



Neighborhood and Community Services

Human Services Commission

Wednesday, December 13th, 2017 6:00 pm
Tacoma Municipal Building, 747 Market Street, Room 148

Meeting Minutes

Those Present: Jason, Sean, Jovan, Kashmir, Kelly, Janet, Elizabeth, Zach
Those Absent: Korbett, Naomi, Rahn, Indira, Brian, Dana Valentine
Staff Present: Adam Vance, Pam Duncan, Linda Stewart, Mary Morrison

Members:

Jovan Dumas,
Chair

Korbett Mosesly,
Vice Chair

Kelly McDonald,
Secretary

Rahn Clayton

Zach Dillon

Kashmir Gavronski

Jason Grube

Indira Hubble

Brian Humphreys

Dana Owens-
Cheatham

Elizabeth Pebley

Valentine Smith

Janet Thiessen

Sean Waite

Naomi Wilson

Staff:

Linda Stewart,
Interim NCS
Director

Pam Duncan, HS
Division Manager

Adam Vance, HS
Program
Technician

1. Welcome/Call to Order

Call to order at 6:06 pm by Jovan

Pam introduced guests to the meeting: Mary Morrison (City) & James Harper (St. Leo Food Connection)

2. Approval & Signing of November Meeting Minutes

Elizabeth moved to approve at 6:08 and Sean seconded, unanimously approved by all HSC commissioners present (Jason, Sean, Kashmir, Kelly, Janet, Elizabeth, Zach)

3. Tacoma Senior Centers & Gifts for Seniors

Pam shared there is an opportunity if the Commission is interested to support the Senior Centers for the holidays, there are ways to do so.

The services provided to the Senior Centers (Beacon & Lighthouse), in order to get out of direct services, the City of Tacoma has put out an RFP to gain support in that arena. Received a response from KWA and Greater Destiny Church. The seniors were allowed to weigh in.

It was determined that Greater Destiny Church (their outreach ministry) and KWA could effectively partner to serve Senior Centers moving forward over a pilot year. KWA will mentor Greater Destiny since the KWA already has an existing contractual agreement with the City. That contract is for \$400,000.

The City has operated the senior centers for 46 years.

Sean asked why outsourcing is a positive. In 2012 when the City was hemorrhaging money, there were staffing cuts throughout the city. The supervisory staffing shifted and split among the two sites. The result was a significant dip in attendance among seniors where there wasn't onsite supervisory capabilities, and there were questions around equity of service particularly to populations of color.

The guests voted for Greater Destiny, but by partnering KWA a combination of service provision was possible.

The Human Services HR department is creating 1500 packages for people experiencing homelessness and are hoping staff will contribute. If the Commission wishes to participate, that participation is welcome. It will be



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ongoing, not just in the holidays.

Kashmir suggested socks, gloves, hats, hand warmers, garbage bags (large Hefty), duct tape to store their items.

4. **Discussion Topic: Equity**

Mary Morrison is representing the Office of Equity & Human Rights

Showed a video with a variety of diverse Tacomans describing their experience with equity in their daily lives.

The office is modeled after Portland's, but they lead with race as a core issue. 1) if government doesn't lead with race, no one will. 2) Discussions about race don't occur in normal discussion 3) Race matters

Objective: to have the work force reflect the community

Having Boards and Commissions and Committees and Services that look like constituents build public trust.

The government can be very bureaucratic, many communications are mailed, meetings are held when convenient to staff. An effort was made thereafter to provide governmental services in more equitable and accessible ways.

Local Improvement Districts: communities want to make improvements in their blocks and gain support from neighbors for a project. They approach the city for a funding project that would be met and matched by the City. That's not equitable if there are neighborhoods who don't have the LIDs to approach the city for funding opportunities.

Garbage & Yard Waste: the City received many calls about the sizes of yard waste cans and there were new sizes added so that people of different ages and strength & mobility could manage the cans.

Last night the council adopted a commission on immigrant and refugee issues. They also adopted the need for all city policy's to be reviewed in an equity lens by the office.

Pam asked to cover how staff is being trained:

A joint meeting in the spring with other commissions in in the works.

Equity 101 is required for all general employees, 23% are currently trained with a goal of 80% goal by the end of 2018, the training began in March 2017. There isn't full buy in from all departments. It has been made a requirement for new employees to being in early 2018.

Discusses the history of institutional racism, sexism and other isms. i.e. Tacoma warned the Chinese they would be driven out. The city went to homes in China town neighborhoods and physically forced Chinese Americans out of town to Lakewood to go to Portland and burned their houses down.

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Pam addresses what the Human Services Commission is doing to address issues from an equity lens. The Human Services Strategic Plan calls out the importance of having a community of service providers able to reflect the community receiving services.

The language and application of the funding process has been changed to reflect an equity lens in terms of the populations served.

The priorities have been considered from an equity lens as well. Contracts have also had language and expectations about equity in them from all service providers. There is an expectation that organizations will look carefully at themselves to reflect staffing that mirrors their populations. There is a lot of diversity in the direct line of service, but as the chain of command moves up, staff are predominantly white (and male).

Pam, Adam, and Christopher Wright have done an Equity and Organizational Leadership training with leaders in funded organizations to understand why equity is important in providing services.

Infant mortality rates in Washington state are disproportionately higher among black babies, in particular within Pierce County. So, for example, if a funding request came in that targets a population with Pierce County to benefit African American babies, that would be a great example of an organization that meets the focus of an equitable lens.

Linda Stewart added an issue to consider is that City Council members have preconceived notions around what organizations "should" be funded and those presuppositions are not necessarily framed around an equity lens. There are times where the HSC can make a recommendation and there may be a council member in disagreement who can change the funding decisions. Linda hopes that the Equity training would be taken by the council and mayor to have the decision-making body coming from the same starting ground.

Our work in equity with our providers is not a check the box approach. They have a contractual obligation and they need to perform to certain criteria, but simply performing a training does not "check" the box.

6. Other Business & Public Comment

An organizational scan is currently underway for the Human Services staff which has been understaffed since May. Linda wanted to commend the staff for their service, in particular Adam and Pam for getting a Herculean amount of work done within deadlines. Pam likewise praised the Commissioner.

Janet asked if there is a final set of dates for February, and there hasn't been. Adam will resend the dates out.



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Pam mentioned having the stabilization site as a standing item on the agenda.

7. Adjournment

Sean moved to adjourn at 7:29 and Jason seconded, all Commissioners present unanimously approved.

Upcoming Events

HSC January Meeting	Wednesday, January 10 th , 2018. 6pm, TMB 148
CDBG ESG App Due	Friday, January 12 th , 2018, 5pm

HSC Chair Signature: *Beatty*
Date: 1-10-18

City of Tacoma Staff Signature: *Daniel K. Duncan*
Date: 1/10/18