

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

MINUTES

November 18, 2021 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Thursday, November 18, 2021 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 SCOTT KAHN, President
REMOTELY (VIA JAMES MCCRAY, JR., Vice President
ZOOM) RITA SEMEL
 DARSHAN SINGH
 GEORGE YAMASAKI, JR.

OTHERS PRESENT Trent Rhorer – Executive Director
REMOTELY (VIA Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary
ZOOM) Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director – Finance and Administration
 Anna Pineda – Deputy Director – Economic Support and Self-sufficiency
 Joan Miller, Deputy Director – Family and Children’s Services
 Susie Smith, Deputy Director – Policy and Planning
 Other department staff and interested citizens

ROLL CALL President Kahn called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. noting the presence of all Commissioners.

President Kahn announced that Commissioner Semel celebrated her 100th birthday three days prior on November 15. President Kahn shared that Commissioner Semel is not only a commission colleague but a dear friend. One thing he misses most about the in-person commission meetings is traveling to and from meetings with Commissioner Semel. He added, “Our conversations run the gamut of life.” He then encouraged his fellow commissioners and meeting attendees to celebrate Commissioner Semel. Mayor Breed was slated to present Commissioner Semel with a surprise proclamation, which she did later in the meeting (see the “Announcement” section below).

EXECUTIVE Executive Director Trent Rhorer furnished an update regarding federal,
DIRECTOR’S REPORT state and local activities.

FEDERAL

The bipartisan infrastructure bill was signed into law on Monday. Relevant to the Agency is the Build Back Better Act (moderate Democrats agreed to pass), which includes free preschool-for-all, child tax credits and childcare subsidies. We are now waiting on the Congressional Budget Office analysis to confirm the White House cost and revenue estimates, which should occur by the end of the week. This is a huge package that would help a lot of families and children we serve.

STATE

CWDA (County Welfare Directors Association) is developing the legislative agenda for next year. CWDA is hosting the annual planning workshop in

December, and Executive Director Rhorer is the President of CWDA for 2022. He will lead the discussion around the legislative agenda, among other items, at the workshop.

AGENCY

Teresa Young has joined the Agency as the new Director of Communications. She comes to us from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) and has experience with internal communications including content development, multimedia storytelling, brand and identity. HSA got to know Teresa through her work during the pandemic at the JIC (joint information center) within the COVID Command Center (CCC) leading the Strategic Communications Team and partnering with BIPOC-led community-based organizations to reach certain populations with information on testing, vaccines and food support. Welcome, Teresa.

ADMIN/FINANCE

There is a significant amount of money from the state for a number of housing-related programs and to draw down those funds, the Agency will go before the Board of Supervisors (“the Board”) for spending authority for a budget supplemental. The programs are Project Roomkey (the SIP (shelter in place) hotel system established as part of San Francisco’s COVID response), the Housing and Disability Advocacy Program (provides housing and advocacy services for adults with disabilities experiencing homelessness who will likely qualify for SSI benefits), the CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP) (for families engaged in our CalWORKs programs) and the Bringing Families Home (BFH) Program (helps families where homelessness could be a barrier to family reunification).

Though not approved through this Commission yet important to mention is Project Homesafe, a Department of Disability and Aging Services’ Adult Protective Services (APS) program that provides intensive case management and housing support to clients at risk of homelessness due to self-neglect. The budget supplemental will also include additional funding for IHSS staff to work with clients coming through the SIP hotel and shelter systems into permanent supportive housing (the actual IHSS services arranged by this staff will be paid for by Federal and state dollars). We also have new grants from the California Department of Housing and Community Development to support housing for young adults formerly in the child welfare system. This all adds up to over \$20 million to support services to address homelessness. HSA will work with the Mayor’s Office, then present it to the Board so we can introduce it into this year’s budget.

HSA has learned a lot about our role in care and shelter during the pandemic; we have reflected on what our role *should* be versus the role of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH). Prior to the pandemic, it made sense for HSA to provide care and shelter services because we had a large homeless and housing division. Now that HSH is its own department, we are rethinking what our emergency response roles look like. HSH’s role would be specific to the unhoused population, so they would step in during extreme weather events, earthquakes, etc. to provide the City’s emergency shelter specifically for the homeless population and would be in charge of reaching out to various entities for suitable locations

and outreach to the appropriate, affected population. HSA would continue to be in charge of emergency shelter for the housed population, for example during an apartment fire, earthquake or another pandemic. We are in the process of revising the City's citywide plan for emergency support.

Related to the City vaccine mandate, the Mayor issued an Executive Order requiring contractor employees working alongside city employees in city sites to be fully vaccinated by the end of December. As an example of what this means, the nonprofit Catholic Charities has representatives on site at 170 Otis to assist CalWORKs clients with housing. Those representatives would need to be vaccinated by the end of the year in order to continue to work on site. We have just over 30 such contractors affected by the mandate. Our Office of Contract Management will be responsible for verifying contractor compliance and working with the City Attorney's Office to determine the consequences in the event of noncompliance. Starting in the new year, all of our solicitation templates, contracts and requests for proposals will include compliance with the Contractor Vaccination Policy as a condition of any new contract.

