

Social Service Human Relations Board
Minutes of the Regular Meeting, March 26, 2015

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

President Biggs called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Present were Vice President Villareal, and members Williams, Hyman, Radding, Blake, and Sorensen.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of the regular meeting of February 26, 2015 were approved as presented.

M/S Hyman / Sorensen Unanimous

3. **AGENDA ITEMS**

3.-A **SEASON FOR NONVIOLENCE DAILY READING**

President Biggs shared that A Season for Nonviolence (SNV) began in 1998, as a grassroots campaign inspired by the 50th and 30th memorial anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He read the daily reading based on the principle of "Release" and added that this reading was also presented this morning in our schools.

3.-B **CITY OF ALAMEDA PARATRANSIT SHUTTLE SERVICE MODIFICATION --
PRESENTATION BY GAIL PAYNE, TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR --
CITY OF ALAMEDA PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

This is an **INFORMATION** and **ACTION** item with a suggested time limit of **20 minutes**.

Ms. Payne explained that each year Public Works staff conducts a review of the City of Alameda's Paratransit Shuttle and Taxi Service. She presented a PowerPoint which contained an overview of the program's services, proposed program changes, the program's budget, and an overview of Public Works planning process. (ATTACHMENT A)

Ms. Payne shared that this year, thanks to last year's election, program funding has doubled because of an increase in transportation sales tax from \$.005 to \$.01. Ten percent of those funds go to the Paratransit program.

These funds support four services:

- The paratransit shuttle program, which does an hour loop on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. It is open to anyone, but focuses on seniors and people with disabilities.
- Two taxi service programs that are subsidized, one through Mastick and another for low-income individuals.
- A volunteer driver program that the City previously provided outreach for, and is now proposing to assist in funding. This program takes individuals to doctor's appointments, waits for them, and takes them back to their homes.

The paratransit shuttle program is proposing to revise the Central Loop on Thursdays to extend it to Fruitvale BART. The underutilized shuttle stops along Shore Line Drive and the Marketplace would be eliminated to accommodate the extension to Fruitvale BART station. Currently the cost of providing this service is \$16 a trip.

Staff is also recommending increasing the shuttle service frequency from every one hour to every 30 minutes. The higher frequency service will reduce the waiting times of shuttle riders. Finally, Staff is recommending expanding the Senior Helpline Services program in the City of Alameda. This assists ambulatory, home-bound seniors in Alameda with door-through-door rides provided by volunteer drivers. The proposed cost of this new program is \$15,000.

Staff is planning to rebrand the paratransit shuttle program. While it focuses on seniors and persons with disabilities, it is open to everyone. Rebranding will hopefully increase ridership. The program is advertised in the Alameda SUN, Mastick's monthly newsletter, and announcements to other programs serving seniors. Staff provides an orientation to the program at Mastick, and makes presentations at Independence Plaza and Anne Diament Center.

Board members commented on the benefit of increasing shuttle frequency to every 30 minutes. It was clarified that these funds are applied for, and that review and approval by ARPD, SSHRB, and other City Commissions, before going before the Council, makes for a more transparent process.

A motion was made to approve the Paratransit Shuttle Service modifications as presented by staff. President Biggs announced that he would abstain, because one of the recommended changes involves serving APC residents.

M/S Villareal / Williams Approved 6-0-1 President Biggs abstained

3.-C **RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PUBLIC SERVICES FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR FY 2015-16**

Staff made a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the CDBG process, and the Board's role, which for FY 2015-16, includes participating in the development of the RFP and scoring criteria, evaluating and scoring the applications, and making recommendations regarding funding allocations. Tonight, the Board will make its allocation recommendations, and on May 5, SSHRB's recommendations will be reported to the City Council.

AHA/CDBG staff informed the Board that there was a 3.1% reduction to the FY 15-16 CDBG allocation. In order to maximize public services funding, Fair Housing will be funded from a different funding source; tenant landlord counseling and the 211 program have been taken off the top of the public services funding cap (\$178,493-\$18,556 (211) - \$7,291 (ECHO T/L). The Public Services funds available for distribution total \$152,646. The Board evaluated and scored four applications whose requests total \$145,893, \$6,753 less than is available for distribution.

Staff shared that the Board's total scores for each application were almost identical. He added that, prior to this evening's meeting, City staff informed him that they would like to designate the remaining CDBG Public Service funds (\$6,753) for rent conciliation services rather than allocate it to existing projects. The rent conciliation program is one on the recommendations included in an Ordinance going before the City Council on May 5, 2015. City Staff has stated this is intended to be a one-time allocation and that another funding source would be identified to support this program in the future. Staff added that this would still

allow SSHRB to make recommendations to fully fund all the current applicant requests.

President Biggs clarified that this is similar to staff's "off the top" funding of 211 and ECHO tenant/landlord counseling, but, in this case, it allows the Board to request ongoing reporting as to how effectively the conciliation process is proceeding. These funds will be distributed with the HUD guidelines.

In response to a question regarding whether the Board could recommend that these additional funds be allocated to the four agencies who had applied, staff recommended that the Board first vote on allocating the \$145,893. The Board could then make its recommendation as to the allocation of the remaining \$6,753. The City Council would make the final determination as to whether it would approve staff's or the Board's recommendation for the allocation of the additional funds, at its meeting on May 5, 2015

Speakers:

Sabrina Thomas, Emergency Services Director at Building Futures with Women and Children, shared that Liz Varela, ED was not able to be here this evening. She thanked the Board for having supported funding of Midway in the past, noting that Midway did not receive state funding last year and the CDBG funds helped keep the doors open. Their funding also supports staffing the DV Taskforce. In addition, last year's funding provided much needed Homeless Prevention rental assistance funds, which can keep a family in crisis from becoming homeless.

