

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

MINUTES

August 1, 2023 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Tuesday, August 1, 2023 in person at the Born auditorium at 170 Otis Street, virtually via Webex and telephonically.

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON SCOTT KAHN, President  
JAMES MCCRAY, JR., Vice President  
SALLY COGHLAN MCDONALD

MEMBERS PRESENT REMOTELY (VIA PHONE) DARSHAN SINGH

MEMBERS ABSENT (UNEXCUSED) RITA SEMEL

OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON Trent Rhorer, Executive Director  
Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary  
Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director – Finance & Admin  
Anna Pineda, Deputy Director – ESSS  
Susie Smith, Deputy Director – Policy, Planning & Public Affairs

ROLL CALL President Kahn called the meeting to order at 2:05pm.

Commission Secretary Elizabeth LaBarre took roll, noting the presence of Commissioners Kahn, McCray and Coghlan McDonald in person in the Born auditorium with Commissioner Singh present remotely via Webex from his home. He stated that his wife, Olivia Singh, was in the room. Commissioner Semel was absent.

AGENDA On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the agenda as posted.

June 26, 2023 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the minutes of the June 26, 2023 Regular Meeting as circulated.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT Executive Director Trent Rhorer provided updates on Human Services Agency ("SFHSA" or the "Agency") programs and federal, state and local policy and activities as they relate to the Agency.

**STATE**

The state budget was finalized since the last [June 26] commission meeting. Given the significant state general fund revenue shortfall of over \$30 billion, human services (and public health) fared well in the final budget agreement. SFHSA will not experience any significant cuts, and in some areas there are noteworthy increases. Executive Director Rhorer highlighted three:

- I. \$400 million statewide to revamp CalFresh budgeting methodology for program administration: The state for years has been using a formula

that did not adequately or accurately reflect eligibility worker workload and ended up covering only about 60% of actual costs both in San Francisco and statewide. The new methodology takes into consideration the updated costs per eligibility worker, application processing, approval time and activities like fair hearings and fraud prevention. Locally, SFHSA will receive several million dollars from the state and will no longer need to use County General Fund dollars to fill the ~40% funding gap.

- II. Just under \$1 million to automate the CalFresh Minimum Nutrition Benefit pilot program: the minimum monthly CalFresh amount increases to \$50 from \$10. The pilot is for a 12-month period. While the legislature wanted the program to be ongoing, the timeframe was reduced to one year during final budget negotiations. Executive Director Rhorer assumes the program will be negotiated next year to continue if it proves successful during the 1-year pilot.
- III. A 3.6% CalWORKs grant increase in FY 2024-25 along with making permanent the 10% grant increase from October 2022 that was set to expire in September 2024. Because of San Francisco local ordinance, CAAP grant recipients will receive the same increases.

## **LOCAL**

The \$14.6 billion City budget was signed by Mayor Breed at a budget signing ceremony last Tuesday. Despite economic challenges similar to the state at the local level, SFHSA managed to get through this year's budget process without significant reductions to staff or operations in large part due to a supportive Mayor, Board of Supervisors ("Board") and the continued availability of state and federal dollars. The Agency budget has grown to about \$1.2 billion both for FY 2023-24 and budget year plus one (FY 2024-25). Executive Director Rhorer noted a few highlights:

- I. The budget assumes and includes a 3.75% cost of doing business increase for most of the Agency's community-based organizations (CBOs). It also includes an increase in the minimum compensation rates paid to nonprofit and IHSS workers. For SFHSA staff (and citywide staff), the budget continues to assume negotiated salary increases of 2.5% effective July 1, 2023 and then a 2.5% cost of living adjustment (COLA) increase that will be effective January 1, 2024. This was negotiated when the contract was signed in 2022. There was a provision in the contract that allowed for delay of these COLAS given a general fund shortfall, but in the end, it turned out that the general fund shortfall did not trigger the suspension or delay of the COLA.
- II. The budget also includes a couple of new grant-funded initiatives: (1) \$750,000 from American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) for a mobile office van to enroll households, families, seniors and individuals in CalFresh, Medi-Cal and other benefits programs; and (2) a California Department of Social Services (CDSS) grant to develop local foster care placement options for children with complex needs.

