



## APPROVED MINUTES

### SUNNYVALE HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

October 24, 2012

The Housing and Human Services Commission met in regular session in the City Hall West Conference Room, 456 W. Olive Avenue at 7:00 p.m. with Chair Dietrich presiding.

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

#### **ROLL CALL**

**Board/Commission Members Present:** Eric Anderson, Dennis Chiu, Hannalore Dietrich, Patti Evans, Diana Gilbert, and Barbara Schmidt.

**Board/Commission Members Absent:** Younil Jeong (excused)

**Council Liaison:** Vice Mayor David Whittum (absent).

**Staff Present:** Housing Officer Suzanne Isé and Housing Programs Technician Edith Alanis.

**Others: 5 members of the public were present.**

#### **SCHEDULED PRESENTATION**

None.

#### **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Housing Officer Isé invited everyone to the Silicon Valley Housing Fall Tour scheduled for Saturday, October 27<sup>th</sup>. She noted that a couple of sites in Sunnyvale were featured and that Sunnyvale's Mayor Tony Spitaleri and Planning Officer Trudi Ryan would be speaking.

#### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

Chair Dietrich asked for a motion to approve the consent calendar.

**Commissioner Anderson moved and Commissioner Evans seconded to approve the Consent Calendar which contained the minutes of the September 26, 2012 meeting.**

**Motion passed unanimously 6-0-0.**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

#### **PUBLIC HEARINGS/GENERAL BUSINESS**

2. Public Hearing: Discussion and Possible Action to Determine Priority Needs for Human Services and Amount of Supplemental Funding for Fiscal Years 2013-14 and 2014-15.

Officer Isé gave a brief summary and explained that the Consolidated Plan is in effect for five years and according to City policy, priorities are evaluated every two years, since community needs can change significantly in five years. This year, staff is also requesting input from City Council regarding the general fund supplement before the Request for Proposals (RFP) is published. She clarified that this would not be a formal budgetary action by the City Council, but could provide a more accurate funding estimate to be used in the RFP.

She gave a quick overview of the timeline leading up to the adoption of the Action Plan in May 2013, when the grant awards would be announced.

She reviewed the draft Report to Council (RTC), the alternatives recommended by staff, and explained the charts provided in Attachment 2.

Chair Dietrich opened the public hearing at 7:16 p.m.

Marie Bernard, Executive Director of Sunnyvale Community Services (SCS), invited everyone to participate in a Poverty Simulation, sponsored by Leadership Sunnyvale and SCS, to be held at Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church on November 15th. She distributed some materials to the Commissioners and gave a brief presentation. She noted that the number of clients seeking help from SCS has not increased for the last two to three years. SCS serves approximately 5% of Sunnyvale's population or approximately 7,000 individuals. She added that low-income families are fleeing Sunnyvale and the entire County due to the lack of affordable housing, the continued rent increases, and the rising cost of food. She has observed that the local homeless population has changed to include more families. Many SCS clients are one bill away from homelessness. She expressed concern that all low-wage service workers are being pushed out of the City. Ms. Bernard invited everyone to the SCS Annual Holiday Auction, a fundraiser which supports their services.

Becky Cooper, Executive Director of Friends for Youth, expressed agreement with the prior speaker's comments, and added that the impact of the economic downturn on the children is very evident. She explained that Friends for Youth has been able to serve to approximately 200 Sunnyvale youth and their families, as well as caring adults willing to become mentors. She also noted that Friends for Youth is looking to expand its services by reaching out to feeder elementary schools to Columbia Middle School. Currently, all of their Sunnyvale referrals come from the Columbia Middle School. Friends for Youth has been in operation for 33 years and has a 90% success rate at keeping youth matched with adult mentors for at least a year, and often these relationships last well into adulthood. The program really works and has a ripple effect within families, breaking cycles of poverty and incarceration, and in turn lowering the cost to society.

Ann Marquart, Executive Director of Project Sentinel, gave a brief description of the services that her agency provides, which include housing counseling, dispute resolution for tenants and landlords, mortgage foreclosure counseling and intervention, and fair housing services. She noted approximately 85% of the calls that they receive are from low-income tenants with a tenant/landlord dispute related to an eviction or a rent increase. She explained that during the last two years they have provided fewer mediation sessions in person, shifting mainly to phone conciliations since they have only county funding for these services. A majority of the calls they receive are related to rent increases that the tenants cannot afford. They also receive many calls related to substandard property maintenance, which they refer to City code enforcement staff. Lastly, she stated that the demand for fair housing services has also increased. The majority of these cases are related to denial of reasonable accommodations for tenants with

disabilities. There have also been cases of discrimination due to national origin, familial status, and hostile living environment.

Sujatha Venkatraman, Program Manager with West Valley Community Services, reported on the success of their "Haven to Home" program that serves homeless people and families. She explained that the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has defined homelessness to include couch surfing and living in temporary arrangements. West Valley Community Services is the only agency providing comprehensive supportive services for homeless people in the north county, especially during the months when the seasonal Armory shelter in Sunnyvale is closed. They provide a year-long program of supportive services designed to re-house individuals, and more recently, families.

Vice Chair Evans left at 8:17 p.m. due to a family commitment.

Chair Dietrich closed the public hearing at 8:21 p.m.

There was a lengthy discussion among the Commissioners, who also asked questions of Housing Officer Suzanne Isé.

Chair Dietrich asked for a motion.

**Commissioner Anderson moved and Commissioner Chiu seconded to recommend approval of Alternatives 1.a Approve the priority human service needs as described in the 2010-2015 Consolidated Plan; 2.a Confirm the annual appropriation of \$100,000 in general funds for supplemental human services; and not to recommend approval of Alternative 3: Set general funding targets for each priority need category.**

**Motion passed unanimously 5-0-0.**

### **NON-AGENDA ITEMS AND COMMENTS**

B/C Members Oral Comments  
None

STAFF Oral Comments  
Staff noted a minor change to the work plan. One of the items scheduled for November was the item heard this evening. In November the Commission will review the RFP before it is released.

### **INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Isé  
Housing Officer