

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

MINUTES

December 17, 2020 Regular Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Thursday, December 17, 2020 virtually & telephonically pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20 and the Twelfth Supplement to Mayoral Proclamation Declaring the Existence of a Local Emergency dated February 25, 2020.

MEMBERS PRESENT REMOTELY (VIA ZOOM) SCOTT KAHN, President
JAMES MCCRAY, JR., Vice President
DARSHAN SINGH
GEORGE YAMASAKI, JR.

MEMBERS ABSENT RITA SEMEL (excused)

OTHERS PRESENT REMOTELY (VIA ZOOM) Trent Rhorer, Executive Director
Elizabeth LaBarre, Executive Assistant to the Executive Director / Secretary – Human Services Commission
Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director – Finance and Administration
Noelle Simmons, Deputy Director – Economic Support & Self-sufficiency
Susie Smith, Deputy Director – Policy & Planning
Other department staff and interested citizens

ROLL CALL President Kahn called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m., noting that four of the five Commission members were present on the Zoom platform based on a visual confirmation. Commissioner Semel had an excused absence and was not present.

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

MINUTES On motion of Commissioner Singh, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the minutes of the October 22, 2020 Regular Meeting as circulated.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT Executive Director Trent Rhorer furnished an update regarding federal, state and local activities, including COVID-19 information.

FEDERAL

There should be a bipartisan agreement, possibly today, for the federal pandemic relief package. The latest \$908 billion package is split into two parts: (1) \$748 billion support for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), unemployment benefits, schools, vaccine distribution, and transit and (2) \$160 billion aid for state and local governments and includes language for liability protections. The \$748 billion package has positive momentum, whereas the future of the \$160 billion bill is uncertain due to McConnell's long-standing support for liability protections for businesses and Pelosi's support for local and state governments. A large piece of the relief package that directly concerns SF HSA (the "Agency") is the extension of all unemployment assistance for 16 weeks, with a supplement of \$300 per week. Without this, unemployment benefits expire December 26. Over 300,000 San Franciscans have filed for unemployment insurance benefits since the beginning of the pandemic, compared to 45,000 filings during the Great Recession of 2008-2009. Another item that directly impacts our clients is \$13B in food relief. Part of the plan is to temporarily increase SNAP benefits (known in California as CalFresh) by 15% for four months with additional funds for food banks, school meal programs, WIC and Meals on Wheels. Another important piece of the relief package is \$25B in rental assistance and the extension of the eviction moratorium through the end of January 2021. \$300 billion for the PPP for small business will help to keep San Franciscans employed.

COVID-19 UPDATES

Executive Director Rhorer reminded the Commissioners that he provides an overview of the COVID status of the City to demonstrate how it relates to the Agency's efforts at the COVID Command Center (CCC) with emergency housing. There are eight key indicators that the Department of Public Health (DPH) monitors, with three being more pertinent for the CCC: impact on the healthcare system during a surge, increase in prevalence of the disease, and disease control. The number of COVID cases per 100,000 in SF is currently 27 cases for the last seven days. 6 cases/100,000 puts us in the red per the state's monitoring system. Increase in hospitalizations is at 30% over a rolling period; high risk is considered 20% or greater. Unlike the rest of the state, San Francisco is

remaining in the green or purple for ICU and acute bed availability. Bed availability is the data we watch the closest since we provide hospital bed offloading options. The CCC provides relief to hospitals so they can make ICU and acute beds available quickly for new patients by housing patients leaving the hospital with no place to quarantine or shelter in place. To provide some context, Executive Director Rhorer reminded the Commissioners that during the most recent surge in the summer, the City was at 15 cases per 100,000. In October/November, the City had 5 cases per 100,000. Now, the City has 27 cases per 100,000. The numbers can skyrocket very quickly. We are well in the red and per the State's rules will remain at that level for at least 3 weeks. The Mayor moved to shut down certain activities in advance of the State's mandate with the guidance of Dr. Colfax at DPH. The following need to remain closed for at least three weeks: outdoor dining, indoor playgrounds and recreational facilities, hair salons, barbershops, museums, zoos, aquarium, movie theaters, amusement parks, bars and wineries. This latest shut down has had no impact on our Agency as we have always provided essential services and continue to do so. We continue to maximize telecommuting.

