SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
M I N U T E S
February 12, 2020 Special Meeting

The special monthly meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 in the Ronald H. Born Auditorium at 170 Otis Street, San Francisco.

MEMBERS PRESENT

SCOTT KAHN, President
JAMES MCCRAY, JR., Vice President
RITA SEMEL
DARSHAN SINGH
GEORGE YAMASAKI, JR.

OTHERS PRESENT

Trent Rhorer, Executive Director
Elizabeth LaBarre, Executive Assistant to the Executive Director / Secretary – Human Services Commission
Noelle Simmons, Deputy Director – Economic Support and Self-Sufficiency
Susie Smith, Deputy Director – Policy and Planning
Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director – Finance and Administration
Other department staff and interested citizens

ROLL CALL

President Kahn called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m., noting that all Commission members were present.

AGENDA

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the agenda as posted.

MINUTES

On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the minutes of the January 23, 2020 Regular Meeting as circulated.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Executive Director Trent Rhorer furnished an update regarding federal, state, and local activities.

**FEDERAL UPDATES**

The latest Public Charge update through the courts is the lifting of the injunction on January 27 by the Supreme Court. The efforts to prevent the new public charge rule from going into effect have been exhausted. The new implementation date is February 24, 2020, which means that benefits received before February 24 will not count against recipients. However, an expanded list of qualifying benefits can be used against recipients after February 24. Programs that may be considered under the public charge test not previously counted are CalWORKs, SSI, long-term care, Medi-Cal with some exceptions, CalFresh, public housing and housing choice vouchers. Benefits not included in the public charge test include disaster relief, school nutrition programs, WIC (nutrition program for women, infants and children), foster care and adoption, Head Start (and other child care subsidies), earned-income tax credit (EITC) and childcare tax credit (CTC). Public charge is redefined in the new rule as someone who is "more likely than not" to receive public benefits for more than 12 months within any 3-year period in the future. Our concern is not the number of clients impacted by this rule change as the actual number is nominal. Our main concern is the chilling effect these rule changes have on immigrant communities who are entitled to receive and do receive our benefits. We have done a lot of public campaigning and reaching out to community partners and other city agencies. Our messaging to clients is know your rights and get the facts before you make any decisions whether it is withdrawing from benefits or deciding not to apply. Review the updated FAQs on our website, translated in 6 languages. We are working with Bay Area Legal Aid to provide a free advice line. We have mailed flyers to immigrant households. We are working with the Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) to provide group workshops in March and April here at 170 Otis along with 1:1 assistance. We have seen a slight decline in the number of CalFresh accounts in households with at least one noncitizen. The pattern of this Administration is to whittle away at benefits as a way of lowering the number of participants under the guise of success. In the state of the union speech, President Trump applauded himself for the decrease in food stamp recipients, claiming people do not need food assistance because they are getting jobs when the reality is that people are off food stamps because of tighter restrictions such as work requirements and public charge rule changes. Yet another rule that falls into this pattern is a new proposal for the Social Security Administration to increase the frequency of reviews from annually to every six months. As we are well aware with our own programs, the more often reviews are required, the more often clients miss appointments. Because the reviews require clients to respond, we are concerned that many will be discontinued for non-response. This will affect everyone on SSI. CWDA submitted comments in opposition last month. Even though we do not administer SSI, many of our clients have household members on SSI and rely on a low cash grant as their safety net.

**AGENCY**

Every two years, HSA recertifies Muni's discounted Lifeline pass (a low-cost fast pass for qualifying residents) at the 170 Otis Street service center for 46,000 recipients during specified weeks. With so many residents coming through the same location at the same time, Dan Kelly and his planning team seized an opportunity: host Community Assistance Resources Enrollment Fairs (CARE Fairs) where low income residents can learn about all of the City's discounted offerings in one place—in the 170 Otis plaza—and sign up. In addition to SFMTA, we are partnering with over 20 organizations, including PG&E, AT&T, SF Public Utilities Commission, SF Library, SF Rec and Park and the SF-Marin Food Bank. The CARE Fairs are on February 24, March 25 and April 25 from 8am – 1pm, free and open to the public. The CARE Fairs are being advertised via a mailing to Lifeline recipients, flyer distribution and social media posts along with info on our website: www.SFHSA.org/Care-Fairs.

Also in the plaza, next week, we are hosting an all-staff Black History Month celebration Wednesday, February 19 from noon – 1:30pm. There will be food, entertainment and the Mayor will attend and say a few words. Commissioners are invited and will receive an email with details.

