

**HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

March 9, 2021

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
Deborah Moore, Consumer Member
Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member

Mark Pascu, At-large Member
Laura Kaplan-Weisman, At-large Member
Leon Suskin, At-large Member
Laurie Gira, Caregiver Member

Members Absent:

Stacey Gold, Caregiver Member

Mayor and Council Liaison Present: Councilmember Mark Pierzchala

Staff Present: Allison (Ali) Hoy, Community Services Program Analyst
Frederika (Rika) Granger, Community Service Manager

Prospective Members Present: Anne Wallerstedt
Stacy Atkins
Kelly El'Amin

RE: Call Meeting to Order

Wanneh Dixon, At-large Member and Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm.

RE: Community Forum

Prospective members introduced themselves.

RE: Approval of Minutes from February 9, 2021

Amanda Schwartz, At-large Member, moved to approve the minutes, as drafted. Deborah Moore Consumer Member, seconded. The motion was unanimous.

RE: Community Services Division Report

Frederika Granger, Community Services Manager and HSAC staff liaison, provided the following updates regarding the Community Services Division:

- Quarterly and six-month reports from **caregiver agencies** were reviewed and mid-year letters were sent out to provide formal input to the program staff from City of Rockville staff.
- The Grants and Program Analyst met with a Montgomery County Council grants specialist to review their FY21 grant program changes and discussed how the City grants process can align with County grants processes.
- The Grants and Program Analyst and representatives from the Human Rights Commission and Human Services Advisory Commission presented a the community-wide HRC/HSAC survey to the Mayor and Council at their meeting on March 1.

- Linkages to Learning staff are setting up their offices at the new Maryvale ES. They will offer a third session of virtual ESOL classes with unspent MCAEL grant funds for childcare during in person classes that had gone unspent.
- Mentoring Program Mentors continue to see mentees virtually. Monthly theme-based programming has started and addressed education, learning and fun. About to interview four candidates for PT Youth Program Assistant Practitioner.
- Latino Youth Development Program – students continue to be seen virtually, with plans to have in person, socially distant activities outside in the spring. Working on substance abuse prevention this month, as part of Under 21 grant.
- Youth and Family Counselor has been introduced to Rockville HS, Richard Montgomery HS, and Twinbrook ES. Referral packets sent to and virtual meetings being set up points of contact early March. Informal offer made to candidate for YFC Assistant. Working with Recreation Dept. to identify a location for Therapeutic Recreation Program.

RE: City of Rockville FY22 Budget Updates

Frederika Granger reviewed for the Commission that testimony was presented at March 1st Mayor and Council meeting and in writing on Needs Assessment and Eat Fresh Program. Frederika Granger stated that Needs Assessment is in FY23 budget. Amanda Schwartz, At Large Member, said that Covid-19 Pandemic is not going away anytime soon and that a Needs Assessment done in FY23 can look back five years, as professionally done Needs Assessments typically do. As well, other data sources are typically used. Frederika Granger offered to generate a list of data sources within the City. Wanneh Dixon, Chair and At-Large Member, stated that Survey designed and soon to be launched by Human Rights Commission and this Commission has several questions about Covid-19 Pandemic needs of residents and how the City has met those needs.

RE: HRC Community Survey Partnership

Wanneh Dixon provided update on Community Survey. It will be launched on or around April 16th and be open for 60 days, until June 14th. It will be translated into five languages, it will be promoted through many channels, including engaging residents we typically do not engage, for which a distribution list is being made. It is planned that there will be a joint meeting of HRC and HSAC to discuss and write a report. Wanneh Dixon shared that the joint committee and staff working on this tried to include everyone’s and Mayor and Council’s input. Mayor and Council liaison, Mark Pierzchala, said that there is not need to bring survey back to Mayor and Council for approval but suggests that members have family and friends take survey to see what they think, as a test run. Wanneh Dixon suggested that could give survey to meeting guests to do for input. Emails of each were provided. Council Member Pierschala suggested to be ready for using this for analytics for FY23 Needs Assessment. Amanda Schwartz, At-Large Member, suggested that at next meeting there is a discussion about the Scope for FY23 Needs Assessment as the work needs to be done ahead of time. She also talked about other data sources used, i.e. City, County, State. She said she could list the data sources to back up the budget for Needs Assessment. And, she suggested that HSAC reach out to other Commissions to find out what they would want to know about needs of Rockville residents. Wanneh Dixon agreed that being proactive is necessary.