The CCC's focus right now is to help the health system manage the surge by providing emergency shelter for three categories: isolation & quarantine (I&Q) rooms in hotels, congregate sites for hospitalized COVID+ clients who no longer require emergency care and don't have a space to quarantine, and shelter-in-place rooms for vulnerable homeless released from hospitals. We have a 45-bed site open now, and are ready to offer up to 330 beds should they be needed. We are expanding the isolation and quarantine hotel capacity to 100 rooms for this surge. The CCC is also in the process of backfilling hotel rooms for medical discharges. This emergency shelter system relieves the health system so that acute beds are available when needed. We will oversee the shelter-in-place (SIP) hotels and congregate sites over the next nine months. We currently have 25 sites with over 2500 rooms—not a small operation.

The last piece of the COVID response effort is the vaccine. 12,000 doses of the Pfizer vaccine have arrived in San Francisco. 6,000 Moderna vaccine doses arrive next week. The City is following State guidelines for distribution and is prioritizing hospital workers and convalescent rehab facilities.

COMMUNICATIONS

On December 15, HSA hosted a webinar to help community providers connect San Franciscans to our services. Over 700 providers registered. The webinar focused on HSA benefits and services, additional supports available during the pandemic, eligibility for non-citizens, and tips for CBOs to help clients apply for services. Registrants will receive a copy of the presentation, a link to the webinar recording and a request to complete a survey to determine if the information met their needs. Executive Director Rhorer kicked off the webinar for Deputy Director Noelle Simmons. The high level of interest in the webinar is an indication that service providers are witnessing increased need in the community.

The final all staff town hall is this afternoon at 2pm. Mayor Breed will kick it off. Executive Director Rhorer will be joined by other members of the executive team to connect with employees and to share highlights from the year and priorities for 2021. The last town hall was well attended—Mr. Rhorer looks forward to similar interest this afternoon.

ADMIN/FINANCE

Budget

City departments received budget instructions from the Mayor yesterday. She announced that the City is projecting a budget shortfall of approximately \$650 million over the upcoming two budget years, out of an annual general fund of approximately \$6 billion. The shortfall is the result of slower than expected revenue growth, the rising cost of employee salaries and benefits, the supposition that there will be no new federal relief and additional costs related to COVID-19. The Mayor's office directed departments to propose 10% in cuts. About 75% of HSA's budget is funded through Federal and State revenue. The 10% will come out of the general fund only. The State has a budget surplus so hopefully the Governor will cover funds lost at the local level to avoid a degradation of our services to the public. The Mayor's priorities are COVID-19 costs, assisting small businesses, and racial equity investments. Departments are being directed to prioritize core services, especially those that have been shown to effectively deliver equitable outcomes. For any proposed budget changes, equity impacts must be called out. Commission meetings on the budget will occur in February. Departments then submit budgets on February 22, 2021 and the mayor proposes her budget on June 1, 2021.

Facilities

Our service centers remain open for certain needs, and have been open throughout the pandemic. We have health and safety plans that are compliant with the City Administrator's Office. Automated temperature check

kiosks have been set up at all service centers: 3120 Mission, 170 Otis, 1235 Mission, 1440 Harrison, and 2 Gough.

ESSS

In 2020, nearly 162,000 San Franciscans used HSA services. CalFresh now serves 60,000 households, up 21% since February. Medi-Cal currently serves 123,000 households, an increase of 10% since February. The cash assistance programs have not increased as precipitously—CalWORKs and CAAP—most likely due to potential clients receiving unemployment benefits and therefore not qualifying for cash aid. However, we will likely see increases as unemployment benefits expire.

SFBN

MediCal program staff are busy processing applications for Covered California (not Medi-Cal), a healthcare coverage option through the state exchange. For coverage in 2021, the open-enrollment period runs through January 31, 2021. The deadline to enroll in coverage was recently extended to December 30, 2020.

WDD (Workforce Development Department)

JobsNOW! is critically important right now to connect unemployed San Franciscans to jobs, but it is difficult to execute during a shelter-in-place order. The JobsNOW! program offers to offset wage costs for employers as an incentive to hire. The program has been expanded to include households up to 300% of the federal poverty level.

