

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

MINUTES

September 26, 2024 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 9:30am 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)  
Susie Smith, Deputy Director – Policy, Planning & Public Affairs

CALL MEETING TO ORDER President Kahn called the meeting to order at 9:35am.

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.

August 27, 2024 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES President Kahn’s call for public comment related to the August 27, 2024 regular meeting minutes yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the adoption of the August 27, 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**

There are bills on the governor’s desk waiting to be either signed or vetoed but none that are significant pieces of legislation for human services. This is the time of year when SFHSA works internally and with other counties to develop the legislative platform for next year, which will be presented to the

County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA) legislative committee in October, and then ratified in December.

## **LOCAL**

The San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) is struggling as you [Commissioners] must be aware from the media coverage—everything from staffing to the announcement of school closures, deficits that are over \$100 million, etc. This past Sunday, the school board held an emergency meeting to consider the superintendent’s employment. Simultaneously, Mayor Breed and her administration were assembling a team of high-level city managers/directors to form a school stabilization team, the purpose of which is to provide support to the superintendent at the highest levels of city government, such as assistance with fiscal and operational concerns, assessing the impacts of school closures, etc. The school stabilization team will be co-chaired by the director of the Department of Children, Youth & Their Families (DCYF), Maria Su, along with the general manager of SF Recreation & Parks, Phil Ginsburg. These two department heads led the City’s support response to children in public schools during COVID-19. Dr. Su and Mr. Ginsburg are very familiar with the leadership at the school district as well as the school board and the other players. The Agency’s role is to look at what kind of support should be provided to families during this period of uncertainty—possible school closures next year, higher teacher vacancies, less support staff (e.g., social workers), etc. Susie Smith, Director of Policy, Planning & Public Affairs, has been named to the stabilization team.

Supervisor Matt Dorsey has introduced an ordinance that would establish a new program administered by SFHSA through CAAP, in partnership with the Department of Public Health (DPH), called Cash not Drugs. It is a contingency management treatment program. The idea is to award good behavior, which in this case is a negative drug test. The legislation provides up to \$100/week for individuals enrolled in treatment and passing weekly drug tests. This legislation will be heard by the Board of Supervisors Government Audit and Oversight Committee next month. Currently, there is no funding attached to the program. Therefore, the first step is to develop an implementation plan, a prospective budget, and determine if the program could be funded with SFHSA’s existing resources or if additional resources are needed.

## **AGENCY**

### **ESSS**

#### CalFresh

There is a ring of EBT card skimming that has been going on for a couple of years, stealing millions of dollars from clients. EBT cards were supposed to be updated to a chip/tap technology (rather than swipe) over the summer. However, there have been issues with onboarding various retailers so the implementation of the new technology has been delayed to January 2025. In the new year, all CalFresh clients (including the over 100,000 SF clients) will receive new cards in the mail with instructions on how to use them.

This week, the CalFresh team has been hosting the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for the annual CalFresh Management Evaluation. CDSS visits all SFHSA buildings that administer CalFresh in order to audit the program and then provide a correction action plan if needed. In fact, the SF CalFresh program is currently under a corrective action plan because it did not meet the threshold that 90% of CalFresh applicants receive a benefit determination within 30 days. The Program is currently at 82% and is working on improving the time it takes to make a determination of eligibility and issue benefits. Executive Director Rhorer attributes much of the delay to the transition to the new CalSAWS system, which required pulling a lot of staff offline for significant amounts of training. This led to a backup of applications. He anticipates getting back into the 90% standard within a month or two.

### CAAP

CAAP moved to a new computer tracking system for shelter beds, called the ONE system, which is the same system that the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) uses. This will improve the CAAP team's ability to track CAAP clients who are referred to shelters as part of their benefit package through Care not Cash. It is important for staff to know how many beds are vacant and available each day because that is the benefit offer made to clients. If there are no beds, then CAAP is required by law to provide the full cash grant. Care not Cash was suspended only once, during the pandemic, when the shelter system could not accept new clients. The ONE system is a better way for staff to track and receive data about shelter utilization.

### **FCS**

In response to an increase in referrals from the police and fire departments around window safety and children, the Early Intervention program partnered with the Communications team to create a window safety flyer for parents and caregivers that will be sent to community partners and placed in Emergency Response Info packets that are shared with parents during home visits. The flyers have been translated to Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian, and Filipino. The plan is to have them distributed by October 1. What has happened is that the window has a screen so the parent thinks it is safe. However, the screen cannot handle the weight of a child pushing on the screen. The hope is that the flyers will help to prevent these tragedies that seem to happen more often lately.

