

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

MINUTES

August 27, 2024 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Tuesday, August 27, 2024 at 1:30pm in person in the Born auditorium at 170 Otis Street and remotely via Webex and telephone for disability accommodations.

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON SCOTT KAHN, President
JAMES MCCRAY, JR., Vice President
SALLY COGHLAN MCDONALD

MEMBERS PRESENT REMOTELY VIA WEBEX DARSHAN SINGH

OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON Trent Rhorer, Executive Director
Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary
Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director – Finance & Administration
Anna Pineda, Deputy Director – Economic Support & Self-Sufficiency (ESSS)
Joan Miller, Deputy Director – Family & Children’s Services (FCS)
Susie Smith, Deputy Director – Policy, Planning & Public Affairs

CALL MEETING TO ORDER President Kahn called the meeting to order at 1:30pm.

ROLL CALL Commission Secretary Elizabeth LaBarre took roll and noted the presence of Commissioners Kahn, McCray and Coghlan McDonald in person in the Born auditorium. Commissioner Singh was present remotely via Webex from his home.

AGENDA President Kahn’s call for public comment related to the meeting’s agenda yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the agenda as posted.

June 25, 2024 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES President Kahn’s call for public comment related to the June 25, 2024 regular meeting minutes yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the adoption of the June 25, 2024 Regular Meeting minutes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT Executive Director Trent Rhorer provided updates on Human Services Agency (“SFHSA” or the “Agency”) programs and federal, state and local policy and activities as they relate to the Agency.

STATE

The state budget was signed by the governor at the end of June, just after the last commission meeting. During the June meeting, Executive Director

Rhorer noted that the January state budget proposal as well as the May Revise reflected significant cuts to human services programs. However, the legislature restored almost all cuts and so, overall, the state-budget impacts to SFHSA were much less than expected. There were two small appropriation reductions—one for CalWorks and one for CalFresh—that will likely be inconsequential for San Francisco due to CWDA county allocation policy that attempts to mitigate the harm to the counties that spend their full allocations, which SF always does.

LOCAL

The Mayor signed the City's budget, following approval by the Board of Supervisors (BOS), in early August. The total City budget is \$15.9 billion, a figure includes federal and state dollars. The Mayor's priorities are reflected in the budget—investments for San Francisco residents, workers, visitors, and closing up the deficit without significant cuts SFHSA. SFHSA's total budget is \$1.2 billion for fiscal year 2024-2025 and \$1.3 billion for fiscal year 2025-2026. The budget includes funding for the relocation of staff out of 170 Otis Street due to the seismic condition of the building. Other increases to the budget include a 2.5 % cost of doing business increase for community-based organizations (CBOs) who deliver critical services in the community, labor wage increases for City employees of 13% over the next three years, and funding for the implementation of the voter-approved Proposition F in January 2025 (the substance use disorder (SUD) initiative in CAAP). In terms of revenue forecasts, the budget team anticipates an austere budget with no program expansions or budget growth. If reduction targets are necessary, the hope is that they will be small and manageable. Executive Director Rhorer noted that there was one add back from the BOS for the food access programs for \$360,000.

AGENCY

Admin/Finance

Facilities/Operations

There are various ongoing staff moves and several projects in the planning phase. SFHSA has two seismically challenged sites: 170 Otis Street and 1235 Mission Street. The City owns 170 Otis outright and the Agency does not pay rent. SFHSA leases 1235 Mission from SFUSD. The plan is to relocate out of both buildings. The BOS approved an additional 8,000sqft at 2 Gough Street where the Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS) already occupies some of the building. The additional space is in the process of being rehabbed before staff move in. Additionally, the Agency plans to acquire a building with the Real Estate department for an additional 191,000sqft at 1455 Market Street, which includes an entrance on Mission Street (at 1460 Mission St.). The plan is to house the SFBN service center, staff from 170 Otis, and various other units from other buildings in this new space. This impacts the 1650 Mission Street and 1440 Harrison Street buildings/staff. Executive Director Rhorer and his team are looking at these moves as a way to consolidate services that serve similar populations at a single location while maintaining a presence in the central part of the City, in the Mission (with the 3120 Mission Street building), in SOMA (with the 1440 Harrison Street building) and in the Bayview (with the

3801 3rd Street building for FCS). The team is currently in negotiations for another building along the 3rd Street corridor.

ESSS

CalFresh

The state's payment error rate fell below the federal standard, which would typically lead to a financial sanction for the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). However, CDSS will not receive a payment accuracy sanction, so there is no financial hit to San Francisco's CalFresh program.

CDSS completed issuance of SUN Bucks cards to all families on CalFresh statewide. SUN Bucks is \$120 in food benefits over the summer months to help shore up food support for families with school-aged children who typically receive free and reduced lunch (and sometimes breakfast) during the school year. Now that school is back in session, the SUN Bucks program has ended.