CAAP

CAAP experienced an increase in applications this month after many months of a decline in caseloads. One would expect an increase in applications during a financial crisis but instead the opposite has occurred. This phenomenon is happening throughout the greater Bay Area and is puzzling human services agency directors like Mr. Rhorer. HSA monitors CAAP especially closely because its funding is 100% general fund.

FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES (FCS)

There was an NBC news bit and front page Chronicle article on out-of-state group homes, highlighting horrific conditions in homes run by a private company, Sequel. The State of California decertified all out-of-state group homes, which means about 125 kids will be returning to California. The reason the children are sent out of state in the first place is because they have exhausted all in-state options. San Francisco has zero children in out-of-state facilities; this is a testament to the excellent work our social workers do within FCS to keep children in local homes. The out-of-state group home issue is the biggest news in child welfare across the state.

COVID is impacting San Francisco resource families. Since the last commission meeting, two resource family households had people in their homes test positive for COVID. They are currently under quarantine. As a result of the pandemic, there are currently 60 providers who have transitioned to inactive status over concerns of risk of COVID exposure. Pre COVID, there were around five homes in inactive status. This has caused significant difficulty obtaining placement for foster youth and non-minor dependents. People are still interested in becoming foster parents—the queue has 30 pending applications—but this doesn't help with the immediate need.

The Annual Resource Family Approval Review went well. The findings of the review were positive with only a few minor deficiencies identified by the State which can easily be resolved. We scored highly in the resource family complaint investigations process, which Executive Director Rhorer attributed to the hard work of the FCS team.

When Fay Ali, an employee with Family & Children's Services, found out that there would be no holiday event and giveaway this year, she asked her friends if they could help out with gifts for the kids. Her friends have donated 155 gift cards totaling \$7,750! A huge thank you to Fay for going well beyond the call of duty.

MANAGER OF THE YEAR AWARD

President Kahn announced DORIS BARONE, Disaster Preparedness & Response Manager, as the 2020 Manager of the Year. Ms. Barone thanked President Kahn, the Commissioners, Executive Director Rhorer and her colleagues for the honor. She admitted that it was a difficult year and appreciated the acknowledgement of her hard work. She was awarded an engraved desk clock. Guests present in support of Doris included her COVID Command Center team, emergency operations center colleagues and many other supporters based at the Moscone Center for the City's pandemic emergency response.

CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion of Commissioner McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved and ratified actions taken by the Executive Director since the October 22, 2020 Regular Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of December 17, 2020:

1. Submission of request to encumber funds in the total amount of \$19,724,037 for purchase of services or supplies and contingency amounts.

2. Submission of 1 temporary position for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of 10/15/20 to 11/10/20.
3. Submission of 1 temporary position for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of 11/11/20 to 12/9/20.
4. Submission of 32 temporary appointments for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of 10/15/20 to 11/10/20.
5. Submission of 21 temporary appointments for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of 11/11/20 to 12/9/20.

RACIAL EQUITY
PRESENTATION
AND RESOLUTION

Asa King, Manager, Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB), requested that the Commission adopts the resolution to advance racial equity and condemn and combat all forms of discrimination and racism, including that the Commission condemns all forms of racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, ageism, and other forms of discrimination; and affirms that all people, including Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian and Pacific Islanders, and all people of color – have a right to live and thrive in our City and have a right to social services and supports to improve their quality of life and standard of living; opportunities for living with dignity; access to essential services such as food, healthcare, housing, supportive and protective services, community engagement and empowerment, and employment; and that the Commission stands in solidarity with demands for justice and exercise of civil liberties of our fellow San Franciscans and communities across the nation, and affirms that Black Lives Matter; and, that the Commission members will participate in racial equity training to deepen their understanding of institutional racism and what it means to apply a racial equity lens in contracting decisions and community partnerships; once trained, the Commission will apply the tools in the GARE Racial Equity Toolkit to its decision-making processes and assessment of departmental outcomes; and, that the Department of Benefits and Family Support (the “Department”) must carry its responsibility for delivering services in the communities it serves with a focus on racial and social equity; and that the Department continues to collaborate with the Office of Racial Equity to disaggregate all data by race and prioritize racial equity in all programs; train employees to understand racism in all forms, including anti-Black racism and how it affects individual and population outcomes; and commit to review all decisions and policies with a racial equity lens; that the Commission directs all Department staff take affirmative actions to advance racial equity by: (1) expanding the Department’s collective knowledge of and capacity to participate in advancing racial equity by creating training and other opportunities for staff to learn how to reduce racial disparities in the workforce and service delivery; (2) ensuring equitable and inclusive access of the Department’s services for all San Francisco residents; (3) deploying a racial equity lens in the allocation of the Department’s budget and other resources; and (4) advancing racial equity in three key areas of internal operations: (1) staff recruitment and hiring, (2) staff leadership development and promotion, and (3) organizational culture. The Commission must direct the Department to build accountability by identifying actions it will implement to advance racial and social equity, including developing performance measures, incorporating a racial and social equity lens in budgeting decisions, and reporting to the Commission on its progress at regular intervals.

