



City of Scottsdale
Human Services Commission
Regular Meeting

SUMMARIZED MINUTES

5:00 P.M., Thursday, May 8, 2008
City Hall Kiva
3939 N. Drinkwater Blvd.
Scottsdale, AZ 85251

Call to Order

Commissioner Weaver called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM

Roll Call

Present: Commissioners: Katherine Weaver, Angela Bowers, Carol Erickson, and Jo Ann Woodward

Also Present: Connie James, Cindy Ensign, Valerie Kime Trujillo

Absent: Chairwoman Donna Reid, Vice-chair Kathleen Hemmingsen
Commissioner: Dave Bachmann

1. Approval of the April 10, 2008 Minutes – Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Weaver called for a motion to approve the April 10, 2008 minutes.

Approved 4-0; Commissioner Erickson moved to approve the April 10, 2008 minutes; seconded by Commissioner Bowers

2. 2008 Human Services Five Year Plan Update

Cindy Ensign, Human Services Planner/Budget Specialist, recapped the changes that have been made since the April 10, 2008 meeting and requested the Commission's approval of the 2008 Human Services 5-Year Plan Update.

Commissioner Erickson asked if the Objectivities and Population Groups listed in the Update are sorted by priority.

Ms. Ensign replied that they are not in priority order and was developed in 2000 by the Human Services Commission appointed at that time.

Commissioner Woodward thanked Ms. Ensign for including the assessment of technology improvements to the Update.

Commissioner Erickson expressed concern about including in the Update the name "Ready to Learn" and suggested that we talk in general terms and emphasize a specific program.

Ms. Ensign agreed to make the changes in this printing.

Commissioner Weaver called for a motion to approve the Human Services Five Year Plan.

Approved 4-0; Commissioner Bowers moved to approve Human Services Five Year Plan Update; seconded by Commissioner Woodward.

3. Save the Family Foundation of Arizona

Laura Skotnicki, Director of Case Management, provided an overview of the Homeless Families Intervention Project (HFIP) which promotes healing from the trauma associated with homelessness and discussed their Transitional Housing and Supportive Services programs. The agency was founded in November of 1988 and now has 80 transitional housing units scattered throughout Mesa, Scottsdale, Tempe, Chandler and Gilbert. Ms. Skotnicki informed the Commission about client demographics for 2006-07, housing & case management examples, programs & services; including: Training for Personal Success (TPS), Parenting Skills Program (PSP), Kids Works Programs, Career Development Services, Legal Advocacy and Information Project (LAIP), and the Affordable Rental Movement (ARM) program. Ms. Skotnicki presented a video on how Save the Family offers services to homeless families and families who are victims of domestic violence.

Commissioner Erickson asked how long a family can stay at the organization.

Ms. Skotnicki replied 24 months and the average is 7-12 months.

Commissioner Weaver asked how Save the Family selects affordable housing in Scottsdale and where the locations are in the valley.

Ms. Skotnicki replied that the units they have currently are through a HUD grant and there are not that many units here. Some are located in the south part of Scottsdale, and some are located near Fashion Square Mall.

Commissioner Weaver asked how hard it is for a client to obtain skills to get a job that will pay enough to cover all of their expenses.

Ms. Skotnicki replied that those folks usually stay longer and in the first 45 days of the program, clients meet with a career developer and develop their goals toward achieving a higher salary range. Clients in need of a GED receive a little more time to complete the program.

Commissioner Bowers asked what kind of child care Save the Family offers to families with children.

Ms. Skotnicki explained that Save the family does not provide child care but does work with them in the first 30 days to get subsidized child care in place through DES.

4. A New Leaf (formerly PREHAB of Arizona, Inc.)

Kathy Di Nolfi, Vice President Mesa CAN and Shelter Services, provided an overview of the La Mesita Family Shelter and how the shelter serves homeless, and Scottsdale/East Valley families. They have a 30 unit family shelter consisting of studio apartments and two 1,250 square foot units to accommodate larger families. The shelter has benefited from \$500,000 of improvements during a recent renovation. Residents can stay a maximum of 120 days with the average stay between 75-80 days. One of the largest barriers to self-sufficiency is affordable child care and La Mesita does provide on-site child care at the center. In

addition, there is an adult development center on-site which allows adults quiet time to work on their resumes, access their email, and apply for jobs online.

Commissioner Weaver asked if the agency sees families who don't want to come or are resistant or does your agency only see the ones who want to come.

Ms. Di Nolfi replied that clients self-refer and sometimes clients are resistant over the phone, but when clients actually show up, they are very pleased with the facilities and programs and they are much more comfortable in staying.

