

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
M I N U T E S
September 26, 2019 Regular Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Thursday, September 26, 2019 in the Ronald H. Born Auditorium at 170 Otis Street, San Francisco.

MEMBERS PRESENT SCOTT KAHN, President
 JAMES MCCRAY, JR., Vice President
 RITA SEMEL
 DARSHAN SINGH
 GEORGE YAMASAKI, JR.

OTHERS PRESENT Noelle Simmons, Deputy Director – Economic Support and Self-Sufficiency
 Elizabeth LaBarre, Executive Assistant to the Executive Director / Secretary – Human Services Commission
 Susie Smith, Deputy Director – Policy and Planning
 Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director – Finance and Administration
 Other department staff and interested citizens

ROLL CALL President Kahn called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m., noting that all five Commission members were present.

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

MINUTES On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the minutes of the August 22, 2019 Regular Meeting as circulated.

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S REPORT Executive Director Trent Rhorer was absent. In his place, Noelle Simmons, Deputy Director of Economic Support and Self-Sufficiency, furnished an update regarding federal, state, and local activities.

FEDERAL UPDATES

Last week, Congress arrived at a bipartisan agreement to transition states to the Family First Prevention Services Act (“Act”), a federal act mentioned by Executive Director Rhorer in prior meetings that has somewhat complicated California’s child welfare reform efforts through Continuum of Care Reform (CCR). However, there are components of the Act that will actually ease our transition. Funding for Title IV-E waiver counties (of which San Francisco is one) was supposed to expire at the end of this federal fiscal year (“FY”), September 30, 2019, with an abrupt cut off. Congress instead approved a ramp-down of funding over two years. Counties will receive 90% of the amount originally negotiated in the waiver during federal FY20. The funding decreases to 75% of originally negotiated amount in federal FY21. The Act also allows for one-time \$500M flexible funding to help states with their transitions.

As discussed by Executive Director Rhorer in prior Commission meetings, the Public Charge rule was finalized and goes into effect October 15. The Public Charge rule will broaden the benefits that can be used against immigrants seeking a Green Card and/or citizenship. The rule does not impact eligibility. Cash aid (e.g., CAAP and CalWORKs) has always been considered under Public Charge. The benefits that will be newly considered are CalFresh, MediCal (with a few exceptions) and federal housing assistance. We have been doing a lot of engagement with the community around Public Charge. Our focus is to reach out to clients with clear, accurate information in collaboration with community partners, legal advocates and neighboring cities and counties. Messaging is challenging on such a complicated and arcane subject that was designed to instill fear and confusion in the community. The Agency launched a direct mail campaign to our clients with non-citizen households, along with postcards and posters distributed to health clinics, public gathering places and HSA service centers. We have hosted several community stakeholder meetings, in partnership with legal advocates, which included training for providers and members of the public to clarify what the rule really means. San Francisco and Santa Clara Counties filed a joint lawsuit against the Trump Administration (“Administration”), then the State of California followed suit. The San Francisco District Court will hear the case on October 2. We hope to stay implementation. However, we continue to prepare in the event that implementation moves forward on October 15.

There is another proposed federal rule change for SNAP (in California, known as CalFresh) recipients restricting who is eligible for benefits based on “categorical eligibility.” Currently, states have some flexibility with SNAP distribution. They can allow families with incomes slightly over FPL (Federal Poverty Level) to qualify for food benefits when their expenses bring their gross income down, for example in high cost of housing areas like the Bay Area. This broadening of SNAP (CalFresh) eligibility would be eliminated. The rule change would also reinstate an asset test. In practice, this means that families must spend down every last penny of their savings before qualifying for benefits. Currently, CalFresh recipients are not subjected to asset limits. Nationally, about three million people would lose their SNAP benefits. In California, about 350,000 households would lose CalFresh benefits with San Francisco at 3,200 households. Children of CalFresh households are currently automatically enrolled in the federal free school meals program. School districts would no longer have this automated system under the new rule. We are submitting public comments in partnership with the Mayor’s Office and City Attorney in opposition to this rule change.

STATE

The state legislature ended its session at the end of September. The governor has until October 13 to sign hundreds of bills now on his desk. Two bills sponsored by CWDA we hope to be signed are AB 944 and AB 1301. AB 944 provides an additional 12 months of CalWORKs benefits to sponsored immigrants who meet the indigence requirement. They currently receive only 12 months total in CalWORKs. AB 1301 is a child welfare bill that, beginning in July of next year, would require county child welfare agencies to compensate licensed private adoption agencies for the costs of supporting families through the process of adopting children and nonminor dependents who are eligible for the Adoption Assistance Program.

LOCAL

On September 12, Supervisor Stefani sponsored a Food Security Hearing, which focused on food insecurity for pregnant mothers and young children. Numerous City departments were called on to present. The Human Services Agency provided a lot of material on CalFresh, Home Delivered Meals and Food Pantries for the hearing along with information about our new innovation, combining WIC (Women, Infant and Children nutritional supplement program) and CalFresh enrollment. We are aware of several thousand families in San Francisco on WIC who aren't on CalFresh even though they qualify. As a result of the hearing, HSA will have a WIC benefits representative at service centers to assist pregnant mothers with applying for CalFresh benefits. WIC benefits specialists will be trained on how to sign up clients for CalFresh at their offices.