RE: Federal Legislative Advocacy

Amanda Schwartz encouraged members to look at Relief Bill US Senate passed, to see all that it includes from preschool to adult age, such as K-12 disabilities dollars, preschool needs, IDEA, homeless students, unemployment compensation, Head Start, childcare, Cobra, FEMA, food and shelters, rent and mortgage assistance, etc. All is one-time money but, as with American Relief and Recovery Act of 2009, some dollars may become longer term support. Also, to consider the Relief Bill as momentum for programming. Amanda Schwartz encouraged members to join the listserv of State Delegate, Julia Palacovich Carr, to keep track of bills etc. Councilmember Pierzchala reported that Ms. Carr used to be a Council Member on Rockville Council.

RE: Caregiver Grants Update – FY22 Site Visits

Ali Hoy, Grants and Program Analyst, City of Rockville, reported that site visits for each caregiver under this program will take place virtually 3/22 – 4/9 on Monday or Wednesday afternoon or anytime on Friday. She sent out a doodle poll for caregivers to pick which time slots they want. If anyone wants to visit a specific place, they can let Ali know. Otherwise, just let her know what times you are free on Mon, Wed, or Fri. Deborah Moore, Consumer Member, asked to visit the Women’s Shelter and Mobile Med. She asked if they will see consumers or the facilities to which Ali said perhaps the caregiver could show the facility with their video conferencing device as well as invite a consumer if they want. Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member, shared that she enjoyed the visits from the HSAC members when she was a grantee as she wanted to tell them all the programming she was able to do with the grant.

RE: Other Items

Councilmember Mark Pierschala asked that all the guests be sure to submit their expression of interest applications to City Clerk as they are all highly qualified. Frederika Granger said she would follow up with the guests. One guest, Kelly El’Amin, asked for a description of HSAC, its mission, goals, role etc., to which Wanneh Dixon gave her. Ali Hoy shared that there is a binder given to new members that includes lots of information about the Commission and that Amanda Schwartz still needs one. Ali Hoy will be sure the binder material is updated with City Department change. Frederika Granger will be sure to give binders to new members, including Amanda Schwartz. Mark Pascu, At-Large Member whose membership has expired, will stay on until a new At-Large member is appointed. Wanneh Dixon led a bid of farewell and appreciation for Mark Pascu, in case this is the last time the Commission will see him. It was raised that there is an opportunity for testimony at next Mayor and Council Budget Hearing on April 12th.

RE: Plan Agenda for April 13, 2021 Meeting

Amanda Schwartz recommended that the Commission address the scope of the needs assessment at next meeting. Mark Pascu suggested that the Commission review the ordinances for the Commission and the Caregiver Grants Program especially from an equity standpoint. It was raised that Caregiver Grants Program include, perhaps, that staff do training on unconscious bias and equity. At next meeting members want to hear about the site visits that will have taken place. Wanned Dixon shared that it would be good to have HSAC more known to the public,

especially what it has accomplished, to which Amanda Schwartz suggested that the website be revised. This will be an agenda item at next meeting.

April 13, 2021 Agenda items are as follows:

- Site Visit Reports
- Community Survey Update
- Scope for Needs Assessment
- Review of HSAC and Caregiver Grant Program ordinances and resolutions, with attention to racism, equity and bias.
- Update website and publications to include what HSAC has accomplished.

RE: Adjourn

Mark Pascu motioned to adjourn. Deborah Moore seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.