



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE
HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION**

Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, April 25, 2024
Community Design Studio Nave
7506 E. Indian School Rd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

PRESENT: Chair Neal Shearer, Vice-Chair Mary Jung, Commission Members Roger Lurie, Patrick Dodds, Tricia Serlin, and Stuart Turgel

ABSENT: Commissioner Jeff Jameson

STAFF: Kira Peters, Human Services Director; Mary Witkofski, Community Assistance Manager; Rachel Smetana, Human Services Manager; Eugenio Munoz-Villafane, Human Services Manager; Deanna Owens, Human Services Manager; Sue Oh, Human Services Manager

Call to Order

Chair Shearer called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present as listed above.

Public Comment

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes

Approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of March 28, 2024

COMMISSIONER LURIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MARCH 28, 2024, HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES. VICE-CHAIR JUNG SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0) BY ROLL CALL VOTE. CHAIR SHEARER, VICE-CHAIR JUNG, AND COMMISSIONERS SERLIN, LURIE, DODDS, AND TURGEL VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

2. Paiute Neighborhood Center Update

Rachel Smetana, Human Services Manager, provided an update on Paiute Neighborhood Center's current operations, tenants, and programs. Funding for the center primarily comes from nonprofit partners and connections in the community. She said that crisis case management is the most important service provided at the center. Currently, there is one case worker and herself carrying the heavy caseload. In October of 2023, the Family Resource Center, funded through a First Things First grant, was moved from the library staff to the responsibility of Ms. Smetana at Paiute Neighborhood Center. The Family Resource Center does amazing things with community connectiveness, including resource referrals, providing emergency items for children of families in crisis, and special family programming.

In the year that Ms. Smetana has been at Paiute Neighborhood Center, the team has come together and developed "Community Building" as their unofficial strategic plan. The center was originally built to serve the surrounding neighborhood, but as the area has become gentrified, programming has changed to serve people from a wider area. Programs are being developed to address loneliness and help people connect with and know their neighbors better. Community Coffees offers an opportunity for neighbors to come together and learn about nutrition, fire safety, and how to handle extreme heat emergencies. It also offers an opportunity for community members to provide input about areas in which City services could be improved. It is hoped that in the future there will be an opportunity to reclaim some of the space at Paiute so that additional programming can be offered to meet the needs of groups such as senior citizens and elementary school students who live in the area. She highlighted work being done by Scottsdale Community College (SCC), which is working to revitalize its involvement at the center, providing children and teen education programming opportunities. Ms. Smetana offered anecdotes about several people with unique circumstances who have recently received assistance at Paiute Neighborhood Center.

Raoul Zubia, Board Member for Partners for Paiute, provided information on their programs at Paiute. His presentation included a review of the history of Partners for Paiute and the evolution of their efforts from focusing solely on Paiute Neighborhood Center to expanding coverage to the community in general. They work with Paiute social workers to provide various forms of assistance.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Commissioners expressed an interest in receiving information on how many families or individuals are being assisted by programs offered through Paiute. It was mentioned that Duet offers support for grandparents raising grandchildren. Mr. Zubia talked about the importance of the relationship between City of Scottsdale case workers and Partners for Paiute. Rosemary Ortega, Partners for Paiute Board Member, shared her experience with Paiute and changes she has seen in the surrounding neighborhood. She said that Partners for Paiute is open to working with case workers from other community centers within Scottsdale to fill the gaps and assist with unique needs that cannot be met by City programs. Commissioners agreed that it is important to develop a strategic plan that includes reclaiming some of the space on campus and that will act as a guide in morphing Paiute Neighborhood Center into something more dynamic and supportive of the evolving needs.

Mary Witkofski, Community Assistance Manager, said that Partners for Paiute was nominated and selected for Industry Partner for Affordable Housing Month in May and will be presented with an award during the Affordable Housing Month event on May 13, 2024.

3. Homelessness Outreach & Community Education

Kira Peters, Human Services Director, provided information on the upcoming partnership with the Scottsdale Police Department to facilitate a month-long operation, scheduled for May of 2024, that will provide homeless outreach, traffic enforcement, and education for the community specifically in the area of Indian School Park. The project is being driven by the Police Department and will begin with two weeks of outreach to residents and businesses about City laws affecting areas within the Indian School Park corridor. An enforcement effort will begin in week three, and a team will be available in person during week four to answer citizen questions.

Discussion ensued regarding park hours and enforcement of the overnight camping ordinance. Director Peters said that she is not certain how the Police Department handles people in the park after hours, but assumes that if there is no disturbance, they would at most ask them to move along. Commissioners expressed concern about the education and enforcement components of the plan. They felt that outreach and navigation services should be made available as part of the program. They stressed the importance of the partnership between the Human Services Department and the Police Department.

4. Including Recreation Programming at Vista Del Camino

Director Peters shared preliminary plans to offer general recreation programming at Vista Del Camino to serve the community. She said that on March 21, 2024, City of Scottsdale staff attended a Yaqui Community meeting at St. Daniels Church. During the meeting, the Yaqui Community expressed a desire to have access to the Vista del Camino community building to use for community recreation opportunities. As a result of that meeting, Director Peters and Vista del Camino Manager Deanna Owens met with stakeholders to discuss ways that the center could be used for recreation services while continuing to serve critical social service needs of the community. A decision was made to partner with the Parks and Recreation Department to bring in two part-time recreation leaders and open the recreation room for drop-in play and recreation programs on Saturdays from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. beginning on June 8, 2024.

