



County of Santa Barbara
105 E. ANAPAMU, SANTA BARBARA
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

ANNUAL RETREAT MEETING - ACTION SUMMARY

Date: Thursday, September 10, 2015
Time: 9:30 AM to 2:00 P.M.
Place: Marriott, 555 McMurray Road, Buellton CA

Call to Order: Commission Chair Solomon called the meeting to order at 9:32 a.m.

Roll Call **Members Present:** Chair Julie Solomon, Commissioners Allen, Aceves, Cawthon, Fairfield, Jensen, Keator, Lindner, Ramirez, Sepulveda, Tade
Absent: Commissioner Mickiewicz and Siegel
Staff Present: Terri Maus-Nisich, Susan Foley
Other County staff: A.J. Quinoveva, Akila Shenoy, Roc Lowry and Laurie Baker all from Housing and Community Development (HCD) , a division of the Department of Community Services (CSD)
Public: Ms. Susan Lindman, Chair of Valley Haven Board of Directors

Public Comment Period: None were in attendance to speak about non-agenda items. One member of the public attended to speak to an action item later in the agenda and discussed later in these minutes.

Assistant County Executive Officer Terri Maus Nisich –Ms. Nisich greeted the Commissioners and thanked them for all of their work to prepare for the current cycle (2015-17). She expressed how pleased she was that after all the Commission’s work the Board of Supervisors unanimously approved their funding recommendations in May. She welcomed new Commissioners and thanked them for their interest in being a part of the Commission.

Minutes to June 4, 2015 and July 30, 2015 HSC meetings:

The meeting minutes to the June 4, 2014 regular HSC meeting were recommended for approval by Commissioner Fairfield, seconded by Commission Jensen and passed UNANAMOUSLY.

NOTE: The July 30, 2015 Contract Compliance minutes inadvertently had a May 7, 2015 date on the agenda approved at the retreat but they actually were July 30th minutes. Commissioner Keator recommended approval and this was seconded by Commissioner Jensen and passed UNANMOUSLY.

HCD Presentations on Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) and Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)

In 2011 the Board of Supervisors asked the Human Services Commission to oversee the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) public services and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) federal programs. These federally funded programs are administered by the Housing and Community Development division of Community Services. Staff administrators from both programs attended to

provide Commissioners with an overview of the federal programs, criteria and upcoming 2016 Notice Of Funding Availability (NOFA). The CDBG Public Services program covers services similar to the general fund Human Services program that are considered to be “safety net” programs offering food, clothing, shelter, transportation, freedom from abuse, senior programs, disabled services, HIV/AIDs services and health programs. The ESG provides critical support for homeless shelters for beds, services, case management, homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing. Like the Human Services general fund program the federal programs are also set up on a reimbursement basis.

The CDBG program is meant to serve areas that have a population that is 51% or more low-moderate income according to the U.S. Department of Housing & Community Development (HUD). The program also serves specific “limited clientele” who meet federal criteria and can provide backup documentation. Examples of limited clientele include low income, seniors, abused children, persons with HIV/AIDS, homeless, disabled. Income eligibility is determined by using HUD’s Part 5 calculator at client intake. The program management is guided by HUD’s invoicing and monitoring requirements.

HCD staff provided Commissioners with a tentative 2016 NOFA schedule with applications being made available November 1, 2015 and due January 8, 2016. Staff will first review applications to determine if each is eligible. Staff will then will work with the Commissions Allocations Committee throughout the process including conducting applicant interviews and deliberating. The Allocations recommendations will go directly to the Board of Supervisors for review in the spring.

Unlike the CDBG program which has an Urban County Partnership arrangement with the County as the lead administrator, the ESG allocation for the entire County is provided directly to the County HCD to distribute Countywide. ESG staff provided extensive training on the program covering background, eligibility (beneficiaries and activities), the selection process and contract management. Beneficiaries include individuals or families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness or persons fleeing domestic violence. There is some limitation on the amount of funds that can go toward street outreach. There is extensive reporting through the Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) where agencies have to report beneficiary data (confidentially for domestic violence agencies). In addition, program administrators collect extensive back up data as part of the invoice and reporting process.

The County is expecting an ESG allocation in fy 2016 (there was no 2015 allocation). HUD allocations are determined based on demographics (population, poverty and housing conditions). For new Commissioners or those not a part of the fy 2014-15 process, staff shared the Allocations Committees recommendations for that fiscal year, including homeless shelters and services and homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing programs totaling \$126,795. The ESG program will be part of the same 2016 NOFA as the CDBG Public Services program.

