Agreed to have Public Works look into considering exceptions for health related need for frequent taxi service.
- Agreed to work on creating a map of the routes.
- Explained that the number of seniors in the “Otis Corridor” that are participating in the program was calculated with the help of a survey of homeowners associations.
- A staff person at Mastick Senior Center schedules the taxi service and provides information regarding the shuttle program.

Board members acknowledged the value of both programs, and the benefits that will result from the modifications to each.

3-C. REPORT ON PLANNED SEASON FOR NON-VIOLENCE ACTIVITIES IN ALAMEDA, AN UPDATE ON THE MARCH 12 ANTI-BULLYING WORKSHOP IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ACCYF AND AUSD AND OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS, AND A REQUEST BY PRESIDENT WASKO TO HAVE THE BOARD CONSIDER ALLOCATING SSHRB FUNDS NOT TO EXCEED \$750 TO ASSIST WITH THE FACILITATION OF THE WORKSHOP.

At the request of President Wasko, staff provided an update on season for nonviolence activities in Alameda and plans for a bullying prevention workshop on March 12. Starting next week, a number of elementary and middle schools in Alameda will use the SNV daily word and readings at the beginning of each school day. School board and city Council meetings will also begin with the daily reading throughout the season for nonviolence. Plans are also underway to have elementary and middle schools conduct their own school speech contest. The winners of these contests will compete in the speech contest finals at the Alameda library on May 14.

Plans are also underway for the bullying prevention workshop at Wood middle school on Saturday, March 12. After taking into consideration all input received, the planning committee has contracted with Cary Trivanovich to be the keynote speaker / performer. In addition to the SSHRB, the Youth Collaborative, Alameda Police Department, and AUSD will be cosponsors of the event.

In addition to Cary, the workshop will include presentations by Chief Noonan, Diana Kenney from Encinal high school, and Matthew Giles--AUSD's school psychologist. After the performance and the

presentations, members of the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions. We anticipate \$2000 - \$3,000 in expenses, and we are requesting that the board authorize SSHRB funds not to exceed \$750 to assist with the facilitation of the workshop. A large portion of the funds will be used to purchase Keep It Clean cell phone cleaners, to be given to members of the audience. The “Keep It Clean” message carries the double meaning of “Keep your cell phone clean”--- “Keep the message clean”. (Staff passed around a sample of the cell phone cleaner.)

After a brief discussion, there was a motion and second (Dailey/Biggs) to authorize SSHRB funds not to exceed \$750 to assist with the facilitation of the workshop. Unanimous.

3-D. **WORKGROUP PROGRESS REPORTS** –

Assessment and Awareness Workgroup – The Resource Guide will be ready to be

Resource Sharing Workgroup

Member Biggs reported:

- There are discussions underway to submit a Childhood Obesity Grant.
- There are plans to hold a meeting of West End Stakeholders to discuss ways for West End providers to work together to access mutually beneficial resources.

4. **BOARD/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA** -

Member Biggs announced that fliers advertising the VITA Free Tax Preparation program are available. He also announced the passing of former School Board member and community activist Beresford Bingham

5. **ADJOURNMENT**

Member James requested that we adjourn the meeting in memory of Beresford Bingham.
Unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 9:25

Respectfully submitted by:

Jim Franz

Secretary