Call to Order

Vice-Chair Brown called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Roll Call

Members present as listed above.

1. **Open call to the Public**

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

2. **Approval of Minutes: December 14, 2017**

COMMISSIONER PORTNOY MOVED TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 14, 2017 HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES. COMMISSIONER CAMPBELL SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY A VOTE OF SIX (6) TO ZERO (0).

3. **Restorative Justice Intervention Program (RJIP) First Year Review**

Joanne Meierdirks, Manager, gave a brief overview of the history behind the inception of the Restorative Justice Intervention Program (RJIP) and the success of the program during the past year. Discussions about developing a program began between the City and the police department approximately ten years ago and the pilot program focused on truancy.

Brian Hartman, School Resource Officer, explained that the truancy program started approximately six years ago at Supai Middle School. It was discovered that in many cases
truancy was just a symptom of bigger personal problems. The program started with approximately 55 youth and lasted over a two-and-a-half year period, during which time those students received one-on-one counseling through the Youth and Family Services department.

Ms. Meierdirks said that following the approval of county attorneys and city prosecutors, a pilot program started on August 1, 2016, using the school resource officers’ unit. Restorative Justice is intended to hold minor children accountable for their choices while supporting them and helping them to resolve harm done to a victim.

Officer Hartman noted that with the success of the truancy program, parameters for a larger program were discussed. It was determined that the program would include youth aged 10 to 17; all eligible parties would have to agree to take part in the program as well as their parents and any victims. Status offenses, which are crimes that would be legal if they were adults and marijuana and drug paraphernalia are included as offences that can be mitigated through the program. Domestic violence and driving violations do not qualify. The RJIP program is unique in that at the officer’s discretion, an internal citation is issued and the juvenile is required to contact Youth and Family Services within a set amount of time to participate in the program. Most participants complete the program within 45 days. Officials at the Arizona State Library Archives and Public Records recently agreed to lock all records one year following completion of the program. Participants who have already completed the program will be included retroactively. If they were to go through the court system, the process could last for months to years and the violation would remain on their record for up to 25 years.

Nora O’Connell-Krause, Human Services Specialist, described the Youth and Family Services intake process, the requirements participants are expected to complete within a 60-day period, and the benefits to both participants and their families.

Tim Ostby, Human Services Specialist, discussed the program outcomes and participant demographics.

Ms. Meierdirks noted that the program has received statewide recognition, including from the County Attorney’s Office, which is interested in expanding the program statewide. She noted that Police Office Analyst, Cassie Johnson, received an award for her contributions to RJIP. Ms. Meierdirks has given presentations at the International Association of Law Enforcement Planners, the Arizona Anti-Graffiti Initiative, the Arizona Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative, and the Arizona Juvenile Justice Commission. The Police Department presented an innovation program award to Youth and Family Services.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Ms. Meierdirks said that the program is unique and the department is working to build relationships with communities that have, or are interested in, developing similar programs nationwide. Commissioners commended Ms. Meierdirks, Youth and Family Services, and the Police Department for the success of the RJIP program.

Mr. Ostby said that statistics show that the earlier someone gets involved with using substances, the greater chance they will have to develop a substance abuse disorder later in life. The RJIP program offers young people an opportunity to go down a better path and make better decisions.
Ms. Meierdirks noted that the RJIP program averages a savings of $11 for every $1 spent.

Greg Bestgen, Director, said that since the inception of Youth and Family Services in the mid-’80s, the focus has been on longevity, connections, and rapport with the community. He noted that the City provides over $100,000 to Scottsdale Unified School District for early prevention programs.

4. **Overview of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher and Family Self-Sufficiency Programs**

Michelle Albanese, Community Assistance Manager, gave a presentation outlining the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program.

The HCV program is funded through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the City of Scottsdale receives approximately $9.5 million annually for the program, which includes rental assistance payments and administration costs. The rental assistance program assists low-income Scottsdale citizens in paying a portion of their rent based on their annual income. The program allows an individual to rent anyplace in the City of Scottsdale that is within the cost guidelines. Ms. Albanese reviewed the qualifications, which include income eligibility and a background check.

Mayia Hernandez and Stacey Benson, Human Services Specialists, discussed the Family Self-Sufficiency program. In addition to her duties working with participants, Ms. Hernandez conducts property inspections. Ms. Benson works directly with participants on a five-year program geared towards helping them improve their educational, financial, and health situations.

Commissioners were given an opportunity to ask questions. Ms. Benson explained that all Family Self-Sufficiency program participants are required to be Section 8 eligible. The program is governed by the Fair Housing Act for any landlords who choose to participate in the program and accept the Section 8 Housing Choice voucher. The City has been conducting landlord marketing in an effort to increase the availability of affordable housing options in Scottsdale. Ms. Benson said that Scottsdale receives 735 vouchers and approximately 60 percent of the recipients are elderly or disabled. This year six participants were forced to move to another city because they were unable to renew their leases and were unable to find housing in Scottsdale.

Myrtle Wilks, Family Self-Sufficiency program participant, talked about her background and her experiences working with the City of Scottsdale and the ways the Family Self-Sufficiency program benefited her.

5. **Staff and Commission Updates**

Ms. Meierdirks gave an update on activities at Paiute Community Center. She noted that the recent newsletter highlighted longtime volunteer Betty Ames who recently was awarded the William P. Schrader Volunteer Impact Award. The newsletter also mentioned that the Paiute fence project has been completed. Ms. Meierdirks reported that Paiute has a toy program, supported by Scottsdale Community College and Toys for Tots, helps fill gaps for programs that Vista del Camino does not cover. This year toys were distributed to 250 families. Gifts included toys, gift cards for teens, and over 50 bicycles that were donated by Partners for Paiute. Excess toys were donated to Family Promise and Save the Family. Scottsdale Family Resource Center
recently held an event for local families that included Legoland, Discovery Science, and a presentation by the Scottsdale Fire Department.

Scottsdale Mayor’s Youth Council will host their Youth Town Hall on March 5, 2018. The topic this year is addiction. Commissioners were invited to attend.

Tim Miluk, Manager, gave an update on the activities of the Via Linda and Granite Reef Senior Centers. The Adopt-a-Senior program increased this year by 40 percent serving 260 seniors ages 65 to 100 years old and 68 disabled adults aged 19 to 64. He talked about the benefits of keeping connected to the seniors in the community and having the ability to go to their homes and help to enrich the quality of their lives. Director Bestgen noted that the City has been coordinating with Concerned Citizens for Community Health, who has assisted in helping with the growing demand of seniors of low to moderate income in north Scottsdale.

Director Bestgen said that Commissioners will be given an opportunity to review the annual report prior to the January 25th meeting.

Human Services is involved together with the Police Department and other City departments with a Homeless Coalition the City of Scottsdale has put together to address the growing homeless population in Scottsdale. A consolidated report will be submitted to the City Manager in the next 60 to 90 days.

Commissioners are invited to attend the Chaparral ADA playground ribbon cutting ceremony on January 17th at Chaparral Park.

Director Bestgen explained that the Yaqui Tribe does not have the ability to contribute matching funds to complete the art mural at this time. Staff is reaching out to the art community in search of an alternate solution in hopes of bringing the project forward in the future.

Commissioner Snopko commended staff for the work they do and for taking a proactive approach to addressing the homeless population's needs.

Vice-Chair Brown thanked Commissioners and staff for their dedication and passion.

On behalf of Chair Eng, Vice-Chair Brown encouraged Commissioners to be available for all meetings through the funding season.

6. **Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, being duly moved and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

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