5. Central Arizona Shelter Services, Inc. (CASS)

Mark Holleran, Chief Executive Officer, gave an overview of the state of homelessness as a regional issue including April statistics of the persons occupying the CASS shelter, Vista Colina Family shelter and the Men's Overflow shelter. Mr. Holleran provided a handout to the Commission about their occupancy for 2008, addressing that the center is over-capacitated at the current time. CASS was originally set-up to be a temporary solution for the downtown Phoenix homeless population but has turned into something permanent and serves over 10,000 individuals per year with more people over 55 than ever before. CASS is developing a new policy statement regarding housing sex offenders at the shelters and if approved by the board, will phase out the number of sex offenders served starting in May 2008 and ending with zero being served by September 30, 2009. Mr. Holleran stated that the only way to end homelessness is by providing affordable housing. In closing, he recommended that the Human Services Commission, valley Mayors and City Councils, the Board of Supervisors and private sectors write letters to the Governor in the support of affordable housing.

Commissioner Woodward asked out of the 1,000 people who found jobs, how many people kept the jobs.

Mr. Holleran replied that they only keep records for 90 days and based on clients that they get feedback back from, two-thirds of the people still had their jobs during the 90 days.

Commissioner Woodward asked if the sex offenders referenced in the policy statement are mostly rapists and child molesters.

Mr. Holleran replied that we need to be careful not to assume that. The handout references Level II and Level III sex offenders and persons are assessed as a Level II or III based on their probably to re-offend not on the type of crime they committed. However, Level III offenders have a tendency to have violent crime associated with them.

Commissioner Weaver asked if Arizona is a good place to be homeless as to another state where the climates are much different and temperatures drop very low.

Mr. Holleran expressed that it is one of the better land areas to be, except for the high temperatures in Arizona. Approximately 30 people died a couple of years ago from the high temperatures and the new Human Services Campus does provide some shade during the day. A problem occurs when the temperature doesn't drop enough at night and people don't get any relief from the heat.

Commissioner Bowers asked if CASS performs any random screening for drugs or alcohol once someone is admitted into the shelter considering that the statistics show that 50% have a history of substance abuse.

Mr. Holleran replied they don't do random drug testing of persons in the shelter unless they display behavior that suggests drug or alcohol use and then they do.

Commissioner Erickson asked Mr. Holleran what progress had been made with getting people to take that recommendation on affordable housing to the City Council.

Mr. Holleran replied that unfortunately not much progress and asked the Commission to write a letter on affordable housing and that he can provide a template. Mr. Holleran went on to say that the Steel Commons is a great example that affordable permanent supportive housing works. There are 84 units, with staff on site 24/7 and there are seven people that have lived there for 8 years. The cost is \$400 per month and that includes utilities.

6. The Open Table, Inc.

John Katov, Co-Founder, gave an overview of the services and support that are provided to homeless individuals and families on their journey to self-sufficiency. Mr. Katov provided a video on a client that was on a Channel 3TV Storytellers segment and provided an overview of the Open Table model.

Commissioner Bowers asked how often the Open Table meets and how many people they are helping.

Mr. Katov replied that the Open Table meets weekly. 41 tables existing with 8 tables ready to launch, and there should be about 20 more by the end of the year.

Commissioner Erickson asked where Open Table gets funding from.

Open Table Inc. does the mentor training, and each faith institution is responsible for raising their own money through contributions and fundraisers.

Commissioner Bowers asked about Open Table's mental health screening.

Mr. Katov replied that Open Table does very in depth screening. Each clients goes through two, 3-hour personal interviews, drug screening, driving record and tax return assessments, and psychic evaluations to assist in the planning of clearing up different issues the client has and in order to help set aside funds for certain issues they will be dealing with. The City of Mesa has set aside some Section 8 vouchers to clients who are coming through Open Table.

Commissioner Bowers asked if the whole congregation learns about the client.

Mr. Katov explained that each client must be willing to witness to the entire congregation and it ends up being a beautiful experience for all.

7. Staff and Commission Updates

Ms. James thanked Cindy Ensign and Valerie Kime Trujillo for setting up the presentations and the presenters. Ms. James reminded the Commission that the next commission meeting will be on May 22, 2008 and there will be a light supper provided. Staff will ask for future suggestions from the Commission for the coming year. Valerie Kime Trujillo informed the Commission about many site updates including current events, program highlights, and upcoming events.

8. Open call to the Public (A.R.S. §38-431.02)

Commissioner Weaver made an open call to the public for comments/announcements or other business. There were no requests.

9. Adjournment

Commissioner Weaver called for a motion to conclude the meeting. Commissioner Bowers made the motion and Commissioner Erickson seconded that motion.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:34 PM.

This information is available in an alternate format upon request.

Note: In accordance with provision of the Arizona Revised Statutes, the summarized minutes of the Human Services Commission Meetings are not verbatim transcripts. Only the actions taken and discussion appearing with quotations marks are verbatim.

*Signatures needed when APPROVED by Commission

Officially approved by the Human Services Commission at the _____ meeting.

Submitted by:

**Jonathan Montoya
Administrative Secretary**

Reviewed by:

**Connie James
Human Services Director**

Date: _____

Date: _____