

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

MINUTES

October 22, 2020 Regular Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Thursday, October 22, 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
RITA SEMEL
DARSHAN SINGH

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
Joan Miller, Deputy Director – Family & Children's Services
Noelle Simmons, Deputy Director – Economic Support & Self-sufficiency
Other department staff and interested citizens

ROLL CALL

President Kahn called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m., noting that four of the five Commission members were present on the Zoom platform based on a visual confirmation. Commissioner Yamasaki had an excused absence.

AGENDA

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

MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the minutes of the September 24, 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

It does not look like the federal government will pass another stimulus package, at least not before the election. Senator Mitch McConnell indicated in private meetings that he was not going to move forward with a stimulus package in spite of Pelosi doing her best, negotiating with Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin. Executive Director Rhorer is especially watching for relief to state and local governments.

STATE

Governor Newsom has been busy. California has not seen a third spike in COVID cases like 40 other states largely due to his leadership. One bill in particular signed by the Governor directly affects our clients: AB 3088, the COVID-19 Tenant and Landlord Protection Legislation. AB 3088 prohibits landlords from evicting tenants for non-payment of rent starting from March 2020 until September if the non-payment was due to COVID. Starting February 1, 2021, for unpaid rent after September 2, 2020 related to a loss of income due to COVID, a landlord may file an eviction case but must first try and negotiate with the tenants on an affordable rate along with other steps stipulated in the bill. If a compromise cannot be reached, the court will propose a rent that is equal to at least 25% of the actual rent. A tenant must pay 25% of the rent they owe retroactively from September 2 through January 31 by no later than the end of January to avoid an eviction. Beginning October 5, 2020, landlords can begin to file eviction cases for non-payment of rent not due to COVID. The definition of COVID in the bill is broad enough to include many losses of income due to COVID. This is not a perfect bill. It is a compromise between landlords, tenants and the legislature. We would prefer that the bill go further to protect renters from losing their homes.

COVID-19 UPDATES

The City of San Francisco has 112,000 COVID cases to date with 133 deaths. These numbers are way below any urban area in the country. Executive Director Rhorer shared the comparison data during the September commission meeting. The City has a COVID dashboard that includes where the City falls in the state's tiered

reopening system —red, orange, yellow or green—for 8 categories. SF is currently green in five categories and yellow in three. The City is measured by the capability of the healthcare system to respond and disease control. In healthcare, SF is green for three categories: the number of available ICU and acute beds and hospitalization rate. The hospitals have more capacity now than prior to COVID. [HSA and DPH] are always concerned about a surge so data are constantly analyzed and planning and preparation occur on both the hospital and housing/shelter side. In terms of disease control, the City is measured on several factors including number of new cases per 100,000 residents. As of today, SF has 3.56 new cases per day per 100,000 people, which is in the yellow. Three weeks ago, SF was in the red with over 6 cases per 100,000. Testing is another disease control factor. The City is conducting 5,051 tests per day, far exceeding the required 1,800 tests per day to be in the green. Case investigation and contact tracing, also part of disease control, are at yellow with contacts established for 84% of new cases; green would be 90%. We have 100% of necessary PPE, meaning SF has a 30-day supply or more on hand. Because of all of these statistics, the state moved San Francisco from Orange to Yellow this week. San Francisco is the only urban area in the state to be at Yellow. Yellow allows us to open more of the City but it is not mandated. SF can open nonessential offices at 25% capacity, and fitness centers and higher education can increase their capacity. While the 25% capacity for nonessential offices applies to government offices, the Mayor has mandated that government offices will remain at maximum telecommuting through the end of the fiscal year (June 2021).