PROGRAMS

This topic has been covered in local newspapers lately. San Francisco's new Director of Mental Health Reform, Dr. Anton Bland, and the Department of Public Health (DPH) identified a select population of nearly 4,000 homeless people with severe mental illnesses, substance use disorders, and/or dual-diagnosis, along with high use of City emergency services. Of the 4,000 identified, the 230 most vulnerable behavioral health clients experiencing homelessness will immediately begin receiving an enhanced form of care coordination, bringing together public health, social services and law enforcement, to create a comprehensive case management plan for each client to get them connected with the services they need to stabilize. We are partnering with [these] various agencies to ensure these individuals receive public benefits.

On August 28, we hosted a film screening at the Roxie theater of the HBO Documentary Film FOSTER, which shows a compelling look into the complexities of the foster care system in Los Angeles County. About 150 HSA staff, Family and Children's Services community partners, resource families, former foster youth and President Kahn and his wife Vickie attended the screening. The screening brought staff & community partners together outside of "the office" in a fun, comfortable and educational environment to acknowledge the hard work of staff & community partners and honor their positive impact on the lives of San Francisco's youth. If you were unable to attend the screening, FOSTER is available on HBO.

HSA is working with the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) and the Department of Public Health (DPH) on response to recent heat events, ensuring protocols are in place to successfully contact vulnerable populations, and to provide refuge from the heat and water.

ESSS

SFBN - CalFresh & Medi-Cal

SFBN is approaching open enrollment season for Covered California, the state's health exchange created under the Affordable Care Act. We have almost four million Californians enrolled. MediCal eligibility expansion, approved by the state legislature for young adults aged 19-25 regardless of immigration status, begins January 2020. The state approved funding for MediCal outreach efforts in response to a decrease in enrollment. There was a lot of publicity when the Affordable Care Act was rolled out in 2013. It is time to reinvigorate our outreach efforts and increase MediCal enrollment numbers.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

CalWORKs is preparing for the new CalWORKs Outcomes and Accountability Review (Cal-OAR) process that will be implemented in all 58 counties. Cal-OAR should allow for better data collection on CalWORKs program performance measures that will be calculated for counties by CDSS. We are currently awaiting the performance measures from CDSS. County self-assessment reports will be due in summer of 2020, and improvement plans will be due in summer of 2021. We will present to the Commission progress updates. In the CalWORKS Housing Support Program (HSP), 416 clients have been housed through July 31 of this year. We were just alerted that we would be receiving additional funding this year to help us house additional families.

CAAP

On October 1, CAAP clients will receive a 13% increase to their grant, which mirrors the grant increase in CalWORKs. The top monthly grant amount will go from \$520 to \$588. A few months ago, Executive Director Rhorer reported that CAAP launched an online portal for benefits applications. We are currently receiving 50-60 online applications per month.

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES (FCS)

November is national adoption month. National Adoption Day is November 8. For National Adoption Day, we are planning an event where we will be finalizing 10 adoptions. The SIP (System Improvement Plan) draft was submitted and is awaiting state feedback. There will be a presentation about this topic at the next Commission meeting.