Kudos to the HSA IT department—tasked with the huge lift of getting employees back up and running in the office with the necessary IT equipment as part of the citywide November 1 return to office mandate—for an incredible job. It was a herculean effort with 16 IT technicians stationed at our major buildings issuing 50 new laptops, 140 headsets, 300 various network or monitor cables, 200 docking stations, and 150 keyboard and mice sets and providing support for our employees, some of whom had not been in the office for almost two years.

At this time, the Mayor joined the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mayor London Breed joined the Commission meeting to wish Commissioner Semel a very happy 100th birthday and present her with a proclamation. The Mayor spoke about Commissioner Semel's legacy of advocacy and leadership and how she has changed the lives of so many San Franciscans. When Mayor Lee appointed Commissioner Semel [in 2013], Mayor Breed witnessed firsthand her commitment to help those in need, and to social justice. Mayor Breed listed several of Commissioner Semel's contributions to the City including her role as co-founder of the Interfaith Council. Anyone who knows Commissioner Semel knows that they can always count on her to help her fellow San Franciscans. Mayor Breed noted that at 100, Commissioner Semel has more energy and gets more accomplished than most people in their 20s or 30s. Commissioner Semel thanked Mayor Breed for the kind words and for taking such good care of the citizens of San Francisco.

Commissioner Yamasaki wished Commissioner Semel a very happy birthday, adding that she is truly a living legend. He had known of her great work before actually meeting her. "It is a pleasure to be Commissioner Semel's colleague on the Commission," offered Commissioner Yamasaki. He marvels at her continued enthusiasm and concern for the people who need assistance in San Francisco, particularly through the Interfaith

Council. Commissioner Semel thanked Commissioner Yamasaki and added, “Some people don’t know when to quit.”

Vice President McCray also wished Commissioner Semel a very happy 10th birthday, joking that he now has to do the new math. He added that Commissioner Semel, since 1982, has been a light and torch in both his ministry and life. He thanked her for her kindness and humility and for always being approachable and full of wisdom.

Executive Director Rhorer shared an anecdote showing the depth of Commissioner Semel’s commitment. He met her 1999 when she was head of the Interfaith Council. At the time, the Interfaith Council oversaw the emergency shelter program, for free, and had been since 1988 when Mayor Agnos needed help with the homeless during a particularly rough winter. Mayor Agnos approached Ms. Semel (who at the time was a Jewish community leader) and other faith leaders, asking them if they could help and could they open their doors to provide shelter and food for the homeless. Four congregations ended up providing shelter and 15 congregations provided meals under what Executive Director Rhorer assumed was Rita’s firm hand and request. In 1989, the Loma Prieta earthquake hit San Francisco and Mayor Agnos asked the same group of faith leaders to assist with the fallout of the earthquake and the Interfaith Council was born, with Commissioner Semel as cofounder. The Council decided to establish the winter emergency shelter as a permanent service, with 12 congregations rotating duties; it was entirely volunteer with no city funding. This is just one of many of her contributions to the City. In 2002, HSA began funding the Interfaith Council’s emergency winter shelter program. Executive Director Rhorer added that Commissioner Semel constantly says, “I don’t do enough, what more can I do.” Her career in PR has been incredibly helpful. She continually reminds the Agency to get the word out about services and the good work we do. She regularly communicates with Executive Director Rhorer in between meetings; she connects people in need to the Agency and connects the Agency to resources. Executive Director Rhorer then thanked her for her contributions and friendship, and wished her a happy birthday.

Commissioner Semel stated, “We all do such good work, we all need to support each other... to make the City a welcoming place.”

Executive Director Rhorer then completed his report.

CONTINUATION OF
THE EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Programs anticipated an increase in applications with pandemic unemployment benefits ending in September for many San Franciscans.

ESSS

CAAP

CAAP has seen a 50% increase in applications for benefits. There were 1600 new intakes each month for September and October. The overall caseload grew 6% (at the same time new applications are approved, some CAAP recipients stop benefits usually due to moving out of the county). The increase has eased in the last week. Executive Director Rhorer was

pleased CAAP was able to absorb the additional workload in a remote environment (and then employees returned November 1 at 40%).

WDD

Last month, Executive Director Rhorer mentioned the list of workforce development programs that were put on hold during the height of the pandemic that are now back, or that were created as a result of the pandemic. He highlighted one particular program in this month's report: HSA has provided 526 undocumented households on CalWORKs with a \$2500 one-time benefit. These are households who most likely did not receive federal COVID-19 stimulus funds. To be able to reach that many undocumented households, who don't want to be seen or found by any level of government for fear of reprisal regarding their immigration status, is a huge feat. Kudos to staff and community-based organizations for getting the word out and getting a significant amount of money into the hands of people who were disproportionately negatively impacted by COVID.