HSA's role within the City's COVID plan has been emergency housing in hotels. While we are no longer leasing rooms, we are using this time period as an opportunity to get hotel residents on benefits. Starting September 14, eligibility workers donned in full PPE and socially distanced went door-to-door signing hotel residents up for benefits when eligible. In 20 days, the eligibility workers have visited 14 hotels, generating more than 270 applications. Almost every applicant is applying for two to three different benefits. The approval rate for CalFresh benefits is very high at 96%, compared to the usual approval average of 70%. The approval rate for Medi-Cal applications is 95%. The CAAP approval rate is low at 18%, perhaps due to applicants already receiving SSI or other benefits rendering them ineligible for CAAP. Executive Director Rhorer planned to investigate this figure further.

As of October 3, there were over 273,000 open unemployment claims for San Francisco residents. Compared to the great recession of 2009-2010 with 40,000 unemployment claims, COVID is creating almost seven times the damage to employment. The unemployment rate in San Francisco was 8.4% last month. This number is probably artificially low. A lot of residents are removing themselves from the labor force due to several factors including parents needing to stay at home to care for children. That same time last year the unemployment rate was 1.9%. It is important to note that San Francisco has many, many households not working.

The Economic Recovery Task Force, a massive group formed by the Mayor and made up of over 100 leaders from business, hospitality, labor, faith, education, nonprofit, and community organizations and chaired by Assessor Carmen Chu, Treasurer José Cisneros, President of the Chamber of Commerce Rodney Fong, and Executive Director of the Labor Council Rudy Gonzalez, released a report on October 8. The Task Force was created to guide and inform San Francisco's economic recovery through COVID-19. The report advances 41 policy recommendations that focus on long-term economic recovery and development, promoting safe reopenings, narrowing the gap for vulnerable communities, and providing businesses more opportunities and flexibility to operate and succeed. HSA's significant piece of the report was getting JobsNOW! to be a part of the economic recovery plan. The Mayor invested over \$7M in additional dollars for this JobsNOW! program expansion.

The City budget has been gravely impacted by COVID. With a weakened economy, tax revenues go down, which means less money for the City to provide services to residents. Revenues are way down, much worse than projected. SF has the lowest sales tax revenues in the state per capita of any county. As an example, hotel taxes typically bring in \$40M-\$50M per month; current tax revenue from hotels is \$1M-\$2M per month. HSA will most likely get a mid-year budget reduction target from the Mayor's Office. When that occurs, Executive Director Rhorer will present it to the commission for discussion and approval.

HSA's Facilities COVID update continues to be the health and safety plan for Agency employees and clients. Our service centers are being prioritized for in-person needs. Plans were submitted for 1235 Mission, 1440 Harrison, 170 Otis (the CalWorks floors of the building) and 2 Gough (the DAS hub). 3120 Mission and 1800 Oakdale will be available for in-person services in early November. After the service center plans are submitted, Facilities and HR will focus on the locations with no client-facing services: 170 Otis (Floors 4-8), 3801 3rd Street, 601 Van Ness and 1650 Mission. These are very comprehensive plans. Thank you to RE Walsh (Facilities Director) and Katrina

Williams (Manager, Learning & Organizational Development, HR) for leading the effort to determine how the buildings should be managed to protect our clients and staff.

At this point, Executive Director Rhorer declares that he has completed the COVID-19 update and asks if any of the commissioners have questions. A member of the public attending the meeting via phone states that while he is not a commissioner and does not have a question, he would like to make a statement. After a bit of confusion from President Kahn and Executive Director Rhorer, as public comment is typically only allowed at the end of the meeting, the speaker stated that it was about 20 years ago that Trent showed up looking for a job, and “we gave him a job.” “Trent, I wanted to surprise you, this is Mayor Willie Brown.” He complimented Mr. Rhorer’s thorough report and congratulated the Executive Director for his 20-year anniversary in the role. Mayor Brown stated that he was very proud to work next to Executive Director Rhorer. Mr. Rhorer thanked Mayor Brown for the congratulations and kind words, and confessed to everyone attending the meeting that he was indeed surprised and did not know that his 20-year anniversary as Executive Director of the Human Services Agency would be celebrated at the commission meeting.

