

**HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 11, 2022  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Virtual Meeting via Cisco Webex**

**Members Present:**

Wanneh Dixon, At-large Member and Chair	Amanda Schwartz, At-Large Member
Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member	Lauren Lehman, At-large Member
Deborah Moore, Consumer Member	Stacey Erd, Caregiver Member
Wesley Hickens, At-large Member	Leon Suskin, Caregiver Member

**Members Absent:**

Anne Wallerstedt, At-large Member	
Henry Elowitch, At-large Member	Kelly El’Amin, Consumer Member

**Mayor and Council Liaison Present:** Councilmember Mark Pierzchala

**Staff Present:** Frederika Granger, Community Services Manager and HSAC staff liaison

**RE: Call Meeting to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 6:35pm by Chair, Wanneh Dixon

**RE: Community Forum**

None.

**RE: Approval of Minutes from November 9, 2021**

A motion to approve minutes was issued by Lauren Lehman and seconded by Amanda Schwartz. Minutes were approved with unanimous vote.

**RE: Community Services Division Report (Frederika Granger)**

Ms. Granger shared that school-based services, Counseling, Mentoring, Latino Youth Development, Therapeutic Recreation, and Linkages to Learning are very busy. Counseling caseloads continue to be full, with a full day’s waitlist; hours will increase at Rockville HS. Children tend to come to counseling in a crisis, trauma and/or pandemic related. Counselors continue to see students in person at the schools. The Latino Youth Development Program and Mentoring Program are going well. Postponed for a week due to COVID. LYDP will recruit middle school students in Feb and March. Linkages had a busy end to December with the Holiday Drive and Family Sponsorship. Their winter programming will start in February and will include Edutainment again with So What Else, classes at Gilchrist encouraged for parents, food and nutrition program (EFNP) for the students, CPR for adults, and parent enrichment.

December Holiday Drive provided \$25 Target gift cards and two books for each child in families referred. 1,100 children were served. The Family Sponsorship Program served 42 high need families (208 individuals). Monetary donations were \$77,000. Niambi Powell continues to assist residents with navigating the County rent relief program.

**RE: City of Rockville Budget, including American Rescue Plan, \$9.6M  
(Frederika Granger)**

- Councilmember Pierzchala shared that the Mayor and Council appropriated more of the ARPA funding: \$1.7M for: King Farm Farmstead Fire Suppression Improvements; King Farm Farmstead Electric; SCADA system improvements; and, Gude Yard Recycle Transfer Enclosure. \$4M remains in ARPA.
- Ms. Granger shared that HCD continues to advocate for more affordable housing, needs assessment, Bank on Rockville, electronic client record keeping system, and more mental health services in the ARPA or the FY23 budget.
- Budget hearings are in March and April.

**RE: Caregiver Grants FY23 Update (Frederika Granger)**

- Ms. Granger shared that the grantees have submitted their application and that there are four new ones. The total amount set aside for the Caregiver Grant Program is typically \$700,000 to which will likely be added the \$45,000 for pandemic affected services. Ms. Dixon and Ms. Lehman, along with a member of the HRC and a member of the Environment Commission are the Grants review panel.
- The 1% proposal that Caregiver Program be allotted 1% of the City's previous year's budget is being considered for testimony and HSAC wants more information on it. ACTION ITEM: Ms. Granger will provide at next meeting.
- Ms. Granger shared that the Kaseman Clinic was flooded by a pipe burst in restaurant above and will take several months to renovate. The Clinic is temporarily located in the basement of the Rockville United Church on Linthicum.

**RE: HRC Community Survey Partnership Update: Report and Presentation  
(Wanneh Dixon)**

- Ms. Dixon shared that she and HRC person are studying the data, and are scheduled to present a report to Mayor and Council on March 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Preliminary findings show that: mental health services are needed, due to heightened stress; childcare and family support are needed due to reduced wages from pandemic; respondents are not aware of HSAC and HRC or the new Police Commission; and that there is discrimination in access to services and support in pursuing services.
- A planner in the City of Rockville will help with mapping the results with Census data in the City of Rockville and then to be able to report on all demographics and details of the survey. As stated in last month's minutes, the format of the report is as follows:
  - Methodology--promotion and distribution efforts and broader context;
  - Limitations of Survey and the efforts, i.e. questions limited, amateur, provisions of svcs, unlike City's Bi-Annual Survey;