There was some discussion about how clients are matched with housing. Staff noted that there is a Housing Placement Group that assists in getting homeless individuals housed and there are efforts to work with property management groups to accept homeless. In addition, the County manages the federal HOME Investment Partnership program that builds low income housing such as Pescadero Lofts in Isla Vista for formerly homeless persons. There are also funds made available for rental assistance and senior housing projects.

Brown Act Power Point Presentation – County Counsel Jerry Czuleger – Mr. Czuleger provided the Commissioners with an overview of the Brown Act (open meeting law) and highlighted updates. He reminded Commissioners that there must be an agenda and that it must be posted 72 hours in advance

of the meeting including on the website. All locations where Commissioners are participating away from the primary meeting place must post the agenda the day of the meeting on their door and the place must be handicapped accessible. Agenda's must be of sufficient detail that anyone viewing them would know what the meeting will be about. The public may speak about any agenda item. He stated that signing in at a meeting is purely voluntary and must be made clear. If there is a topic of urgent need that is not identified on a posted agenda, it takes two-thirds of the Commissioners to add it to the agenda. He provided a handout of the PowerPoint presentation to Commissioners. A quorum is a majority of Commissioners who are in attendance for regular Commission meetings and all Standing Committees. All meeting records must now identify how each Commissioner voted on action items.

Ad Hoc committees must be made up of less than a quorum of the entire Commission and must be short term vs. being a standing committee. There was some discussion about how the Brown Act relates to ZoomGrants, the electronic grant application system being utilized by County program administrators. Using that system, Commissioners review and rank applications (preliminarily) and use their ZoomGrants notes for discussion at the public deliberations. However, Mr. Czuleger stated that if a member of the public asked to see details of individual Commissioner scores they should be provided. Members of the public are especially permitted to speak to any "action" item where a vote will take place. They can also speak to non-agenda matters.

Lunch Presentation: Activities to improve Food Security Countywide

There were three lunch speakers; Lee Sherman with the Food Bank, Trina Long with Public Health and Barbara Andersen, director of the Food Action Plan. All three were there to discuss their efforts with food services programs countywide.

Mr. Sherman shared the Food Banks interactive asset map of all of the food programs that are part of their network. The map provides demographic data tied to the food program delivery areas/programs and it provides contact information for each program. Some are open to the general public but others are targeted to specific populations where eligibility requirements are in place and are therefore not open to the general public.

Ms. Long is a Health Care Program Coordinator with the Department of Public Health. She is a member of the School Wellness Council and works with the schools on health and wellness issues. They are partnering with the Orfalea Foundation on developing health policies to apply to every County agency. She mentioned the need is especially high in North County and the program also includes health and education components. She also heads up the Nutrition Education & Obesity Prevention (NEOP) program with the County public health and chairs the Partners for Fit Youth coalition.

Ms. Andersen is the project manager for a Countywide Food Action Plan that is being developed by a diverse county wide coalition including 2 representatives from the Board of Supervisors. The plan, due to be completed by the end of the year, is being guided by an executive team that includes the Food Bank, Santa Barbara Foundation, Community Environmental Council and the Orfalea Foundation. The plan is a "strategy-based action oriented blueprint to support Santa Barbara County to build a more accessible, thriving, and sustainable, and healthy food system". Expected outcomes include increased awareness and new policies, improved food access and health, reduced pollution and waste, creating a more resilient local food system and promoting economic development. The data collection and analysis and public input process have been extensive.

Valley Haven Action Item: The Contract Compliance Committee Chair Debby Aceves informed the full Commission that the Committee unanimously agreed (July 30, 2015) to withhold fourth quarter funding from Valley Haven due to non-compliance. They missed the Commission's 85% threshold by a wide margin on several targets. She detailed out the due diligence the Committee members went through to come to this conclusion including a mid-year visit with the agency in front of the full commission and a Contract Compliance Committee site visit during the summer. Staff worked extensively with Valley Haven staff and board members on developing new targets that were not met after the mid-year visit. Committee Chair Aceves and other committee members noted that going forward they have confidence that the agency will successfully meet targets because the organization has undergone a restructuring and has carefully thought out their fy 2015-16 targets in addition to offering scholarships.