**PROGRAMS**

**ESSS**

Mentioned in the context of contracts last month, Executive Director Rhorer shared with the commission that the state is transitioning from a regional-based program to a single, statewide information system for our benefits. Currently there are 3 systems but by January 2023 all 58 CA counties will migrate to a single statewide system called CalSAWs. We are currently a part of the CalWin system with 18 counties. We are already planning for the transition to a new system so that it is as seamless as possible. This is a huge lift with new technology and training of staff. Early planning will hopefully prevent data loss and enhance application processing. Program staff are already participating in a number of state workgroups and data cleaning exercises. This is the third transition in Executive Director Rhorer's tenure. It makes sense to combine all counties into one system, especially for county transfers and there will be other efficiencies for clients.

SFBN

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) was onsite last week to audit the CalFresh Employment & Training Program. This program places CalFresh clients into job readiness training and subsidized employment to ultimately help them with access to better paying jobs. They were very effusive in their praise of our program—they are recognizing that our program is the model for the state, the best practice. Many counties have followed our lead in this program. Unlike most programs we administer, we receive an uncapped federal reimbursement. For every dollar we spend, we receive one dollar back from the federal government. While it does cost the county money, we do receive reimbursement from the federal government. We have been able to expand this program thanks to the revenue draw and other counties have stepped up to do the same. It is especially helpful to have a robust employment program right now with the work requirement change for able-bodied adults receiving CalFresh.

**FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES (FCS)**

Supervisor Yee wants information on foster care in San Francisco, especially the numbers of children placed out of county. His request for a hearing is actually quite timely for us. We have been planning for the last year a resource family recruitment campaign. We are using the State of Foster Care in SF hearing with Supervisor Yee on February 27 at 10am with the Neighborhood Services Committee as an opportunity to spin positive. Mayor Breed is planning an event either the day of or perhaps the day before the hearing to emphasize the need for resource families, reinforcing our Agency's goal that we do not place any children outside of San Francisco anymore unless they are placed with a relative. We hope to receive some press.

Vice President McCray mentions that he often talks to friends and family who do not know about an HSA event. The Commissioner really likes the idea of the CARE fair where he can learn about Agency opportunities, but also opportunities and programs, in one convenient location, from all over the City.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

President Kahn announced LEE OLIVER, Eligibility Worker Supervisor, Medi-Cal, as the February 2020 Employee of the Month. The Commission recognized Lee for his hard work, positivity and professionalism. Mr. Oliver was awarded an engraved desk clock, which he graciously accepted with thanks to a standing-room-only auditorium.

RESOURCE FAMILY RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN PRESENTATION

Joe Molica, Communications Manager, presented the commission with an overview of the resource family recruitment campaign and included the campaign's goal, communications strategies, messaging themes, design elements, advertising locations and types of media used to get the word out to San Franciscans that foster families are needed and how to take action.

Commissioner Semel suggests that the Interfaith Council assist with the campaign. Mr. Molica replies that partners will be able to access a toolkit on the Agency's website with ways to help. President Kahn asks if the communications team reached out to local media agencies for pro bono services. Mr. Molica responds that we are working with a local ad agency that specializes in media buys. The media buys in particular have been able to provide value-added services by leaving ads up longer than originally contracted at bus stops for example. Vice President McCray appreciates the presentation and likes the campaign. He heard Mr. Molica reference "our children" multiple times but did not see those words in the presentation. Vice President McCray also echoes Commissioner Semel's comment that we get the materials into the hands of the stakeholders who work with the demographic we want to pull from. Mr. Molica appreciates the feedback and adds that community stakeholders will be forwarded our media kit for the campaign, asking for their help, the following Tuesday. Executive Director Rhorer continues with confirming that the materials should absolutely be distributed to Michael Pappas, Executive Director of the San Francisco Interfaith Council. The Council touches tens of thousands of people –an excellent idea. Joe Molica adds that the Family & Children's Services (FCS) recruitment team has a group that focuses on faith-based organizations.

CONSENT CALENDAR

On motion of Vice President McCray, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission ratified actions taken by the Executive Director since the January 23, 2020 Regular Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of February 12, 2020:

1. Submission of requests to encumber funds in the total amount of $226,639 for purchase of services or supplies and contingency amounts;
2. Submission of 1 temporary positions for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period of 1/11/20 to 2/7/20;

3. Submission of 37 temporary appointments made during the period of 1/11/20 to 2/7/20.

**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021 AND 2021-2022 BUDGET PROPOSAL**

Deputy Director, Finance and Administration Daniel Kaplan presented the Human Services Agency and Department of Human Services Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 Budget proposal. Dan Kaplan stated that the next step is to recommend the proposal to the Mayor's Office. By law, we have to propose our budget by February 21 of each year.