5. Annual Funding Allocation Process Review

Chair Shearer led a discussion on the annual funding allocation process. The discussion included evaluation and ideas for improvement to the annual funding allocation process. In-depth discussion ensued, and Commissioners expressed appreciation for improvements made in the areas of listing specific priorities for the funding sources, the Neighborly SharePoint software, staff support, communication between Commissioners, and alternative funding options provided during the final scoring process.

Commissioners provided input on areas of opportunity for improvement in the funding process. Suggestions included:

- Creating a method to include both quantitative and qualitative information as part of the scoring process.
- Greater insight into the capability of each non-profit organization to perform the work described in their proposals.
- More consideration of outcome measurements, including the number of people served and how their lives have been improved as a result of the services.
- Adding more subjective evaluation criteria.
- Revisiting the length of the application relative to the Commission's responsibility to understanding proposals.
- Guidance as to which programs could be in jeopardy if not funded and areas where staff could use funds for targeted priorities.
- Considering reducing the number of ranking categories and placing more emphasis on priorities.
- Narrowing the definitions of priorities.
- Gaining better understanding of whether agencies are local Scottsdale service providers or providers of regional services.
- Increasing the point scale to provide more differentiation when scoring.
- Focusing more on complete funding of programs and having an understanding of how a reduction in funding would affect services provided by agencies.
- Streamlining applications by reducing the number of questions.
- Advocating for more SRPMIC dollars.

Ms. Witkofski commented that all of the department's needs are contained in the Consolidated Action Plan. Commissioners will be invited to participate in a stakeholder meeting to provide feedback on the plan at the end of June.

Discussion ensued regarding TCAA home-delivered congregate meals service funding needs. A suggestion was made that requirements related to Endowment Funds be reviewed to see if those funds could be distributed less often in an effort to make a more substantial impact.

Vice-Chair Jung commented that Honor Health has convened a food resources group to try to answer questions about who and why one group is providing services in North Scottsdale and another in South Scottsdale and where there could be gaps. She offered to keep the Commission updated on the progress of the group. Commissioners expressed interest in finding opportunities to make meaningful site visits.

Ms. Witkofski reviewed a list of suggested improvements compiled by Human Services staff. Suggestions included a desire to have a representative from the Commission attend the non-profit application orientation, include in the applications a checkbox to indicate if an agency is serving individuals or households, streamline the question-and-answer segment on a SharePoint site instead of having agencies come in person, invite agencies to give presentations in advance of the funding process so as to avoid confusion, and make sure historical data demonstrated capacity is helpful.

Staff would like to put priority on collaboration. If an organization is collaborating with a regional partner or someone in the City of Scottsdale, they must provide a letter of support from the agency they are collaborating with and/or an MOU or IGA. This process would provide Commissioners with information about agencies the City is working with while maintaining anonymity in terms of the purchasing code. Those agencies who are collaborating could have a higher funding cap and be given an opportunity to submit an application under a single proposal.

6. Director's Report

Director Peters provided an update on activities in the Human Services Department. Her presentation highlighted the following items:

- Free vaccines were offered at Paiute Neighborhood Center on April 25, 2024.
- Entertainment Extravaganza was hosted by Scottsdale Center for the Arts on April 25, 2024, beginning at 4:00 p.m.
- The Mayor's Youth Town Hall was held at Scottsdale Stadium on April 25, 2024.
- The Fill-a-Cruiser event was held on April 18, 2024. The City worked with the Scottsdale Police Department to collect donations for summer heat relief.
- The Volunteer Brunch was held at Granite Reef Senior Center.
- Senior citizen excursions have been supported by a post-COVID socialization grant.
- A Scottsdale Back-to-School event is planned for Tuesday, July 30, 2024, at Scottsdale Stadium.
- The Human Services Breakfast Bash will be hosted at Granite Reef Senior Center on May 16, 2024, from 7:15 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. The event will provide an opportunity to meet with Human Services partners and thank the Human Services team for all their hard work.
- National Prevention Week is May 13–17. Youth and Family Services will host information tables at a variety of locations throughout the community.
- Heat Relief begins on May 1 and runs through September 30, with hydration stations available at public libraries, Vista del Camino, Paiute Neighborhood Center, and both senior centers. Water donations are being accepted now.
- The last Coffee and Community of the season is being hosted at Paiute Neighborhood Center on May 3, 2024. A special guest will talk about nutrition and gardening.
- Staff recently met with Commissioners to discuss ideas for increasing Scottsdale Cares donations. The Commission will be given an opportunity to provide input prior to a proposal going to City Council.
- Day Relief hours will be expanding for the summer. South Scottsdale Presbyterian Church will be open Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and Vista del Camino will remain open on Wednesdays and Fridays. Information on the City's website will be updated to reflect the new hours.
- The Human Services management team will be attending a retreat on May 10, 2024, to talk about the strategic plan and develop mission and vision statements for the department. The Commission will be involved throughout the strategic planning process.
- The City Council tentative budget adoption is scheduled for May 14 and final adoption on June 4.

7. Identification of Future Agenda Items

There were no suggestions for future agenda items.

8. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER LURIE MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. VICE-CHAIR JUNG SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED SIX (6) TO ZERO (0) BY ROLL CALL VOTE. CHAIR SHEARER, VICE-CHAIR JUNG AND COMMISSIONERS SERLIN, LURIE, DODDS, AND TURGEL VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

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