The annual management evaluation conducted by CDSS will occur at the end of September. CDSS staff visit the three SFHSA CalFresh eligibility determination sites to evaluate a range of criteria. After the visit and an assessment, CDSS drafts a report with an overview of the criteria and whether they were met satisfactorily; if some were not met, then CDSS recommends changes or improvements which must be implemented by the SF CalFresh team.

Medi-Cal

Consistent with Governor Newsom and his administration's attempt to maximize eligibility for health insurance for low-income families, the Continuous Eligibility (CE) for Children Eligible for Accelerated Enrollment (AE) program will launch in January. It guarantees, with a few exceptions, a 12-month coverage period for children and families who enroll in Medi-Cal irrespective of a change in circumstances within that period. The program will prevent lapses in coverage and is a way to ensure the continuity of health insurance for children and families.

In an effort to incentivize pharmacies to vaccinate children on Medi-Cal, the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program will reimburse enrolled pharmacy providers who administer vaccines.

CAAP

Executive Director Rhorer provided an update on the Proposition F planning and implementation process for the CAAP substance use treatment program. The request for proposal (RFP) process to select a CBO to provide assessments, referrals, peer support, guidance and case management for CAAP clients with substance use disorders is complete. The Agency is currently in contract negotiations with the selected CBO provider. The contract will ultimately go before the Commission, probably in two months. Additionally, the CAAP team is meeting with the Department of Public Health (DPH) to understand how to link individuals to

DPH's on-demand treatment and other treatment options in preparation for the January 1 program start date.

FCS

The annual provider fair was on Thursday, August 22 here at 170 Otis on the 2nd floor. The providers are CBO partners who provide support for families and children in the child welfare system or at risk of entering the child welfare system. The fair offers an important opportunity for FCS staff to meet CBO partners face to face and it helps with connecting families to the right services.

A resource family approval recruiter has been hired who will work closely with existing foster parents and the partner agency, Alternative Family Services, to get more applicants from the community to become resource families. FCS set a goal a few years ago to keep all San Francisco children in San Francisco when they are removed from their birth parents, except when they have a relative who lives outside of SF. To achieve this goal, the team needs to recruit San Francisco foster parents.

Related to a contract on the agenda today for Binti, Inc., the resource family approval team plans to pilot artificial intelligence (AI) with the Binti data system to assist potential resource families complete applications in their native language. The Binti system's AI tool does an automatic language conversion which speeds up the application process. The pace at which FCS approves applications to get someone on the path to becoming a resource family has discouraged some potential foster parents from coming on board. FCS is looking at ways to shorten that process, make it more efficient, and be responsive to potential foster parents whose native language is not English and cast a wider net for potential San Francisco foster parents.

President Kahn's call for public comment specific to Executive Director Rhorer's report yielded no responses.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

President Kahn presented EDGAR ALVARADO, Human Resources Analyst, Learning & Organizational Development (L&OD), with the August 2024 Employee of the Month award, an engraved desk clock, which he graciously accepted with thanks to all, noting that he looks forward to adding the clock to his otherwise undecorated cube. Supporters in attendance included his HR colleagues.

CONSENT CALENDAR

President Kahn's call for public comment related to the consent calendar yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the consent calendar, comprising actions taken by the Executive Director since the June 25, 2024 Regular Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of August 27, 2024:

1. Submission of request to encumber funds in the total amount of \$3,933,364 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 6/20/24 to 8/21/24.
3. Submission of 78 temporary appointments for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period 6/20/24 to 8/21/24.

COMMISSION BUSINESS – ACTION ITEMS

HOMELESSNESS
AND SUPPORTIVE
HOUSING FUND

Tim McGowan, Senior Budget Analyst, presented the HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FUND: Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Report pursuant to Administrative Code Section 10.100-77(e).

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

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the findings regarding the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FUND savings of \$23,164,334 and approved the transmittal of the information to the Board of Supervisors and the Office of the Controller.

CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES
(CDSS)

Jose Canaveral, Acting Program Manager, Resource Family Approval and Family Finding and Engagement, presented the request to enter into an agreement with the CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (CDSS).

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

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into an agreement with the CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (CDSS) for the provision of legal consultation and representation for the Resource Family Approval program; for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027. No cost is attached to this service.

BINTI, INC.

Jose Canaveral, Acting Program Manager, Resource Family Approval and Family Finding and Engagement, presented the request to modify the sole source waiver and existing contract agreement with BINTI, INC.