In partnership with the Juvenile Dependency Court, the Adoption unit is celebrating National Adoption Day on November 15<sup>th</sup> at noon in the courthouse. Several adoptions will be finalized. If reunification with the birth parent(s) is not an option, generally adoption is the next best course that establishes permanency for a child. Adoption means a permanent parent, and to be invited once a year to experience this important and special occasion is a really neat opportunity. Commissioner Kahn will be one of the guest speakers this year.

Executive Director Rhorer closed his report with an overview of the accomplishments in Workforce Development over the course of program director Tony Lugo's career of almost 25 years as he is retiring at the end of September. Executive Director Rhorer acknowledged Tony's leadership and innovation over the past two decades, helping parents, single adults and youth who are seeking job training, work, and/or education through SFHSA's systems, navigate a path to self-sufficiency.

Most recently, Tony and his team implemented the Immigrant Self-sufficiency Program to assist undocumented San Franciscans get money into their households. Since its inception about 1.5 years ago, the program has helped 154 undocumented San Francisco residents. 61 participants completed business planning training. 21 participants successfully completed business registration with the City in sectors such as clothing alterations, gardening, online retail sales, web development, etc.

Tony was instrumental in the implementation of the Working Families Credit (WFC) Program, which was started under Mayor Newsom in 2005 and offers up to \$250 a year to families who qualify for the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) or California Earned Income Tax Credit (CalEITC). Families who qualify for both can get up to \$9,600 for the tax year. For tax year 2023, the team issued 3,474 payments to families. The WFC has served a dual purpose of saving families thousands of dollars and connecting them to deeper support.

Another program Tony oversees is the CalWORKs Housing Support Program (HSP), which provides rent subsidies to families who are enrolled in CalWORKs, specifically families who have some housing instability or homelessness. The rent subsidy helps stabilize the housing situation while the parent(s) moves towards working. Since its inception, the HSP has served 1,065 families. Currently, there are over 100 families participating in the program.

The biggest contribution that Tony and his team have made to the workforce development system in San Francisco is the JobsNOW! program. It started in 2008 with stimulus funding—Tony and his team used federal dollars to reimburse employers 100% of the wage given to employees hired through SFHSA. During the Great Recession, unemployment in SF was 9%-10%. The Program was able to place about 5,000 San Franciscans into jobs during that time, not only providing income to households who would have suffered, but also saving small businesses. Executive Director Rhorer remembers small business owners coming up to him and Tony at press events saying, "I wouldn't have been able to stay in business if it weren't for you meeting my payroll needs." Unfortunately, the funding was not restored after the stimulus package expired. However, the team used local money to sustain the program and then they were successful in lobbying the state to provide funding. Today, the JobsNOW! program is sustained by a combination of state, federal and local dollars and has become the cornerstone of San Francisco's approach to workforce development. To date, the JobsNOW! program has placed 33,449 people in new jobs. Executive Director Rhorer

noted, “That is not a small number.” He added that the CalWORKs caseload is about 5,000-6,000 families; CAAP caseload is 5,000-6,000 individuals. So, impacting more than 30,000 people by providing them with a real job is quite impressive. He thanked Tony for his great work, adding, “For the record, I want to say congratulations to Tony... You certainly have left a legacy here with JobsNOW! and your other efforts and we are going to miss you very much.”

President Kahn stated that even though Tony doesn't necessarily want to be acknowledged for his service and retirement, the Commission should send a letter thanking Tony for his work. He will work with Elizabeth.

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

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

President Kahn presented JANICE KATE ANIES, Clerk, Adoption Unit, FCS, with the September 2024 Employee of the Month award, an engraved desk clock, which she graciously accepted with thanks to all. Supporters in attendance included Janice’s husband and many colleagues from the Adoption unit.

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 August 27, 2024 Regular Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of September 26, 2024:

1. Submission of request to encumber funds in the total amount of \$8,255,206 for purchase of services or supplies and contingency amounts.
2. Submission of 7 temporary positions for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period 8/22/24 to 9/19/24.
3. Submission of 28 temporary appointments for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period 8/22/24 to 9/19/24.

*COMMISSION BUSINESS – ACTION ITEMS*

FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION ANNUAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Susie Smith, Deputy Director, Policy, Planning & Public Affairs, presented the FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION ANNUAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE for consideration and possible action.

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

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025 HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION ANNUAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.

DIAPER NEED  
AWARENESS WEEK  
September 23, 2024  
to September 29,  
2024

Peri Weisberg, Pr Administrative Analyst, presented the proclamation declaring September 23, 2024 to September 29, 2024 DIAPER NEED AWARENESS WEEK.