The Mayor's Office requests budget reductions of 3.5% in each upcoming budget for FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22, which means reductions in HSA General Fund budgets of $2.2 million in FY20-21 and $4.4 million in FY21-22. Our Agency is well-positioned to avoid layoffs and minimize service impacts due to increased allocations in the state budget for Medi-Cal ($1.8 million) and IHSS Administration ($.7 million) along with better than expected revenues in a number of programs in the current fiscal year.

HSA's proposed FY 2020-21 budget for DHS and HSA Administration of $577.2 million is $16.1 million or 2.9% more than the FY 2019-20 budget of $561.1 million. HSA's revenues of $440.5 million in FY 2020-21, are $2.8 million or 0.6% more than FY 2019-20 revenues of $437.7 million. General Fund support for DHS and HSA Administration of $136.7 million in FY 2020-21 is $13.3 million or 10.8% more than the $123.4 million in FY 2019-20. These increases are primarily due to the increased costs of CAAP aid, revenue loss from the expired Title IV-E Waiver, as well as increasing salary, benefit, and contract costs in line with cost-of-living adjustments. The proposed FY 2021-22 budget is the same as the proposed FY 2020-21 budget with the exception that adjustments were made for the costs associated with HSA's proposed FY 2020-21 budget for DHS and HSA Administration of $577.2 million is $16.1 million or 2.9% more than the FY 2019-20 budget of $561.1 million. HSA's revenues of $440.5 million in FY 2020-21, are $2.8 million or 0.6% more than FY 2019-20 revenues of $437.7 million. General Fund support for DHS and HSA Administration of $136.7 million in FY 2020-21 is $13.3 million or 10.8% more than the $123.4 million in FY 2019-20. These increases are primarily due to the increased costs of CAAP aid, revenue loss from the expired Title IV-E Waiver, as well as increasing salary, benefit, and contract costs in line with cost-of-living adjustments. The proposed FY 2021-22 budget is the same as the proposed FY 2020-21 budget with the exception that adjustments were made for the costs associated with mandated growth in salaries, fringe benefits, and aid costs.

Commissioner Semel wants to know the impact on Agency budget if Supervisor Haney's ordinance passes (a navigation center in each district). Executive Director Rhorer states, should it pass, we would want a presence at each center. Deputy Director Kaplan addresses this in the DHS Initiatives section of his presentation: Benefits Connector Services at Navigation Centers and Homeless Shelter Sites include a team of 14 eligibility workers and three contracted triage workers who provide Medi-Cal, CalFresh and CAAP eligibility and work participation assessments on site. This will help to meet new needs from the Mayor's initiative to add 1,000 shelter and Navigation Center beds by December 2020.
Another highlight from the DHS initiatives section is the expansion of the JobsNOW! Career Pathways program. HSA will shift budget within WDD to fund 30 Career Pathway slots. We previously froze civil service positions to fund Public Service Trainees. With the Mayor's Office support, we no longer need to rely on unfunded (i.e., funded out of salary savings) budget for this successful, important program.

On motion by Commissioner Singh, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the Department of Human Services and the Human Services Agency Budget Proposal for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 Budget proposal.

**FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES**

Geoffrey Nagaye, FCS Program Support Analyst, presented the request to modify an existing grant agreement with FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES.

On motion of Commissioner Semel, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing grant agreement with FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES for the provision of respite care for Resource Families; for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2022; for an additional amount of $970,347, plus a 10% contingency, for a total amount not to exceed $2,544,177.

**LOW INCOME INVESTMENT FUND**

Graham Dobson, OECE Senior Policy Analyst, presented the request to modify the existing grant agreement with LOW INCOME INVESTEMENT FUND.

On motion of Commissioner Yamasaki, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing grant agreement with LOW INCOME INVESTMENT FUND for the provision of Child Care Facilities & Technical Assistance; for the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022; for an additional amount of $37,205,495, plus contingency, for a new total grant amount not to exceed $66,303,295.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

President Kahn adjourned the meeting at 11:02 a.m.

Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary

Posted: X.X.20