

Social Service Human Relations Board

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Social Service Human Relations Board, April 28, 2016

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

President Biggs called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Present were Vice-President Williams, and members Radding, Hyman, Blake, Sorensen, and Davenport.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the special meeting of March 24, 2016, were approved as presented.
M/S Hyman/Williams Unanimous

3. AGENDA ITEMS

3.-A REPORT BY PRESIDENT BIGGS ON “QUALITY OF LIFE” SURVEY DATA COLLECTED AT 2015 COMMUNITY EVENTS

President Biggs began his presentation by distributing a report (MINUTES ATTACHMENT A) containing data collected at Alameda’s 2015 Earth Day Celebration and the 2015 Park Street Spring Fair. The report was a compilation of data collected from the four hundred Alameda residents who completed the survey. Residents identified a low crime rate and safe neighborhoods, a good place to raise children, and good schools, as the three most important factors that defined the quality of life in the community. A clean environment and Parks and Recreation were tied for fourth place. Eighty-seven percent of the respondents rated Alameda’s overall quality of life as either high, or very high.

In addition to rating quality-of-life issues on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor, and 5 being very high, respondents had the opportunity to provide comments on steps that might be taken by the City to improve the quality of life in Alameda, in areas such as public safety, community events and activities, and programs and policies. Finally, respondents were asked to share what other comments or concerns they had regarding the quality of life and social service needs of our community.

Board members noted that while forty percent of those who responded stated that they do not volunteer in the community, this could be due to families working to make ends meet, and simply not having enough time to volunteer.

A committee made up of President Biggs, Vice President Williams, and member Sorensen, will meet to further refine the data and create a report to be made to the Council. It was also agreed that the Board should consider the suggestions and comments made by respondents, as it plans its programs and activities for next year.

3.-B WORK GROUP PROGRESS REPORTS –

Reporting on the Alamedans Together Against Hate (ATAH) Workgroup, workgroup chair Vice-President Williams shared that the Muslim Students in America event at the Kofman Auditorium, on April 11, was a success, with more than 200 in attendance. SSHRB co-sponsored the event, and helped underwrite some of the expenses. The evening featured a screening of the film Fordson, presentations by Sameena Usman, Government Relations Coordinator, Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), and Christina Craig, Educational Equity & Family Engagement Coordinator, Encinal Jr & Sr High School. A panel discussion on Muslim students in Alameda was led by Gene Kahane, English teacher, Encinal Jr & Sr High School. Panelists included Ms. Usman and students from Encinal High School's Muslim Student Association (MSA). Questions were also taken from the audience.

Vice-President Williams added that the workgroup had met with Alameda Police Department (APD) Chief Roller to discuss what may have been an act of vandalism (a broken window) across the street from the Islamic Center of Alameda last December, and reports that APD may be conducting a "sweep" of the homeless encampments at Nob Hill shopping center and the site of the future Jean Sweeney Park.

Chief Roller shared that a representative from the Islamic center called to report the broken window, and that the incident was investigated as an act of vandalism. Had there been graffiti and/or other evidence that this may have been a hate crime, it would have been investigated as such, but none was found or reported. Regarding the homeless encampments, Chief Roller shared that, while there have been some complaints regarding both encampments, there are no plans to conduct a "sweep" and remove the homeless individuals and their belongings.

President Biggs, Assessment and Awareness Workgroup (A&AW) chair, announced that it has been five years since the Board has conducted a Community Needs Assessment survey. The A&AW has historically taken the lead on coordinating the survey process, but all Board members have participated. He suggested that the survey be placed on the agenda in either May or June, as he and Member Radding, both on the A&AW, will be leaving the Board at the end of June.

4. BOARD/STAFF COMMUNICATIONS, NON-AGENDA

Staff suggested that the May meeting be set aside as a Board Work Session, to identify new Leadership of the A&AW moving forward, and to calendar Board projects and activities for FY 2016 – 17.

President Biggs related that a homeless woman was found dead, trapped in a clothing donation bin on the property of the Nob Hill shopping center. It appears that she was trying to retrieve items from the bin, and the cover closed on her, asphyxiating her. He asked that staff check and see if these type of containers, placed throughout Alameda, are properly permitted, and if there is a process to assure that they are safe. Staff said he would follow through and report back at the next meeting.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS NONE

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 PM. M\S Sorensen / Radding Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:
Jim Franz, Secretary