

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

M I N U T E S

October 23, 2025 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Thursday, October 23, 2025 at 9:30a.m. in person in the Born auditorium at 170 Otis Street, San Francisco and remotely via Webex and telephone for disability accommodations.

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON	SCOTT KAHN, President DR. JAMES MCCRAY, JR., Vice President SALLY COGHLAN MCDONALD
MEMBERS ABSENT (EXCUSED)	DARSHAN SINGH
OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON	Trent Rhorer, Executive Director, SFHSA Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director – Finance & Administration Anna Pineda, Deputy Director – Economic Support & Self-Sufficiency (ESSS) Joan Miller, Deputy Director – Family & Children’s Services (FCS)
CALL MEETING TO ORDER	President Kahn called the meeting to order at 9:40a.m.
ROLL CALL	Commission Secretary Elizabeth LaBarre took roll and noted the presence of Commissioners Kahn, McCray and Coghlan McDonald in person in the Born auditorium. Commissioner Singh had an excused absence. There was a quorum.
AGENDA	President Kahn noted that there was one change to the agenda. The adoption of the September 25, 2025 regular meeting minutes would be postponed until the next Commission meeting. President Kahn’s call for public comment related to the meeting’s agenda yielded no responses. On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the agenda as posted with the one modification, the deferral of item V. Adoption of the September 25, 2025 regular meeting minutes.
25 YEARS AS DEPARTMENT HEAD OF THE SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY – HONORING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RHORER	For item IV., 25 years as Department Head of the San Francisco Human Services Agency – honoring Executive Director Rhorer, President Kahn introduced Kunal Modi, Chief of Health & Human Services with the Mayor’s Office, to kick off the silver anniversary celebration. Kunal shared that he was standing before the Commission to honor a truly incredible individual, Trent Rhorer, and to celebrate his leadership, service and accomplishments. As executive director for the San Francisco Human Services Agency for 25 years, Trent is the longest serving department head in the City and County of San Francisco. Kunal provided an overview of Trent’s current and past achievements. He shared that when he speaks to counterparts across the country, they ask about SFHSA because under Trent’s leadership, the Agency

has become a national model for innovation, access and impact in public service. “Trent, thank you for your tireless work for our city. We in San Francisco are grateful for your dedication. I look forward to continuing to work together to drive San Francisco forward.”

Then President Kahn congratulated Trent on this milestone, noting that it has, “been an honor to serve alongside someone who not only leads with heart, but who genuinely values the role of the Commission in shaping how we serve our clients and community.” The following colleagues, current and past, came to the podium to congratulate Trent and thank him for his longtime commitment to SF social services:

1. Susie Smith, Deputy Director, Policy, Planning & Public Affairs
2. Joan Miller, Deputy Director, Family & Children’s Services
3. Anna Pineda, Deputy Director, ESSS
4. Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director, Finance & Administration
5. Kelly Dearman, Executive Director of DAS
6. Teresa Young, Communications Director, who presented Trent with the Team SFHSA Coach Rhorer jersey & bobblehead on behalf of the aforementioned deputies (& herself)
7. Shireen McSpadden, Executive Director, Department of Homelessness & Supportive Housing
8. Steve Arcelona, past Deputy Director
9. Noelle Simmons, past Deputy Director
10. Phil Ginsburg, General Manager, SF Recreation & Park Department
11. Cindy Ward, Homeless Benefits Linkages Manager

Supportive leader, puts family first, fearless, politically astute, passionate, devoted, smart, sharp were common themes among all commentators. Here are some highlights:

“No matter who the leadership is, you’re not ever afraid to get up and say something and to give your opinion and... people really appreciate that.”

“Being aware of the politics, being aware of the finance, being aware of the operational implications, being aware of the client impact situations, and holding that all at once and keeping everyone else focused on that balance... this is a very unique skill [Trent possesses].”

“...over the years you have been a mentor, an incredible boss, a colleague and ultimately a friend.”

Trent is “someone who is devoted, truly passionately devoted to making the world a more equitable and better place for the most vulnerable and for that, Trent, you have my enduring admiration, and I just love working with you.”

“I always felt seen, I always felt listened to.”

“Thanks for not being quiet and thanks for teaching me not to be quiet.”