Asa introduced Shakira Simley, Director of the Office of Racial Equity with the San Francisco Human Rights Commission. Shakira shared a presentation on the City’s racial equity vision and strategy.

Vice President McCray thanked Asa and Shakirah for their presentation and important work, then asked how department leadership responded to the request for racial equity plans. Shakirah responded that the response ran the spectrum—for some departments this work is new, and for other departments they have been working on racial equity for years. All 54 departments are on track for the December 31 deadline.

On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the resolution to advance racial equity and condemn and combat all forms of discrimination and racism.

ABODE SERVICES

Jiro Arase, Community Services Specialist, Welfare-to-Work Services Division, requested authorization to enter into a new grant agreement with ABODE SERVICES.

Commissioner Yamasaki asked that a representative from Abode Services make a statement. Executive Director Rhorer then thanked Abode Services for their partnership, sharing that they have a great reputation helping counties with a difficult intervention, providing housing in high-cost counties. Vivian Wan with Abode Services stated that they serve 60 families per year, and that they provide services in other counties. Then Louis Chicoine, CEO, stated that he was excited to rehouse San Franciscans. People are vulnerable, worn out and anxious regarding options for the future. It is exciting to work with people who care.

On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a new grant agreement with ABODE SERVICES to provide housing locator, connector, and

stabilization services; during the period of January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022; in the amount of \$3,252,596, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$3,577,856.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Jiro Arase, Community Services Specialist, Welfare-to-Work Services Division, requested authorization to enter into a new grant agreement with CATHOLIC CHARITIES.

Commissioner Yamasaki asked that a representative from Catholic Charities make a statement. Carlos Jose Cartegena with Catholic Charities discussed the partnership with the CalWORKs program, stating that they have helped 40 families since the beginning of the pandemic. They have learned a lot since the onset of the pandemic, using technology to meet with families. Case managers show families on FaceTime the apartment and the neighborhood instead of meeting in-person on location. Catholic Charities has a long history partnering with HSA. Dr. Ellen Hammerle, Vice President, Client Services of Catholic Charities, added her heartfelt gratitude for the partnership with the Agency.

On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request new grant agreement with CATHOLIC CHARITIES to provide housing locator, connector, and stabilization services; during the period of January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022; in the amount of \$1,832,269, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$2,015,496.

HAMILTON FAMILIES

Jiro Arase, Community Services Specialist, Welfare-to-Work Services Division, requested authorization to enter into a new grant agreement with HAMILTON FAMILIES.

President Kahn asked that a representative from Hamilton Families make a statement. Timothy Evans, Chief Programs Officer, stated that Hamilton Families has been partnering with HSA and the CalWORKs program for the last decade. They provide locator and connector services across 19 counties. Hamilton Families serves families experiencing trauma with a coaching, not managing, style. With the HSA CalWORKs team Ana Pineda and Lidia Sanchez along with other partners, Hamilton Families assisted 50 families this year.

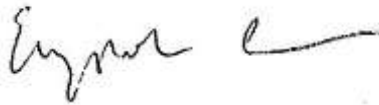
On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request new grant agreement with HAMILTON FAMILIES to provide housing locator, connector, and stabilization services; during the period of January 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022; in the amount of \$4,888,810, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$5,376,910.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

ADJOURNMENT

President Kahn adjourned the Human Services Commission December 17, 2020 Regular Meeting at 10:54 a.m.



Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary
Human Services Commission

Posted: 12.31.2020