Staff noted that the BFWC request for \$95,000 this year is \$10,000 less than they received last year for Midway, the DV Taskforce, and Homeless Prevention.

Troy Gilbert, Executive Director for the Alameda Food Bank thanked the City for its continued support. He shared that the Food Bank has capacity to serve more than the 2,000 households currently coming to their sites, and has launched an outreach campaign to encourage all low-income families to access their resources. He distributed posters, which are printed in English, Spanish, and Chinese, to better serve our diverse community.

Erin Scott, Executive Director of the Family Violence Law Center (FVLC), thanked the City for its support and clarified that FVLC serves the entire county. FVLC's City of Alameda CDBG funding helps them be rooted in Alameda, and while CDBG funding only pays for legal services, it encourages them to be engaged in the DV Taskforce, and work closely with APD. Two years ago, FVLC was built into the protocol of APD and are called every time a DV incident occurs in Alameda.

President Biggs initiated discussion by stating that the Board has two tasks. The first is to make recommendations regarding funding the four applications. The scores are almost identical and there is enough available money to fully fund each agency, or, if the Board chooses, determine another formula. The second is to make a recommendation regarding the additional \$6,753.

Member Villareal acknowledged the quality of services provided by all four applicants, and all scored equally high.

A Motion was made to fund all four agencies at their requested amounts. A brief discussion ensued regarding whether the Board should discuss the additional \$6,753 before acting on the motion. President Biggs received consensus that no member recommended giving any agency less than their request, and

recommended the Board vote on this motion first. The Board then had the option of approving the staff recommendation for the additional funds, or recommending that they be distributed to the four agencies that had applied. He thanked the agency representatives for all they do, and noted that this will be an easy vote, and possibly the last time that enough funds will be available to fully fund all agency requests. President Biggs added that he had scored lower than the other Board members, and was happy to discuss his scoring with applicants. He did this to encourage applicants to pay close attention to their requests next year, because there will most likely be more competition for funding, and less funds available.

M/S Villareal/Williams Unanimous

President Biggs invited comments and suggestions regarding the distribution of the remaining \$6,753.

Member Williams voiced concern that, while the applicants had made presentations at our meeting and spent the time to complete applications, the only information the Board has regarding the rent conciliation services program is what was presented this evening by staff. She stated “This is not an equitable process”.

President Biggs shared that like the 211 and ECHO landlord-tenant mediation programs, City staff could have simply chose to take this funding off the top. This process, however, gives the Board the opportunity to request to receive reports regarding the nature, and progress, of the program: once it is in place. Some members felt that, even if they recommended allocating the funds to the four agencies that had applied, their recommendation would be overturned by City staff and / or the Council. In general, it was agreed that there is a need for services that help renters remain housed.

Throughout the discussion, Member Radding advocated for the Board to not support the City staff recommendation for the additional money to be set aside to fund a rent conciliation services program administered by a yet-to-be-identified provider. He strongly urged that the Board distribute the additional funds to agencies that had applied and followed the process.

A motion was made that, despite the Board’s concern regarding the process and information presented about the program, the additional \$6,753 be provided as one-time seed money for the rent conciliation services program. It was also asked that the Board receive periodic updates on the progress of the program, once an agency has been identified to administer the program. In the event that the Ordinance does not pass, the Board’s recommendation is that the funds be distributed to AFB, BFWC, FVLC, and LAS in amounts proportional to their grants.

M/S Hyman / Williams Approved 5-2

AYES: Biggs, Villareal, Williams, Hyman, Sorensen

NOES: Radding, Blake

3.-D **UPDATE ON SSHRB PARTICIPATION IN PARK STREET SPRING FESTIVAL AND JAM AT NEPTUNE BEACH**
Discussion and Action item with a suggested time limit of **20 minutes**.

Member Williams reported that the committee had met and reviewed examples of community surveys provided by President Biggs. Member Hyman added that SSHRB might include multiple-choice as opposed

“essay” questions. Staff has secured a booth at the Earth Day Celebration at Washington Park on April 25, and will order new SSHRB banners for this and other events. Staff also shared that renting space at the Park Street Spring festival would be very costly, and that Rob Ratto, PSBA Executive Director is trying to arrange for free or low-cost space at the event. Member Sorensen announced that he will be able to provide free space at the Jam at Neptune Beach on June 21st and 22nd. Members will be needed to staff the booths, and sign-up sheets for all three events were circulated. Member Sorensen suggested that the Board might also distribute the survey at the Chamber event on April 10. The committee will continue to work on the survey and SSHRB brochure, and will report back at the April meeting. The City has offered to provide City of Alameda shopping bags to all who fill out the survey, but there may be other costs for printing and other materials for the event.

A Motion was made to authorize the committee to spend an amount not to exceed \$400 for materials.
M/S Williams / Villareal Unanimous

Staff shared how much each agency would receive if the \$6,753 were to be distributed proportionally to the four applicants.

3.-E **UPDATE ON SSHRB HOMELESS COUNT PRESENTATION TO COUNCIL ON APRIL 7**
Discussion and Action item with a suggested time limit of **20 minutes**.

President Biggs reported that he had collected photos from the homeless Count conducted in September 2014, and that he was preparing a PowerPoint presentation to accompany his report to the Council. He will present his report at the May 5th meeting. This is the same meeting that the Council will hear Public Comment and vote on the FY 15-16 CBDG funding. Board members are encouraged to attend.

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

Member Villareal requested that co-sponsorship and the consideration of providing funds for the 6th annual Alameda Harvey Milk Day celebration be placed on the April agenda.

5. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS- NONE**

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM. M/S Hyman \ Sorensen Unanimous (6-0)

Respectfully submitted by:
Jim Franz
Secretary