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

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the sole source waiver and existing contract agreement with BINTI, INC. for the provision of Resource Family Approval (RFA) Portal Services; for the period of September 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026; in the additional amount of

\$137,989, plus a 10% contingency, for a revised total contract amount not to exceed \$1,015,875.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

President Kahn's call for public comment yielded three responses:

The first public comment was provided in person by Chris Ward Kline PAVEN, "Good afternoon, commissioners. Thank you for allowing me to speak. For the record, my name is Chris Ward Kline, and I have handed out a document, which is basically the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor signing an agreement... everyone on digital surveillance from 2020 into 2027, and they don't want to take off the digital surveillance because they still think that we're in a pandemic and we are not. Now the reason that is a problem, the last page is a vulnerability that was exposed in San Francisco, and that vulnerability allows other cities, other counties, other countries, a hacker to gain access to our emergency broadcast system, and that allows access to public health and public safety systems. How that is important is that I was treating a substance abuse disorder patient and they are a base level 8. If someone comes in to administer their systems, the synergy creates that person from going from an 8 to an 11 and if that person at an 8 was in healthcare, in housing and now becomes an 11, that person may get frustrated, walk out, do more drugs and overdose. So the vulnerability has been exposed. I woke up one day and I thought I was in combat again. Unless you were in combat, you wouldn't really know this because the system and the system administrators would tell you that everything is ok because that's what the system is telling you. We have federal state and military partners that are addressing this item immediately and currently, and going forward, our healthcare solutions or access and communication networks should start seeing vast improvements. I want to thank the Commission and the director for some of my direct feedback, direct comments to the staff. It was just needed. We had to do that. We had to put pressure on people to make tough decisions and thank you, and everyone here, including HSA, has been very professional even through the toughest of times, but it is going to get better for everyone. Thank you." The document referenced in Mr. Kline's public comment is included in these minutes as an attachment.

The second public comment was provided in person by Veronica Shepard with the SFAAFB Coalition, "Thank you again for the opportunity to come before you regarding hunger and the vulnerable populations you desire to protect as commissioners. I have with me copies of the 2023 San Francisco biannual Food Security and Equity Report data brief to share with you. This is the data I shared with you all at the June HSA commission meeting when I gave public comment [remotely]. Today I'm here with another colleague to revisit what I presented last month and to learn more about how commissioners will provide oversight and accountability concerning funding to address hunger and in an equitable manner from HSA. The need for food is a basic human right yet leadership from the citywide food access team at HSA does not seem to understand that. Our most vulnerable populations with nutrition sensitive health disparities are not receiving enough funding to address these health issues. I'm specifically

talking about the Black, Pacific Islanders, Native American and Latinx populations. I know personally what it feels like to be hungry. I know personally what it feels like to look in my partner's eyes as a breadwinner and not have enough to feed the family. I stood in lines to get grocery bags. When a city agency is given the responsibility to administer funding to our most vulnerable citizens regarding hunger and chooses not to, something is terribly wrong. To know that HSA has received \$143 million to address hunger yet doesn't focus through a lens of health equity seems inhumane in itself and contradicts the commission's responsibility to administer programs to meet the basic human needs and ensure protection of our most vulnerable populations. How many HSA dollars go to fund salaries instead of focusing on filling the empty stomachs of the populations that need food? We'll keep coming. We're meeting with the Mayor. Our faith-based organizations are meeting now to discuss a time to discuss these issues, and together we need your help on how we can work together. I look forward to helping and working with you all. And I've left copies here for you all to have and one for the director as well. Thank you.”

The third public comment was provided in person by Guillermo Reece with the SFAAFB Coalition, “I'm the lead liaison of the San Francisco African American Faith Based Coalition and I just wanted to speak on two points or ask you two questions. The San Francisco African American Faith Based Coalition is a coalition that has been on the ground since the pandemic addressing food security to the very populations that have high nutritional and health inequities. No one from HSA has reached out to understand what our community needs are and yet we are feeding 3,600 households monthly. My question is, what can you do as a commission to close the gap and work directly with our coalition who have trusted relationships with partners citywide to provide appropriate funding with a racial and health equity lens? And my final question is, before the December city budget cuts, the convening food providers of District 10 determined that there were at least 2,980 people in the community who were substantially under nourished and in need of some form of supplemental food support. Since those budget cuts, that population has nearly quadrupled. Even with the budget deficits, this remains among the richest cities, counties, and regions on the planet. How does this commission justify this disparity and how does this commission propose to address the disparities? Again, we would like a response within, hopefully, the next 30 days. Thank you.”

Vice President McCray noted that when he reviewed last month's meeting minutes, the public comment regarding food support got his attention again. After several conversations with Executive Director Rhorer, Vice President McCray was reminded that the Agency has taken a proactive review and action to redirect funding, to highlight and enhance local and community participation in the food program, and also increased [sic] of the most needy being served for the populations in the Southeast. He added that Agency staff and fellow Commissioners are hearing you and encourage you to keep coming. One question that arose when VP McCray reviewed the minutes was who has the responsibility? Executive Director Rhorer has indicated that SFHSA has taken the responsibility for this food

support. The Commission will be looking at how to get a health equity lens more incorporated into... Agency activities. He thanked Veronica and Guillermo for attending the meeting and continuing to attend.

ADJOURNMENT

President Kahn adjourned the meeting at 2:15pm.



Elizabeth LaBarre
Commission Secretary
Human Services Commission

Posted: 9/9/24