- Substance –what learned from Survey, i.e. demographics (who completed survey and who did not), main stressors were Covid and National politics and that mental health services are a need; and,
- Cross tab reporting, e.g. demographics.
- A draft will be ready for circulation in January, as the final draft needs to go to the City on February 16<sup>th</sup> for Department and then City Manager review before going into the Mayor and Council packet for March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**RE: HSAC FY21 Annual Report and FY22 & FY23 Goals Presentation to the Mayor and Council; (Wanneh Dixon)**

- Ms. Dixon will draft a report for Mayor and Council with plan to present on March 7<sup>th</sup>, in addition to Community Survey report.
- Ms. Dixon stated, what gets measure gets done, so this will be part of the agenda each month.
- Ms. Schwartz proposed, and all agreed that Health and Mental Health should be added to goals.

**RE: Testimony to M&C (Wanneh Dixon, Frederika Granger)**

- **Dates for testimony: 3/7, 3/21, 3/28, 4/4, 4/25, 5/2, 5/9, 5/16, 5/23, 6/6**, those in bold are public budget hearings.
- Testimony for HSAC has to be approved through voting by HSAC members, so allow enough time for that when preparing to testify.
- Commission discussed supporting the Caregiver Grant Program funding to be 1% of City's budget. Mr. Suskin shared that there is a reverse sunset approach so that the current Mayor and Council can propose such without locking the future Mayor and Council into this for perpetuity. Councilmember Pierzchala shared that, due to the pandemic effect of the Great Resignation of staff and of residents' having difficulty paying taxes that the finances are uncertain. With that said, he shared that HSAC should ask for it, testify for it, anyway and to be sure to prioritize what HSAC supports in budget testimony, i.e. top three.
- **Testimony Calendar (Budget hearings are in bold)**
  - December 20<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3 min): Bank on Rockville, Lauren Lehman
  - **March 7<sup>th</sup> Budget Hearing (5 min)**: mental health in City schools, Amanda Schwartz (Rika will provide info)
  - **March 7<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3 min)** Needs Assessment, Deborah Moore
  - **March 21<sup>st</sup> Budget Hearing (5 min)**: Caregivers 1% Amanda-stories; Wanneh--broader
  - March 28<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3 min)
  - **April 4<sup>th</sup> Budget Hearing (5 min)**: Leon, Stacey, Lauren
  - April 25<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3 min)
  - May 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Forum (3 min)
  - May 9<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3 min)
  - May 16<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3min)
  - May 23<sup>rd</sup> Community Forum (3 min)
- **Possible Topics for Testimony:**
  - Needs Assessment
  - Bank on Rockville
  - More mental health services
  - Electronic Record keeping system
  - Caregiver additional funding, 1%
  - More affordable housing

- Rent and utility assistance
- Caregiver Funding Task Force recommendations
  - Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs excludes water utility assistance from their program that provides an ongoing electric/gas utility subsidy for low-income household-
  - on this one, M&C write to State?
- ACTION ITEM: Ms. Granger will get a history of 1% from City Finance.
- ACTION ITEM: Ms. Granger will provide Needs Assessment RFP info to Ms. Moore and City SCYS mental health services to Ms. Schwartz.

**RE: Federal Legislation Advocacy (All Members)**

- Ms. Schwartz shared that Build Back Better initiatives are being put in other places since BBB is not supported enough to pass as is. She also shared that our representatives support what HSAC supports, so, to talk to people in other states about supporting BBB initiatives.
- Redistricting was brought up. In December, State legislators split Rockville into two Congressional districts. The Democratic candidate for West Rockville is no longer Jamie Raskin. Trone is middle and West Rockville. One should research it to be sure.
- State and other governments are having difficulty staffing projects that have been funded.

**RE: Rockville Housing Enterprises Presentation on Move to Work by James Hedrick**

Mr. Kedrick will present at the February meeting. Ms. Granger will share with him the following, which HSAC asked to be addressed:

- Move to Work challenges for the grantee, RHE
- how it will affect residents
- what are its goals
- why is RHE doing it?

**RE: Other Items**

- None.

**RE: Agenda items for next meeting, January 11th**

- Usual report items: Community Services, Caregivers, ARPA, FY23 budget
- Survey analysis and reporting DRAFT
- HSAC Goals and Accomplishments DRAFT
- Review testimony calendar and plan testimonies
- Move to Work presentation

**RE: Adjourn**

Ms. Moore made motion to adjourn; Mr. Suskin seconded. Unanimous to adjourn, 7:47pm.