SFBN

As reported in the past, the state had suspended many eligibility requirements for CalFresh and Medi-Cal. There are indications that the state will continue to suspend them through the end of next year. Good news for us that households can continue to stay on benefits and not worry about being discontinued due to not submitting an appropriate form or other eligibility requirement.

FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES (FCS)

Executive Director Rhorer periodically meets with foster parents. Recently, two foster parents mentioned that they collect gently used clothes and items for foster parents and youth and asked if HSA could provide a space to house these items so RE Walsh and his Facilities team found a space that will serve not only as a clothing and supply closet but will also hold meetings, trainings and other activities. Thank you to the foster parents for the suggestion, and thank you to RE and his team for finding the space.

AGENDA

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

MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the minutes of the October 28, 2021 Regular Meeting as circulated.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH AWARD

President Kahn announced LOUISA KWAN, Program Specialist, Records Management, as the November 2021 Employee of the Month. The Commission recognized Louisa for her hard work, especially her contributions to giving San Francisco a voice in the CalSAWS planning and implementation plan. Louisa was awarded an engraved desk clock.

CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved and ratified actions taken by the Executive

Director since the October 28, 2021 Regular Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of November 18, 2021:

1. Submission of request to encumber funds in the total amount of \$6,735,164 for purchase of services or supplies and contingency amounts.
2. Submission of 6 temporary positions for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of 10/14/2021 to 11/4/2021.
3. Submission of 19 temporary appointments for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of 10/14/2021 to 11/4/2021.

MULTIPLE PROVIDERS (Bayanihan Equity Center, Bayview Hunters Point Community Advocates, Bayview Hunters Point Foundation (for United Council of Human Services), Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, Chinese Progressive Association (for Excelsior Works!), Curry Senior Center, Dolores Street Community Services, Fresh Approach, Glide Foundation, HOMEY, SF New Deal)

President Kahn read a portion of the October 28, 2021 meeting minutes to address Item VIII.A. of the November 18, 2021 Agenda:

“From item VIII.C. of the October 28, 2021 regular meeting agenda, the request to enter into new grant agreements with MULTIPLE PROVIDERS for the provision of Innovative Neighborhood Food Support; for the period of November 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022; in the combined amount of \$3,000,000, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$3,300,000. On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and not unanimously carried due to back and forth confusion with the multitude of contracts brought before the Commissioners and commentary among the Commissioners, the Commission thought that they adopted the motion but they did not.”

Therefore, the Commission took a roll call vote and on motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into new grant agreements with MULTIPLE PROVIDERS (Bayanihan Equity Center, Bayview Hunters Point Community Advocates, Bayview Hunters Point Foundation (for United Council of Human Services), Booker T. Washington Community Service Center, Chinese Progressive Association (for Excelsior Works!), Curry Senior Center, Dolores Street Community Services, Fresh Approach, Glide Foundation, HOMEY, SF New Deal) for the provision of Innovative Neighborhood Food Support; for the period of November 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022; in the combined amount of \$3,000,000, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed \$3,300,000.

Grantee	FY 21/22	10% Contingency	Total Not to Exceed
Bayanihan Equity Center	\$250,000	\$25,000	\$275,000
Bayview Hunters Point Community Advocates	\$275,000	\$27,500	\$302,500
Bayview Hunters Point Foundation (for United Council of Human Services)	\$200,000	\$20,000	\$220,000
Booker T. Washington Community Service	\$300,000	\$30,000	\$330,000
Chinese Progressive Association (for Excelsior Works!)	\$250,000	\$25,000	\$275,000

Grantee	FY 21/22	10% Contingency	Total Not to Exceed
Curry Senior Center	\$175,000	\$17,500	\$192,500
Dolores Street Community Services	\$250,000	\$25,000	\$275,000
Fresh Approach	\$300,000	\$30,000	\$330,000
Glide Foundation	\$275,000	\$27,500	\$302,500
HOMEY	\$375,000	\$37,500	\$412,500
SF New Deal	\$350,000	\$35,000	\$385,000
Total	\$3,000,000	\$300,000	\$3,300,000

COMMISSION
TELECONFERENCED
MEETINGS
RESOLUTION

President Kahn presented the request to approve the resolution making findings to allow teleconferenced meetings under California government code section 54953(e).

On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to approve the resolution making findings to allow teleconferenced meetings under California government code section 54953(e).

STATE AGREEMENT

Casey Schutte, Analyst with Family and Children’s Services, presented the request to enter into a new State agreement.


On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a State agreement for the provision of legal consultation and representation for the Resource Family Approval Program; for the time period July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024.

GENERAL PUBLIC
COMMENT

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

ADJOURNMENT

President Kahn adjourned the meeting at 10:16am.



Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary
Human Services Commission

Posted: December 7, 2021