Executive Director Rhorer noted that the outcome of the budget process given the landscape in December 2022 was positive; the Agency has the resources necessary to meet service demands for the next year or two. He cautioned that the budget makes use of one-time dollars and makes

assumptions about revenues that may not materialize. The budget relies on certain economic growth factors including tax rate growth. While these are reasonable assumptions, there is a lot of uncertainty with the economy—low downtown office building occupancy rates, tourism slow to rebound, etc. Executive Director Rhorer and his team are paying close attention to these growth indicators; further reductions may be needed at the end of the year when the Mayor allocates budget targets. However, the Agency’s reliance on state and federal dollars in both the Department of Benefits and Family Support (BFS) and the Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS) can cushion local dollar shortfalls.

The biggest budget item that was not annualized and was without an ongoing revenue source was the food programs born out of the pandemic. Facing the local budget deficit, the SFHSA budget team, the Mayor’s Office and the Board spent a lot of time negotiating how to close the gap as much as possible to keep \$30 million in SFHSA’s budget for food support. Ultimately, revenues that historically have not gone to support food were shifted to create a \$20 million program for this fiscal year and then a \$10 million program in fiscal year plus one. The largest cuts are in the Citywide Grocery Access program run by the food banks. The Mayor wants to invest more in smaller, grassroots, community-directed programs as well as food vouchers that families and seniors use directly to buy their own food at certain grocery stores, community kitchens, etc. to create a much more diverse portfolio of food options for the community. SFHSA will continue to fund the food bank but at a smaller scale than during the pandemic. SFHSA budgeted \$3 million in the last fiscal year for the “Purchasing Power” voucher program with \$2.25 million in this fiscal year (FY23-24). Supplemental meals will receive \$2.25 million this fiscal year compared to \$3 million in FY22-23. Community food production (e.g., urban agriculture, urban farming, neighborhood food-autonomy programs, etc.) will receive a slight reduction from \$1.25 million in FY22-23 to \$.94 million in FY23-24. The neighborhood-based grocery access program, which focuses on providing culturally responsive food, had a budget of \$14.35 million in FY22-23 and is reduced to \$7.5 million in FY23-24. SFHSA issued an RFP for these changes in funding; the contracts should be coming before the commission next month.

## **AGENCY COMMUNICATIONS**

Executive Director Rhorer thanked the communications team for sponsoring the all-staff meeting on July 13. Over 600 staff attended the Microsoft Teams Event where Executive Director Rhorer and executive leadership shared federal, state, local and Agency updates, similar to his monthly report to the commission. Agency updates included the budget, program initiatives, and employee safety. Safety updates included a summary of 1235 Mission Street neighborhood interventions and training offerings for staff around how to be as safe as possible in the workplace. The last 15 minutes of the meeting were dedicated to a live Q&A session where staff submitted questions in the chat and Executive Director Rhorer

and his team responded live. The all-staff meeting was recorded and posted on the intranet for staff to access at their convenience.

## ECONOMIC SUPPORT AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY (ESSS)

### **SFBN**

#### *CalFresh*

The annual CalFresh Employment Training (“CFET”) program audit by CDSS resulted in no findings: they were very complimentary of the CalFresh team. San Francisco has the largest program per capita of any county human services agency. The CFET plan for next year was approved by the state with a \$5 million increase (from \$20 to \$25 million). The CFET program is designed whereby the state allocates a fixed amount of money, but the federal government matches the county dollar for dollar for every dollar spent so it makes a lot of sense to expand services to the SF CalFresh population.

#### *Medi-Cal*

With pandemic-era continuous coverage ending, the SFHSA Medi-Cal team workload is similar to what it was before the pandemic: clients are redoing/renewing their benefits for the first time in numerous years. For many, their circumstances have significantly changed such as new employment with private health insurance or moving or other life-changing situations that make them no longer eligible for benefits. Clients who do not submit their renewal paperwork in time have a 90-day window to prove eligibility and restore benefits. The state has been working closely with counties to ensure continuous coverage as much as possible including the approval of several waivers. The two most recent waivers are: (1) allowing counties to accept attestation of income when a client is at or below 100% federal poverty level (FPL); and (2) a Hard-to-Reach Population waiver, which allows greater flexibility to redetermine eligibility and extend renewal dates for eligibility when we can't contact a “hard-to-reach” population (e.g., homeless or undocumented populations).