President Kahn officially broke the news to Mr. Rhorer that there was no employee of the month. In its place is a celebration of Executive Director Rhorer and his 20 years of service as the leader of the Agency. President Kahn then presented Mr. Rhorer with the proclamation from Mayor Breed stating that October 23, 2020 is Trent Rhorer Day in San Francisco. President Kahn also presented Mr. Rhorer with a congratulatory plaque from the commissioners and Agency staff.

This prompted Chandra Johnson, Director of Communications and anniversary planner, to congratulate Mr. Rhorer. Ms. Johnson admitted that a Zoom congratulations was not the preferred environment to demonstrate our gratitude and appreciation of Mr. Rhorer’s contributions over 20 years. However, she found COVID-safe ways to show everyone’s appreciation including a Kudos Board. This electronic “card” is filled with commentary and photos from colleagues, friends, family and commissioners and the link to the Kudos Board was placed in the “chat” section of the Zoom meeting for Mr. Rhorer to read and others to contribute. Ms. Johnson then played a video compiled by her communications team of comments from Will Lightbourne (Mr. Rhorer’s predecessor), Frank Mecca (Executive Director of CWDA) and Mayor Breed, along with photos and a narrative of Mr. Rhorer’s accomplishments.

Executive Director Rhorer thanked the commissioners and meeting attendees for the surprise acknowledgement of 20 years in the role. He shared one anecdote. During his first interview with the Department of Social Services (now known as HSA), when he was applying for a policy analyst position, the panel asked him what are his long-term career goals, and he replied that he would hope to be a county human services director one day. Little did he know that four years from that interview he would be in that role, admittedly wholly unprepared when he started the job in 2000. One of the reasons he remains in the role is that he was able to build a fantastic team, the best team in the City. He feels very fortunate that several mayors trusted him with this role. He feels very honored and lucky to have a job he loves, cares a lot about and takes very seriously.

Executive Director Rhorer then continued with his report.

COMMUNICATIONS

Chandra Johnson will be presenting on the new brand later in the meeting so Mr. Rhorer did not go into more detail. The Mayor will be holding a press conference, tentatively scheduled for next Tuesday, to announce the expansion and launch of the JobsNOW! subsidized employment program. The City is trying to drum up interest for prospective employees and employers who will get wages subsidized by the City.

ESSS

SFBN

The state and federal governments have shown some leadership roles with COVID benefits, making them easier to access by extending waivers, especially in CalFresh and Medi-Cal. In CalFresh, emergency allotments continue through October, which means that households receive the maximum benefit and do not have to worry about deductions due to rent or other factors typically considered. The Pandemic EBT program, which is food benefits for families whose children qualify for free school lunches, was approved through September. The telephonic signature waiver is extended through November, allowing CalFresh intakes and renewals to be taken over the phone without a telephonic signature. Face-to-face interviews are waived through June of next year. In Medi-Cal, renewals continue to be waived. The state and federal governments are allowing us flexibility to get benefits to residents who desperately need them.

WDD (Workforce Development Department)

Referrals to JobsNOW! have almost tripled since July to over 100 per week. To increase participation, JobsNOW! information sessions are being provided during unemployment (EDD) workshops. The program implemented a new phone system to handle the increase in calls from both job seekers and employers. The daily average is 60 calls.

CAAP

CAAP resumes the work requirement component for applicable clients in November. New applicants will go through triage employability rating services. Those who are rated appropriate for workfare will participate in a telephonic orientation. Our Workforce Development Department then links clients to an appropriate work site in partnership with other City departments including MUNI, the Department of Public Works and the Recreation & Parks Department. About 11% of the CAAP population (~550 clients) will participate in workfare activities each month.

FCS

Court hearings are now all virtual. This allows families to avoid a lengthy adjudication process. Los Angeles County, for example, has a backlog of about 30,000 cases waiting to be heard in court. This backlog delays services and family unifications. Thanks to the work of FCS and the courts, San Francisco families do not face the same issues.

The learning HUBS across the City in partnership with the Recreation & Parks Department are prioritizing slots for foster care kids. The FCS Emergency Response department is working with the nonprofit Safe and Sound on the school district's brown bag lunch program at the front end.