Ms. Lindman, with Valley Haven, was in attendance requesting leniency from the full Commission on the Contract Compliance Committee's recommendation to *not* fund their fourth quarter 2014-15 invoice. Ms. Lindman stated that the organization recognizes that they were not in compliance during much of the second half of the fiscal year but they were trying to meet targets that weren't attainable and had staff turnover and cutbacks. She also stated that the organization is on target this fiscal year to meet or exceed all targets due to restructuring the program. The Commissioners expressed empathy but noted the importance of maintaining consistency in their actions. When faced with this issue with other groups in the past, they recommended withholding funding and this was upheld by the full Commission. Commissioner Allen stated that since the general funds are disbursed on a reimbursement basis, the Commission would not be able to pay it since the activities were not performed. Commissioners in attendance with the exception of Commissioner Cawthon voted to withhold the funding. Ms. Foley reminded Commissioners that the agency has the right to appeal the Commission's decision to the Board of Supervisors. She also noted that due to the fact that the fiscal year is past, funds would not be able to be transferred to another agency with a similar program. Funds would be used to support overages in the HSC budget however.

Discussion of HSC 2015-2016 NOFA and Mini Grant: There was discussion about whether or not to continue the mini grant in light of the Board of Supervisor comments at the May 6, 2015 Board meeting where they approved the Commission's funding recommendations. One or two Board members asked the Commission to consider eliminating the mini grant in favor of funding one or two additional basic services grants. Commissioners noted that there hasn't been enough time to determine if the mini grants are successful and therefore it's too early to eliminate the program. Much research and data collection led to the implementation of the mini grant with one of the key goals being to improve agency capacity to improve their evidence-based practices. Commissioner Keator made a motion to continue the mini grant. This was seconded by Commissioner Aceves and passed unanimously.

Additional discussion took place about the June Board budget hearings where a number of agencies who participated in the Human Services Commission's granting process (where some were funded and some were not), went directly to the Board to lobby for funding. The chief concerns are threefold: 1) that not all human services agencies were equally made aware of this opportunity to seek additional funding directly from the Board, 2) the Human Services Commission was appointed by the Board for exactly this purpose and therefore it may not serve the county well when these agencies go outside of the Commission's well established process and participate in a lesser known process, 3) the Commission's funding has essentially been frozen for over 2 decades while the County's human services needs have grown. If the Commission's budget were increased the Commission could more fairly and transparently

address all of the human services needs including those that were directed to the Board during budget hearings.

Commissioners expressed interest in approaching their Board representatives about the possibility of increasing the budget and having organizations come through the Commissions well established process. The Commission directed staff to prepare bullet points for the Commissioners one-on-one visits with Board representatives related to increasing the Commissions budget to manage the increased human service's needs.

Housekeeping Items:

Ethics: Chair Solomon expressed the importance of having all Commissioners take the Ethics exam as part of their expected duty as Commissioners. Ms. Foley agreed to inform Commissioners of who needs to get her a copy of their ethics certificate which is required every two years.

Form 700: Ms. Foley stated that Sheila Hess with the Election Commission now has all Commissioners contact information and will contact each of them when it's due. She noted that most Commissioners will report that the Form 700 is "not applicable" to them, unless there is a very specific conflict with the Commissions work.

Mileage: Ms. Foley asked that mileage forms be submitted quarterly specifically at the end of October, January, April and July. She said to always use the current year form and to provide MapQuest maps vs. google maps. Ms. Foley also stated that we are over our budget as more Commissioners are using the mileage reimbursement than prior. The 2016-17 budget will be increased to cover mileage and the mini grants will go down to compensate.

Bylaws: There were a number of suggested revisions to the bylaws. All were approved by the Bylaws committee and shared with the full Commission at a regular Commission meeting. However the CEO's office is reviewing the suggested revisions related to administering the program and will provide comment hopefully by the October meeting.

Community Relations Committee: It was suggested that the Community Relations Committee work with the HSC administrator to prepare materials for the one-on-one Board discussions about increasing the HSC budget. The next meeting of the Committee was set for **October 1, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.** prior to the Regular Commission meeting that begins at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be at the same place where the Commission meets, 2901 Nojoqui Ave. in Los Olivos at St. Mark's Episcopal Church.

Committee Assignments and liaisons: It was decided that all Commissioners will discuss these roles at the October meeting.

Adjournment There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.