The Department of Healthcare Services announced a health enrollment navigators project for CBOs who help the public with Medi-Cal enrollment/re-enrollment. Counties will provide CBOs with a list of Medi-Cal members who may need help with renewals and the CBOs will help counties reach that population.

### **WDD**

The CalWORKs program recently received an allocation of over \$1.4 million to provide housing and other supports to Ukrainian refugees with the opportunity to pursue additional funding if needed. Ukrainian refugees are eligible for CalWORKs due to their status as refugees. Executive Director Rhorer is meeting with the Consul General of Ukraine next week to discuss working with the Consulate to assist Ukrainian refugees. The Consul General was very pleased when Executive Director Rhorer reached out to announce the funding, of which he was not aware. The Agency looks forward to this newer partnership in terms of providing support to a

refugee population that does not have to be income-eligible for its programs.

#### FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES (FCS)

CDSS leadership has convened a work group with six county representatives from CWDA including SF County/Executive Director Rhorer to address high-needs youth. The first meeting was a few weeks ago. County representatives attempted to get CDSS officials on the same page as counties and to understand the difficulties and challenges counties face given the changes in laws over the last six years, including the Continuum of Care Reform at the state level, and some changes federally due to the Family First Prevention Services Act that limits Medicaid funding for some group placements. This confluence of changes and factors have really impacted counties, forcing—not in San Francisco, luckily—counties to place youth in offices, hotels, Airbnb, etc. The Complex Care funding (alluded to at the beginning of Executive Director Rhorer's report) attempts to address these placement issues, but San Francisco is one of only a few counties to receive those dollars. This state-county work group is attempting to get an understanding at the state level of this problem and to do some interventions jointly that could be funded by the governor or the legislature. Monthly meetings are planned through December at which point the team will produce a proposal.

#### EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AWARD

President Kahn announced that ANCA BUJES, PROTECTIVE SERVICES WORKER, FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES is the August 2023 employee of the month. President Kahn presented Anca with an engraved desk clock, which she graciously accepted with thanks to all.

#### CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the consent calendar, which comprises actions taken by the Executive Director since the June 26, 2023 Regular Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of August 1, 2023:

1. Submission of request to encumber funds in the total amount of \$2,439,897 for purchase of services or supplies and contingency amounts.
2. Submission of 8 temporary positions for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period 6/22/23 to 7/26/23.
3. Submission of 70 temporary appointments for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period 6/22/23 to 7/26/23.

#### COMMISSION BUSINESS – ACTION ITEMS

Mieko Yeh, Program Specialist, requested authorization to enter into a sole source grant agreement with SAN FRANCISCO-MARIN FOOD BANK.

#### SAN FRANCISCO-MARIN FOOD BANK

Vice President McCray asked who covers the van insurance, to which Johanna Gendelman, Contracts Manager, responded that the City does. It is/will be a City vehicle.

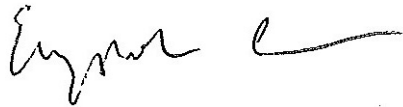
On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a sole source grant agreement with SAN FRANCISCO-MARIN FOOD BANK (SFMFB) for the provision of CalFresh outreach, enrollment, benefit maintenance, and other support services via a mobile office; for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2025; in the amount of \$290,023, plus a 10% contingency, for a total grant amount not to exceed \$319,025.

CODE42 SOFTWARE, INC. Alex Shoyket, IT Infrastructure Manager, presented the request to modify the existing sole source waiver and contract with CODE42 SOFTWARE, INC.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing sole source waiver and contract with CODE42 SOFTWARE, INC. for the provision of data risk and protection software; for the period of July 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024; in an additional amount of \$160,186, plus a 10% contingency, for a revised total contract amount not to exceed \$357,689.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT President Kahn's call for public comment yielded no responses.

ADJOURNMENT President Kahn adjourned the meeting at 2:48pm.



Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary  
Human Services Commission

Posted: 8/12/23