The FCS COVID update: since March, only two relative caregivers and six children tested positive for COVID; all have fully recovered. It is encouraging to know that we are protecting our caregivers and children in care. Kudos to the RFA division, led by Arlene Hylton, for finding essential resources for students and caregivers in distant learning. The California Caregiver Alliance and Help a Mother Out donated laptops and iPads in October. FCS continues to hold virtual meetings with caregivers to keep them in the loop about available resources and help them problem solve. Caregivers appreciate the virtual opportunity. The most recent caregiver quarterly Zoom meeting on October 6 hosted 56 participants. This virtual meeting method will continue until further notice.

Governor Newsom is not allowing foster children to emancipate during COVID, which is great. He issued an executive order to allow non-minor dependents over the age of 21 to remain in the foster care system through June 2021. San Francisco currently has 31 young adults who will be affected by this order. By June of next year, the order will help and protect 74 non-minor dependents in our Agency.

With another thank you to the commissioners and staff for the 20-year anniversary surprise, Executive Director Rhorer concluded his report.

Comments from the Zoom portal, time stamped:

- 10:03:02 From juliet Halverson : congratulations! proud to work for SF under your leadership
- 10:03:03 From Tony Lugo : Congratulations Trent !!!!!!!
- 10:03:07 From Abigail Stewart-Kahn : Trent - you deserve every bit of this even though you clearly can't stand it. Thank you for your leadership, friendship, support and deep mission, strategy and commitment to those most vulnerable among us. From Abigail and HSH
- 10:03:27 From Nikon Guffey : Congratulations Trent!
- 10:03:30 From Jessica Mateu-Newsome : Congratulations Trent!
- 10:03:46 From Tracy Burris : Congratulations Trent!
- 10:03:47 From Abigail Stewart-Kahn : Best moment is that you told him it was not time for public comment.
- 10:03:56 From Mandy Sharp : congratulations to you Trent
- 10:04:02 From Angela Ramos : Congratulations Trent! 🎉
- 10:04:39 From Tracey Belton : Congratulations Trent from your friends in the County of San Benito! So glad I have had the opportunity to work with you!
- 10:05:00 From jbaird : Congrats, definitely proud to be a public servant under your leadership!
- 10:05:28 From Luenna Kim (she/her) : Trent - Congratulations! It's been an honor to serve under your leadership. Looking forward to many more years.
- 10:05:34 From Eileen Cavan : Thank you for always being such a true supporter of the SF Foster Youth Fund!
- 10:06:44 From Andres Salas : Congrats Trent! Great times at SF Foster Youth Softball Games with HSA!
- 10:06:49 From Julie Meyers : Congrats Trent, I love working with you. You are a great leader.....
- 10:07:45 From Carolyn Tyler : congrats, Trent! 20 years is like 100 in dog years or with the city family!

10:09:11 From marthar : Thank you Trent for being such a great partner in our work! We treasure your leadership.

10:11:24 From Krista Ballard : Sign Trent's kudoboard here: <https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/PHaaZzQQ>

10:12:13 From Ronda Johnson : thank you Trent

10:12:46 From Cindy Ward, San Francisco, Administrator : Willie Brown Zoom Bomb - WOW! Congrats, Trent!

10:14:02 From Diagnostics's iPad : congratulations Trent, Joyce CRUM

10:14:17 From sisom : Congratulations Trent ! We are lucky to have you as our leader.

10:14:48 From Robin Love, FCS Program Manager : Congratulations Trent!!

10:15:57 From Jennifer Williams : Congratulations Trent!

10:16:44 From Dr. McCray : Mr. Rhorer, I've served under One HSA Executive Director. It is good to know he's the Best! Peace be unto you.

10:17:54 From stevearcelona : Congratulations Trent! It was a privilege to work with you for 13 years I work was

10:20:07 From stevearcelona : of course I meant privilege to work with you and for 13 years and to share the same taste in suits. Steve

10:20:27 From scott walton : Congrats Trent. Thanks for the opportunities starting in 2003 and again with COVID Command Center. Your support and leadership - the BEST.

