

**HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

April 13, 2021

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Virtual Meeting via Cisco Webex

Members Present:

Stacey Gold, Caregiver Member

Amanda Schwartz, At-Large Member

Deborah Moore, Consumer Member

Mark Pascu, At-large Member

Laura Kaplan-Weisman, At-large Member

Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member

Members Absent:

Wanneh Dixon, At-Large Member and Chair

Leon Suskin, At-large Member

Mayor and Council Liaison Present: Councilmember Mark Pierzchala

Staff Present: Frederika (Rika) Granger, Community Service Manager

Prospective Members Present: Wesley Hicken
Kelly El'Amin

RE: Call Meeting to Order

It was not until 6:45pm that there was a quorum. Mark Pascu, At-large Member, volunteered to stand in as chair for Wanneh Dixon. The meeting started at 6:45pm.

RE: Community Forum

Prospective members introduced themselves, Wesley Hicken for the first time, from the Middle East, where he is stationed in the Armed Forces. He will return to Rockville, his home, mid May. He is Physician's Assistant at Shady Grove Hospital. ACTION ITEM: Mayor and Council will consider three potential members on for appointment at April 26th meeting.

RE: Approval of Minutes from March 9, 2021

Laura Kaplan Weismann, At-large Member, asked that one sentence be removed that was incorrect about what she had said. Rika Granger, Staff Liaison removed it. Amanda Schwartz, At-large member, motioned to approve the minutes as edited and Deborah Moore, Consumer member, seconded. All agreed.

RE: Community Services Division Report

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

- Virtual Site Visits with most of the Caregiver Grant Program agencies have been completed. Rika Granger has begun to review Task Force recommendations to discuss with HSAC what to implement next, most likely using the grant software more for reporting and data analysis.

- The Grants and Program Analyst has continued communicating with a Montgomery County Council Grants Specialist to discuss how the City grants process can align with County grants processes. The Grants Specialist is seeking to coordinate a meeting with grant representatives from City of Gaithersburg and City of Takoma Park.
- Linkages to Learning (LTL) staff are in their offices approximately two days a week at the newly renovated Maryvale ES (MVES). They will offer a third session of virtual ESOL classes with unspent MCAEL grant funds originally for childcare. Summer programming is being planned.
- Mentoring Program mentors continue to see mentees virtually. A part time assistant has been hired. She is a mentor as well. Summer programming is being planned.
- Latino Youth Development Program students were seen virtually until spring break. They will now do programming outside through the summer at Maryvale Park, virtually if poor weather. They successfully completed Narcan training and participants who are 18 and older received a kit to use in case of emergency.
- The Youth and Family Counselor (YFC) has begun seeing students at Richard Montgomery HS. She plans to co-lead a group there with the school psychologist. The YFC has continued to reach out to Rockville HS and Twinbrook ES for referrals. A notice was published in Rockville Reports proposing to parents that they can refer their youth to City Youth Services. A space at Thomas Farm Community Center was booked for the Therapeutic Recreation Program, but there have been difficulties getting referrals from Ritchie Park ES, so the YFC will conduct TRP with students from other schools in smaller groups and individually. She has reached out to all the City public schools offering school and community youth services as the referrals from the target schools are low.

Questions asked included: Amanda Schwartz's recommendation to reach out to the PTAs about SCYS as well as to offer presentations about mental health and that Fallsmead and Lakewood ESs have great counselors who would want SCYS and that she would talk to them about it; Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver member, commented that she is pleased that the Latino Youth Development program did a Narcan training as it is beneficial for youth to learn about the devastating harm substance abuse can cause; and, Laura Kaplan-Weismann, At-large member, inquired about number of referrals and concurred that outreach being done and suggested are all good.

RE: City of Rockville FY22 Budget Updates

Frederika Granger reviewed for the Commission the following: Mayor and Council agreed to put the additional \$45K recommended for Caregiver Grant Program for Pandemic needs in the budget now rather than have it be an additional mini grant program during FY22; that DHHS grants are the same for SCYS and LTL including TRP; Mayor and Council agreed to a 1.4% voluntary rent increase guideline and that landlords have to give tenants 90 days notice of a rent increase; MPDU certification will start up again after a moratorium due to Pandemic. Council Member Pierzchala added that City of Rockville is supposed to get \$56M as part of the American Rescue Plan for which the City is waiting on implementation guidelines. He commented that it is five times as much as what City of Gaithersburg is to get, \$11M; how much the funds will be for individuals vs the City is unknown; water is one focus; and, how much collaboration will be done with State and County so as not to duplicate efforts.

RE: HRC Community Survey Partnership

In Wanneh Dixon's, Chair and At-large member, absence, Rika Granger provided update on Community Survey. It has been translated into five languages as has the flyer. The flyer has been designed. The distribution list has been fine tuned, Ms. Dixon has people to input the survey into Survey Monkey, and Andrew Linn, Chair of Human Rights Commission, has a distribution plan. The City is in process of purchasing Premium version of Survey Monkey, currently, with City Attorney's Office's reviewing the terms and conditions and Risk Management reviewing as well. The plan is to launch survey ASAP and keep it open for at least 60 days and that HSAC and HRC will analyze data and write report collaboratively.

