



**CITY OF SCOTTSDALE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, November 18, 2021  
Meeting held electronically**

**PRESENT:** Chair Raoul Zubia, Commissioners Jeff Jameson, Roger Lurie, Neal Shearer, and Tricia Serlin

**ABSENT:** Vice Chair Emily Reilly, Commissioner Jayne Hubbard

**STAFF:** Greg Bestgen, Director; Irma Hollamby, Community Assistance Manager; Mike Murphy, Community Services Business and Analytics Manager; and Kevin McKee, Human Services Manager at Vista del Camino's Park and Community Center and acting Community Action Program Director.

**GUESTS:** Amy St. Peter, Deputy Executive Director, Maricopa Association of Governments  
T.J. Reed, Regional Homelessness Program Manager, Maricopa Association of Governments

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Zubia called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Members present as listed above.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no members of the public who submitted public comments.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes of October 21, 2021

Commissioner Shearer noted "it has been \$1 since inception in the 1990's" should be added to his suggestion to increase the Scottsdale Cares option in the utility bill to \$2 to give it context. Director Bestgen noted it is appropriate and would be taken into consideration during that agenda item.

COMMISSIONER SHEARER MOVED TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 21, 2021, HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER SERLIN SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0) BY ROLL CALL VOTE. CHAIR ZUBIA, COMMISSIONERS JAMESON, LURIE, SHEARER, AND SERLIN VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE. THERE WERE NO DISSENTING VOTES.

## **REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

### **1. Regional Efforts to Address Homelessness**

Amy St. Peter, Deputy Executive Director of the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG), provided an update on the data and outreach driving regional efforts. Homelessness is increasing at an alarming rate and Arizona has the highest rate in the country. Among many factors the lifting of the eviction moratorium has played a significant role in the increased numbers. Additionally, there is a housing crisis where it is difficult to find affordable housing with many families paying more than 30-50% of their income on housing, which is not sustainable.

T.J. Reed, Regional Homelessness Program Manager at MAG, discussed steps being taken to address the need and strengthen the regional response to homelessness.

The goal is to reduce and prevent homelessness by working collaboratively with diverse agencies within Maricopa County to identify risk factors, increase the supply of affordable temporary and permanent housing, and identify funding sources.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Ms. St. Peter advised to her knowledge there are no initiatives within the local community to implement a local moratorium on evictions, nor is she familiar with any prohibitions to do so. She will research the topic and report back to the Commission. Several programs assist landlords and tenants to prevent homelessness. Mr. Reed discussed a recent program within the Maricopa justice system that provides legal services to those going through the eviction process. Additionally, shared housing opportunities are being explored and are anticipated to be implemented within the next 18 months.

This topic will be added to the next agenda allowing Commissioners an opportunity to review all the data that was provided this evening and have a meaningful in-depth discussion at the next meeting.

### **2. Human Services Yearend Summary**

Mike Murphy, Community Services Business and Analytics Manager provided a review of the community impact. Overall, the City provided 201.3 tons of food with a value of \$964 to 85,247 recipients through a variety of programs.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. Murphy clarified the increase in the assistance provided at the Senior Centers was a result of not previously including those participating in the Brown Bag program. Staff is working to capture demographic data on households that participate in the programs. Additionally, it was noted that Paiute provides counseling services and does not distribute goods.

### **3. Vista del Camino Program Updates**

Kevin McKee, Human Services Manager at Vista del Camino's Park and Community Center and acting Community Action Program Director, provided an update on services and recent program changes due to COVID.

The rent, mortgage, and utilities assistance program has seen the most change related to COVID. Applicants apply online and will receive assistance based on their eligibility for any or all the 23 fund programs available. The programs are supported through Federal funding. The table below shows the comparison of services provided Pre COVID to Year to Date.

Year	Rent / Mortgage Assistance	Utility Assistance
Pre COVID	\$230,000	\$440,000
FY 20-21	\$3.8 million	\$780,000
Year to Date (beginning July 1)	\$2.3 million	\$330,000

The increase in services provided called for an increase in staffing, which was filled through redeployment of staff. Additionally, a \$965,000 staffing reimbursement was received from Maricopa County.

Adopt a Family is the longest running holiday program. This program targets families in need of a meal for Thanksgiving and winter holidays. This year the program was coordinated with Paiute's toy program to better service participating families who meet the eligibility requirements.

In July, the Back-to-School program occurs where students are provided what they need to be successful in school.

The Career Services team aids individuals seeking employment through case management, helping with resume writing, clothing, and assistance with transportation to interviews. Since COVID these services have been provided virtually to individuals. One of the challenges is having more job seekers to connect with employers.

The food bank is a partnership with St. Mary's and Scottsdale Community Partners. Food boxes are prepared and distributed by appointment in a drive-up setting. The goal is to distribute food to 300 families monthly.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Mr. McKee noted due to space issues at Paiute the donations from Toys for Tots will be delivered to Vista del Camino for distribution to families in need and will include gift cards and/or food for the holidays. The plan is to return to an in-person Back to School event at the Scottsdale Stadium.

Commissioners Lurie, Shearer, and Serlin provided positive comments and gratitude for the work being done to support those families in need.

#### **4. Director's Report**

Greg Bestgen, Human Services Director, commented on the brilliant, passionate, creative, and committed managers and the exciting and ever-growing Human Services department. The staff over the almost two years of the pandemic have risen to face the challenges and shifted to continue to provide services to those in need.

The Vista CAP office has social workers to work with clients who come in for emergency assistance. Although it cost more, it shows the City's commitment to providing outstanding service.

It is important to review the information presented by MAG this evening as a further discussion will be held at the December meeting. A future conversation will need to be held on how to continue to fund the programs once the AZ Cares funds are gone.

At future meetings, managers will provide a presentation to educate the commission on things that are being done to support low-income individuals and families in Scottsdale.

Additionally, Mr. Bestgen proposed taking the commissioners and his new secretary on a tour after the holidays to see all the facilities and meet staff.

#### **5. Adjournment**

COMMISSIONER SERLIN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. COMMISSIONER LURIE SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED FIVE (5) TO ZERO (0) BY ROLL CALL VOTE. CHAIR ZUBIA, COMMISSIONERS JAMESON, LURIE, SHEARER, AND SERLIN VOTED IN THE AFFIRMATIVE WITH NO DISSENTING VOTES.

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

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