President Kahn asked for the date of National Adoption Day, to which Noelle replied November 8, 2019.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH	<p>President Kahn announced the RACIAL EQUITY WORK GROUP (“GARE”) MEMBERS as the September 2019 Employees of the Month. There are 15 members: Co-chair Vellore Adithi (Planning Unit), Co-chair Rosa Ortiz (Human Resources), Dan Kelly (Planning Unit), Kelly Bryant (DAAS Integrated Intake Unit), Alexis Cobbins (Families Rising), Laura Dueñas (Welfare to Work Services), Cassandra James (San Francisco Benefits Net), Ronda Johnson (Family & Children’s Services), Van Luong (Family & Children’s Services), Dr. Roxanne Manning (County Adult Assistance Programs), Brenda McGregor (In-Home Supportive Services), Phyllis Pettus (Adult Protective Services), Priscilla Prado (San Francisco Benefits Net), Paulo Salta (Office on the Aging) and Armando Zapote (Office of Early Care & Education). The Commission recognized the work group members for their significant contributions over the last 18 months, which culminated in HSA’s first racial equity report, entitled <i>Advancing Racial Equity at the San Francisco Human Services Agency: Opportunities in Hiring, Promotion, and Organizational Culture</i>. Each work group member was presented with a certificate of appreciation, and will be receiving their engraved clocks in a few weeks. Guests present in support of the work group included a full auditorium of Agency colleagues.</p>
GARE PRESENTATION	<p>Delving further into the Racial Equity Work Group’s research for the last 18 months, Susie Smith, Deputy Director, Policy & Planning, shared with the Commission a presentation entitled <i>San Francisco Human Services Agency Racial Equity Project and Report</i>. Deputy Director Smith began her presentation with an overview of Agency priorities, of which racial equity is primary. Within the Agency’s recruitment and hiring processes, leadership and development promotions, and the organizational culture, she reviewed current conditions, major challenges, goals, strategies and an action plan.</p> <p>Vice President McCray had a clarifying question about #5 in the presentation (slide 21), asking if the new office HSA is creating would be responsible for said item. Susie responded in the affirmative, adding that it would be in partnership with the Department of Human Resources (DHR).</p>
CONSENT CALENDAR	<p>On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved and ratified actions taken by the Executive Director since the August 22, 2019 Regular Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of September 26, 2019:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submission of requests to encumber funds in the total amount of \$2,242,079 for purchase of services or supplies and contingency amounts. 2. Submission of 4 temporary position for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of 8/13/19 to 9/11/19. 3. Submission of 56 temporary appointments made during the period of 8/13/19 to 9/11/19.
538 HOLLOWAY AVENUE	<p>Robert (RE) Walsh, Director of Facilities, presented the request to authorize the payment of closing costs for 538 HOLLOWAY AVENUE.</p> <p>President Kahn asked if other departments weighed in on this transaction before being reviewed by the [Human Services] Commission, such as the Real Estate Division of the City & County of San Francisco. Deputy Director Dan Kaplan responded that HSA is currently working with MOHCD (Mayor’s Office of Housing & Community Development) and the Real Estate Division of the City. Then the next step is to execute appraisals, then obtain approval from the Board of Supervisors.</p> <p>President Kahn voiced his concern associating closing costs with a property yet to be appraised, to which Director of Facilities & Operations RE Walsh responded that the property was appraised in 2015, and will be reappraised once this transaction is approved. President Kahn asked if closing costs could be negotiated, to which RE replied no. Deputy Director Kaplan then stated that we rely on the real estate department to negotiate fees. Commissioner Yamasaki inquired as to who is involved in the transfer of property—why is it us versus the real estate department? Deputy Director Kaplan replied that in this case, since it is an HSA program in the building, we are involved. President Kahn asked if we negotiated the initial loan. Mr. Kaplan explained that the money all comes from the same City general fund, so whether we pay it or the real estate department pays is inconsequential. Deputy Director Simmons added that the seller and the purchaser are the same entity, the City. Deputy Director Kaplan assured President Kahn that the real estate department will negotiate the best closing costs. Vice President McCray asked for the 2015 appraisal value. Mr. Walsh responded that it was \$1.1M. For an idea of today’s value, add 6% to that appraisal amount.</p> <p>On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved payment of closing costs for 538 HOLLOWAY AVENUE associated with the transfer to the City of the real property located at 538 HOLLOWAY AVENUE and all improvements thereon, from Larkin Street Youth Services, in exchange for City’s forgiveness of loans to Larkin Street Youth Services in the amount of \$1,030,913.00.</p>
SAFE & SOUND	<p>Karina Zhang, Program Support Analyst, Family & Children’s Services, presented the request to modify an existing grant agreement with SAFE & SOUND.</p> <p>On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing grant agreement with SAFE & SOUND for mandated reporter training, intervention services, multi-disciplinary teams for commercially sexually exploited children and youth and system improvements; for the period of July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022; for an additional amount of \$300,000, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$2,414,611.</p>
SENECA FAMILY OF AGENCIES	<p>Geoffrey Nagaye, Program Support Analyst, Family & Children’s Services, presented the request to modify an existing grant agreement with SENECA FAMILY OF AGENCIES.</p>

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing grant agreement with SENECA FAMILY OF AGENCIES for the provision of permanency Assessments; for the period of April 1, 2018 to June 30, 2020; for an additional amount of \$90,000, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$353,000.

NATIONAL COUNCIL
ON CRIME AND
DELINQUENCY

Irina Kadantseva, Senior Administrative Analyst, Family & Children's Services, presented the request to modify an existing grant agreement with the NATIONAL COUNCIL ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY.

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing grant agreement with NATIONAL COUNCIL ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY for the provision of child welfare reporting and analysis; for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30 2020; for an additional amount of \$68,870, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$748,506.

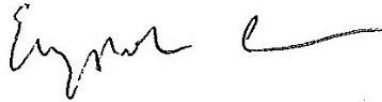
PUBLIC COMMENT

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

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Yamasaki requested adjourning the meeting in memory of former Human Services Agency Deputy Director Phil Arnold. Phil was the Chief Financial Officer and Deputy Director for Finance and Administration of HSA for 12 years. Prior to his employment with HSA, Phil spent 11 years at the Recreation and Parks Department as Assistant General Manager, including serving as Acting Director of the San Francisco Zoo. Commissioner Yamasaki attended Phil's service where there was an overflow of support. "Phil was as close to perfect as anyone I have known," stated Commissioner Yamasaki. "Phil's approach to life and problem solving was, well, perfect."

On motion by Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, President Kahn adjourned the meeting at 11 a.m. in memory of Phil Arnold.



Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary
Human Services Commission

Posted: October 3, 2019