**WHEREAS**, the City and County of San Francisco Human Services Commission traditionally recognizes important opportunities to raise awareness in an effort to increase public health in our City; and  
**WHEREAS**, at \$80 to \$100 per month, the cost to diaper a child can be prohibitively expensive and force families to cut back on other essentials; and  
**WHEREAS**, 47 percent of American families with young children struggle with diaper need, which is the condition of not having a sufficient supply of clean diapers to ensure that infants and toddlers are clean, healthy and dry; and  
**WHEREAS**, diaper need adversely affects the health and welfare of infants, toddlers and their families; and  
**WHEREAS**, recognizing that providing diapers can improve the health and financial stability of San Francisco’s lowest-income families, the City and County of San Francisco have partnered with the nonprofit organizations Help a Mother Out to create the San Francisco Diaper Bank, the first and only publicly-funded diaper bank in the nation, providing a full supply of diapers each month to families receiving SFHSA benefits who have children under the age of two; and  
**WHEREAS**, the San Francisco Diaper Bank has distributed over 18 million diapers since its inception in 2015, supporting low-income families’ health and well-being and forging stronger community connections; and, therefore, be it  
**RESOLVED**, that the San Francisco Human Services Commission proclaims September 24 to September 29, 2024 Diaper Need Awareness Week in San Francisco.

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 proclaim September 23, 2024 to September 29, 2024 DIAPER NEED AWARENESS WEEK.

WESTSIDE  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICES

Elizabeth Vargas, Acting Program Manager, CAAP, presented the request to enter into a new contract agreement with WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SERVICES.

Vice President McCray thanked the Director of Westside Community Services (“Westside”), Cedric Akbar, for attending the meeting and asked to hear a bit about the contract, “from your side.” Cedric came to the podium and shared that the team at Westside Community Services is very excited about the contract and can’t wait to get started. The majority of San Francisco voters want accountability. SFHSA wants to offer services for people who are suffering from substance use disorder. A lot of Westside Community Services staff are former [drug] users with 15 to 20 years of sobriety and experience working in the field. Cedric appreciates that SFHSA made the contract process transparent and that Westside Community Services will be

held accountable. As this is a new contract, not only new to Westside but also to the City, Mr. Akbar wants to hear what the Commission has to say throughout the process; he is always open to suggestions.

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

On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a new contract agreement with WESTSIDE COMMUNITY SERVICES for the provision of substance use treatment support for CAAP clients; for the period of November 1, 2024, through June 30, 2026; in the amount of \$1,475,304, plus a 10% contingency, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$1,622,835.

## GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

President Kahn's call for public comment yielded 1 response:

Chris Ward Kline, "Good morning, HSA commission. For the record, my name is Chris Ward Kline. As some of you are aware, the Mayor of New York City was indicted this morning, and prior to that, there were other resignations and indictments. Why is this important? Because they were using technology that was approved during the pandemic to commit fraudulent schemes. The last several months I've been speaking here about the same thing here in San Francisco where individuals are using technology that was approved for the pandemic for fraudulent schemes. So I'm going to read what I provided to the Board of Supervisors yesterday. Yesterday I sent each of you a 9-page document concerning my public comment today. The first 3 pages are from an HSH document with the seal of the City and County of San Francisco on it. It lists 66 partner agencies that utilize the ONE system. There are more, but the City and County of San Francisco changes the total online depending on various issues to include legal lawsuits against the City. ONE system is AI and uses algorithms. It also uses email, texts and cell phone to act as an intercom between administrators and authorized users and clients. Look at the 66 partners and you can see that each Board of Supervisor, Human Services Agency... internet interacts with someone or multiple people daily, which means that you are subject to illegal influence by others, administrators and politicians. Page 4 shows how to get a username and password through the City and County of San Francisco Department of Technology. Page 5 and 8 is the authorization I signed with Human Services or Homelessness and Supportive Housing that clearly lists first stage, 2nd paragraph, the Department of Public Health and Human Services Agency and other community-based housing and service providers listed. Page 9 is a public records request in which the Department of Technology states that this is a collaboration between HSH, Department of Emergency Management, Homelessness and Supportive Housing, Human Services Agency, which are all on the City and County of San Francisco... Homelessness and Supportive Housing provided partners... participating agencies. On page 1 and 3, point of note, the United Council of Human Services is still listed as a participating agency even though it was barred from receiving funding from the City and County of San Francisco but still can use its technology. Very questionable at the very least. The other concern is that too many people have access to the system that live in Los

Angeles, New York City, Washington DC. They do not have a vested interest in the City and County of San Francisco...This is really concerning because I've been asking for this documentation for 2.5 years and multiple agencies and multiple people have denied the truth and now we're finally getting to it. It's happening in New York City. It will be happening in San Francisco where there'll be resignations and indictments. I ask that this commission take this very seriously and work with the Human Services Agency and the Board of Supervisors to resolve it. Thank you."

ADJOURNMENT

President Kahn adjourned the meeting at 10:21am.



Elizabeth LaBarre  
Commission Secretary  
Human Services Commission

Posted: 10/10/24