RE: Caregiver Grants Update – FY22 Site Visits

Rika Granger reported that site visits for all but one caregiver took place in the last month. She shared that all were animated and excited to report their efforts during Pandemic and did not present as tired and burned out despite their Herculean efforts pivoting during the Pandemic. Ms. Schwartz shared that the visits she was on for two shelters spurred community service in her family. She shared that she wants to nonprofits to be featured more for what they do and to generate volunteerism for them. Ms. Moore shared that her visits with Mobile Med and Interfaith Women's Shelter showed impressive work and exciting plans for the future which is that the shelter for women has been expanded into what they opened for the Pandemic for more room. Stacey Gold, Caregiver member, shared that she enjoyed learning about the Pan Asian Community Clinic and was impressed with their outreach about Covid-19 and the vaccine. Ms. Gold commented also on Manna Food as the Rockstar of food distribution in their helping other food distributors keep up with the demand. Ms. Sushinsky shared that Rainbow Shelter did serve women in need in winter-time until beginning of February. The expanded area for women at Coffield Community Center had opened in the County. Rainbow has very little space so it was difficult to make room, but, they did, and they allowed residents to stay during the day which they cannot do during normal times with a preschool in the building.

ACTION ITEMS: one more site visit, Kaseman Clinic, to do and on which to report.

RE: Scope of Needs Assessment for FY23

Rika Granger opened this for discussion. Ms. Schwartz shared that there are many data sources for secondary analysis, including the HSAC/HRC Community Survey, Census, zip codes, enrollment data from Caregivers, for which she is willing to generate a list. She said she could also generate a list of suggested areas of research, i.e. housing, education, etc. The overall question raised by Councilmember Pierzchala and Mark Pascu, At-large member, is what is the City's interest for the Needs Assessment—what do they want to know; is it only Human Services or what do other Commissions and Boards want to know; the City created a Department of Housing (as the State's agent) which leads to possibility of wanting to know more about housing, i.e. housing type? Laura Kaplan-Weisman suggested areas of research to include: housing, food, transportation, health care, safety, environment, medication, clothing, etc. Ms. Schwartz suggested that there be collaboration and cross collaboration so as not to exhaust the City residents with many small assessments. Councilmember Pierzchala suggested the opportunity for direction from several on Mayor and Council who are experts in this area: Councilmembers Ashton, Miles and himself. This will be a standing item on the agenda.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Ms. Schwartz will bring list of data sources and suggested areas of research.
- Ms. Granger will consult with City and bring information back on interests of the City, including Mayor and Council and other Boards and Commissions.
- She will also bring a list of surveys that have been done in the City in the last few years.

RE: Planning for Review of HSAC and Caregiver Grant Program ordinances and resolutions, with attention to racism, equity and bias

In the absence of Ms. Dixon, Ms. Granger opened the discussion on this. Mr. Pascu opened the discussion with question about requirement, if there is one, for Caregivers to provide information on cultural competency to which Ms. Moore asked if there has ever been an expectation. Ms. Gold said that in RFPs for grants for her agency she is often asked about the demographic make up of her Board of Directors and her executive staff. The general consensus is that the following documents need reviewing for holes on this subject as well as on what no longer is relevant and could be removed from documents: Resolution forming HSAC; Resolution/Ordinance forming Caregiver Grant Program; Application for Caregiver Grant Program. Councilmember Pierzchala suggested that HSAC be specific in what the goal is for each and what changes they propose as something to which the Mayor and Council can respond.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Ms. Granger will email to members copies of the three aforementioned documents.
- Ms. Schwartz will share a nonprofit/agency/program self-assessment tool from Georgetown Univ.
- Ms. Granger will provide the same from State of Maryland.

RE: Planning for Updating Website and Publications to include what HSAC has accomplished

In the absence of Ms. Dixon, Mr. Pascu opened the discussion. Members who have been on Commission the longest, Mr. Pascu, Ms. Moore, and Ms. Sushinsky, commented on fact that a Boards and Commissions Report from a few years ago did not speak favorably of HSAC, “have they done anything?” As well, Ms. Schwartz, a newer member, shared that she was not sure of scope of HSAC when she was considering joining from the information she found. Members shared that there needs to be more information in general, including accomplishments, about HSAC not only on the website but in other social media and publications. As well for the Caregivers, who should be featured for their work more often than once a year.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Ms. Granger will find out the logistics in adding something to website and about what other reporting outlets there are.
- Ms. Schwartz is willing to write some content if relatively easy to add to and/or revise website.

RE: Federal Legislative Advocacy

Ms. Schwartz shared about the the US President’s proposed budget which includes funds in many areas of human service, including infants and toddlers with disabilities. She suggested that those interested should look for advocacy organization that advocate for area of interest and be in touch with them to learn how you can help. She encouraged all to look at the listserv of State Delegate, Julia Palacovich Carr, specifically from March 5th, in which Ms. Carr broke down the areas of federal funding for State of Maryland. Ms. Kaplan-Weismann updated HSAC on Medicare for All at the County level, which is that several councilmembers support it and will

focus more on it after budget season. AS well she shared her encouragement that Medicaid coverage is expanded out more for pregnant women out two years after pregnancy. Councilmember Pierzchala encouraged members to write to Mayor and Council, in detail, about what they want them to advocate. Mr. Pascu shared that, as a Commission, it is at the more local level that one may have the most impact in advocacy. He raised the example of the County's proposed funding package for free clinics a few years ago, which Ms. Moore confirmed.

RE: Other Items

It is Ms. Kaplan-Weismann and Mr. Pascu's last meeting. Members thanked them for their work. Ms. Kaplan Weismann is eight months pregnant with a girl and is moving to Olney. It is Councilmember Pierzchala's birthday.

RE: Plan Agenda for May 11, 2021 Meeting

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

RE: Adjourn

Amanda Schwartz motioned to adjourn. Deborah Moore seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:11 PM.