In response, Executive Director Rhorer thanked everyone who spoke at the podium, his fiancée, Julie Bowyer, and his eldest son, Jordan Rhorer, for attending, along with his past assistant Pam Tebo, and Tony Lugo. He thanked Jim Buick for showing him how to navigate San Francisco politics, put the client first, think through thorny problems and make tough decisions with dignity, and be honest.

He shared that his career aspirations early on were to be a human services director, and he is, and it is his dream job because local government is where it’s at, where decisions have the most direct and immediate impact with

people, whether they are getting healthcare for the first time in their life, food support, housing, receiving protection from abuse, reunifying with mom... it is a different pace at the federal and state levels. Executive Director Rhorer reflected on his 25 years, the 2,400 person organization with dozens of programs and a \$1.3 billion annual budget, how it is very difficult to shift the organizational culture. It isn't possible in four years or eight years but after 25 years, he has witnessed a shift from a compliance-based model to one that is mission-driven, focused on equity, empowerment, and outcomes. He highlighted that the room was filled with colleagues who moved the needle, which is a huge accomplishment and very difficult in an organization as large as SFHSA. Trent concluded that he is surrounded by a phenomenal leadership team and great program directors who work so hard, it's really hard to leave.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director 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.

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

CONSENT CALENDAR

President Kahn's call for public comment related to the consent calendar yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the consent calendar, comprising actions taken by the Executive Director since the September 25, 2025 Regular Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of October 23, 2025:

1. Submission of request to encumber funds in the total amount of \$26,413,860 for purchase of services or supplies and contingency amounts.
2. Submission of 0 temporary positions for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period 9/20/25 to 10/20/25.
3. Submission of 1 temporary appointment for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period 9/20/25 to 10/20/25.

COMMISSION BUSINESS – ACTION ITEMS

PROCLAMATION URGING NOVEMBER BE DECLARED ADOPTION MONTH

Angela Ramos Reyes, Program Director, presented the proclamation urging November be declared Adoption Month.

WHEREAS, children are key to the state's future success, prosperity and quality of life; and
WHEREAS, all children and youth deserve a safe, loving family, yet in San Francisco, as of September 2025, there are 571 children, youth and young adults (Non-Minor Dependents) in foster care; and
WHEREAS, adoption creates supportive, loving families for children, youth and young adults; and

WHEREAS, in San Francisco, we finalized 54 adoptions in 2024 and 55 adoptions to date in 2025; and
WHEREAS, stability and permanency for foster children, youth and young adults are of the utmost importance; and
WHEREAS, permanency is defined as both a process and a result and includes the active involvement of the child or youth; and
WHEREAS, there are no restrictions on who can adopt based on race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or expression, gender identity or marital status; and
WHEREAS, during Adoption Month, we celebrate all who have invited children, youth and young adults in need into their hearts and homes, and express our profound appreciation for all who help make adoptions possible; and
WHEREAS, there are dedicated community-based organizations in San Francisco that partner with the Human Services Agency to find families for children, youth and young adults in foster care who are waiting to be adopted; now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED, that the San Francisco Human Services Commission proclaims NOVEMBER 2025 as ADOPTION MONTH and urges all community members to support and engage in activities that strengthen families and provide an optimal environment for children to learn, grow and thrive so that all children and youth experience happy, healthy, and safe homes.

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

On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to proclaim November 2025 Adoption Month.

ZORAH
BRAITHWAITE

Valdimir Rudakov, Director of Program Integrity & Investigations, presented the request to modify the existing contract agreement with ZORAH BRAITHWAITE.

Vice President McCray requested clarity on the length of each hearing; he noticed Ms. Braithwaite's contract is being increased to four hearings per day. Vlad explained that hearings last anywhere from 30 minutes to a couple of hours each. There is one full-time hearings officer. When she takes time off, a back-up officer is needed, so those hours are represented in the standard contract with Zorah Braitwaite. This contract modification request before the Commission now is to increase Ms. Braitwaite's hours a bit to accommodate the increase in caseloads we are experiencing.

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

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing contract agreement with ZORAH BRAITHWAITE for the provision of an increase in hours as the CAAP part-time fair hearing officer; for the period of October 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028; in the additional amount of \$135,000, plus a

10% contingency, for a revised total contract amount not to exceed \$557,480.

GENERAL PUBLIC
COMMENT

President Kahn's call for general public comment yielded no responses.

ADJOURNMENT

President Kahn adjourned the meeting at 10:45a.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth LaBarre', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Elizabeth LaBarre
Commission Secretary
Human Services Commission

Posted: 11/13/25