10:23:52 From Susie Smith : We're proud and privileged to work under your leadership. Hundreds of thousands of San Franciscans are better off for it. CONGRATS, my friend and jefe!

10:36:07 From Erin Monahan : Congrats Trent! What I appreciate about you is that you listen to the frontline/direct service Child Welfare staff when it counts. You have humility about knowing that we are the servers of the people and you are never dismissive about what we are asking from you to serve our SF families and kids better. When you listen to the workers, it shows you truly care about our families and foster youth. Thank you so much for your ear to the front line child welfare staff over all these years!

11:04:44 From Krista Ballard : One more reminder to sign Trent's digital card/kudoboard: <https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/PHaaZzQQ>

**BRAND
PRESENTATION**

Chandra Johnson, Director of Communications, previewed the Agency's new brand. The HSA Communications team has been working on the Agency's brand over a period of time, gathering feedback from community partners and employees, meeting with leadership, leading workshops, conducting an audit and working with a consultant to ensure buy-in and success. A successful brand will clarify the relationship between the Agency and departments, improve access to our services and provide departments with a unified mission to serve San Francisco. The purpose of the new brand is to provide the public and employees with a consistent visual identity and voice, increase access and understanding of Agency services, promote credibility and trust, and engage employees. Ms. Johnson's presentation included the Agency's new "look" otherwise known as the visual identity along with new value, mission and vision statements and an Agency tagline.

The Commissioners were pleased with the progress of the project and the brand itself. Vice President McCray joked that he wanted to make sure the color scheme of the logo & other visual materials made it into the minutes. This is for you, Vice President McCray: the custom colors chosen for the Agency brand were inspired by the City's landscape and include Ocean Beach blue, Panhandle green, Golden Gate red and Karl the Fog gray.

**CONSENT
CALENDAR**

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved and ratified actions taken by the Executive Director since the September 24, 2020 Regular Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of October 22, 2020:

1. Submission of request to encumber funds in the total amount of \$26,031,180 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 9/11/20 to 10/14/20.
3. Submission of 2 temporary appointments for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of 9/11/20 to 10/14/20.

CIRCLEPOINT

Chandra Johnson, Director of Communications, requested authorization to enter into a new contract agreement with CIRCLEPOINT.

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a new contract agreement with CIRCLEPOINT to provide marketing services for JobsNOW!; during the period of November 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021; in a total amount not to exceed \$98,842.

ARRIBA JUNTOS

Andy Beetly-Hagler, Community Services Specialist, Workforce Development Division, requested authorization to modify the existing grant agreement with ARRIBA JUNTOS.

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing grant agreement with ARRIBA JUNTOS to provide employment services; during the period of November 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021; in an additional amount of \$621,143, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$3,183,841.

YOUNG
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPERS

Andy Beetly-Hagler, Community Services Specialist, Workforce Development Division, requested authorization to modify the existing grant agreement with YOUNG COMMUNITY DEVELOPERS.

On motion of Commissioner McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing grant agreement with YOUNG COMMUNITY DEVELOPERS to provide employment services; during the period of November 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021; in an additional amount of \$627,547, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$3,113,425.

SAN FRANCISCO
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE DISTRICT

Melissa Connelly, Program Manager, Family & Children's Services, requested authorization to renew the existing grant agreement with SAN FRANCISCO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT.

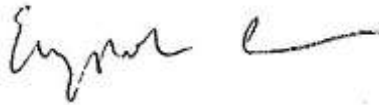
On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to renew the existing grant agreement with SAN FRANCISCO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT to provide Title IV-E specialized training services; during the period of October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021; in the amount of \$836,567, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$922,423.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

ADJOURNMENT

President Kahn adjourned the Human Services Commission October 22, 2020 Regular Meeting at 11:04 a.m.



Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary
Human Services Commission

Posted: 11.5.2020