

Social Service Human Relations Board
Minutes of the Regular Meeting, April 23, 2015

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

2.

President Biggs called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. Present were Vice President Villareal, and members Williams, Hyman, Radding, and Sorensen. Absent was member Blake.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

4.

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

M/S Sorensen / Williams Unanimous

3. **AGENDA ITEMS**

3.-A **UPDATE ON SSHRB PARTICIPATION IN EARTH DAY, PARK STREET SPRING FESTIVAL AND JAM AT NEPTUNE BEACH**

Member Williams shared copies of the quality of life survey and SSHRB brochure to be used at the Earth Day event, letting members know there was still time for last-minute changes. Staff informed the Board that Robb Ratto, Executive Director of PISBA, is providing the Board with free space at the Park Street Spring

Festival, but that the Board would need to provide a canopy. Member Sorensen stated that he had a canopy the Board could use. A sign-up sheet was passed out for Members to indicate which times they would be available to staff the booth at the Spring Festival. Members Sorensen and Radding reminded the Board that they would be out of the Country the week of the Spring Festival.

3.-B **REQUEST FOR BOARD TO CONSIDER CO-SPONSORING ALAMEDA'S 6th ANNUAL HARVEY MILK DAY CELEBRATION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**

Vice-President Villareal announced that the 6th Annual Alameda Harvey Milk Day Celebration event will be held at Alameda High School, from 6 to 8:00 p.m., on Thursday, May 21. The event will feature Victoria Forrester as keynote speaker, performances by the Oakland-East Bay Gay Mens' Chorus, a Harvey Milk Day Proclamation by Mayor Trish Herrera-Spencer, dancers from Alameda and Encinal High School, an It's OK to be Different Youth Presentation, and the Student Poster and Poem Awards presentations. Vice-President Villareal asked that the Board co-sponsor the event and, if funds were available, provide financial support as it had in past years. The Board would also have an opportunity to have a resource table at the event.

After a brief discussion, a Motion was made to co-sponsor the 6th Annual Alameda Harvey Milk Day Celebration event, and to provide funds, not to exceed \$500, to provide the awards for the winners of the poster and poetry contests.

M/S Williams / Hyman Unanimous

3.-C **REQUEST FROM PRESIDENT BIGGS TO REVIEW INFORMATION REGARDING LAURA'S LAW AND CONSIDER ADVOCATING IN SUPPORT OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN ALAMEDA COUNTY**

President Biggs shared that SSHRB has been approached by United for a Path to Hope to lend support for the adoption of Laura's Law in Alameda County. Laura's Law is a California state law permitting court-ordered Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) for people with severe mental illness and a history of refusing treatment, repeated psychiatric hospitalizations and/or incarcerations, or who have made threats or attempted serious violence toward themselves or others. Enacted in 2003, the statute can only be implemented in counties that choose to use it. This law provides for outpatient treatment by a team of mental health professional with services, including housing (if needed) to help a person become stabilized and move on toward recovery. Mental Health trauma directly and indirectly impacts a significant number of Alameda residents, as is evidenced by the rise of "5150" police calls. As implementation of this law has a direct impact on the access to social services for those Alameda residents in critical need, it is within the purview of the SSHRB to identify steps that can be taken to promote implementation of the law.

President Biggs added that he had received a letter from Candy De Witt, daughter-in-law of former Alameda Vice-Mayor Al De Witt. (Excerpt Below)

"Our son, Daniel, attended Alameda High School and became very ill with paranoid schizophrenia just after graduation (a typical age for mental illness to come out). Over the next years, no matter what we did, we could not find any sustained help for him in our current mental health system. We had to watch as he descended into a state of psychosis and terribly suffering without any ability to make a difference. Our son now sits at Napa State Hospital accused of an unimaginable crime that he never could have committed in his right mind. Another family and our family's life have been forever changed and at such terrible loss. Outcomes such as this are not acceptable and we must find ways to help our most severely and persistently mentally ill. Laura's Law is one such opportunity.

Daniel, like many others, was not able to realize he was ill. This lack of awareness is a condition doctors refer to as anosognosia and it affects up to 50% of people with schizophrenia or bipolar illness and this is the reason many do not accept treatment or utilize voluntary programs. Laura's Law was enacted specifically to meet the needs of those that lack the awareness to understand they are ill and to avoid crisis, homelessness, repeated hospitalizations, jail, suicide and sometimes harm to others."

Member Williams shared that, there is also a section 5250, passed in 2003, that can extend the seventy-two hour hold imposed by a 5150 to a maximum of fourteen days. There are guidelines that must be followed to do this.

Discussion included concerns regarding services that hold a person against their will; however it was agreed that there seemed to be benefits, if the extended hold included services. Member Radding asked if there were additional funds to pay for outpatient services, and President Biggs said that there were.

A Motion was made to support the implementation of Laura's Law in Alameda County, to send a letter to the City Council asking that it also vote to support the law and encourage the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to implement Laura's Law (AB1421) Pilot Program in Alameda County.

Radding / Sorensen Unanimous.

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

Staff distributed copies of Statement of Economic Interests Form 700, and asked members to complete it, if they have not done so.

5. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS- NONE**

6. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 PM. M\S Hyman \ Williams Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Jim Franz

Secretary