



**City of Davis
Social Services Commission Minutes
Monday, February 28, 2022, 7:00 P.M.**

1. Call to Order

Chair Ennis called the meeting to order at 7:02pm

Commission Members Present: *Judith Ennis, Chair; Rachael Fulp-Cooke, Vice Chair; Julia Mouat; Alana O'Brien; Jenna Shaw-Battista; Bapu Vaitla; Judy Wong-Chen (Alternate); Susan Perez (Arrived: 7:30pm)*

Commissioner Absent: None

Also Present: Dagoberto Fierros, Management Analyst; Kelly Stachowicz, Assistant City Manager

2. Approval of Agenda

Fulp-Cooke moved, with a second by Vaitla, to approve the agenda. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Ennis; Fulp-Cooke; Mouat; O'Brien; Shaw-Battista; Vaitla; Wong-Chen

NOES: None

ABSENT: Perez

3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners, and Liaisons

Commissioner Vaitla – Spoke with Kerry Loux. Would like to have Social Services liaison to the CAAP process/meetings. Vaitla is moving to Maine and will be leaving the Commission in a few months.

Stachowicz noted that Council will discuss Respite Center continuation and American Rescue Plan Act funding at the March 1 meeting.

4. Public Comment

No public comment

5. Consent Items

A. Approval of Minutes – January 24, 2022

B. Principles of Civility

Shaw Battista moved, with second by O'Brien, to approve the consent calendar.

AYES: Ennis; Fulp-Cooke; Mouat; O'Brien; Shaw-Battista; Vaitla; Wong-Chen

NOES: None

ABSENT: Perez

6. Regular Items

A. Daytime Respite Center for Unhoused Individuals

Dagoberto Fierros provided overview of the respite center and its services, including the feedback from the February 17 neighborhood meeting and survey, as well as the police calls for service for the general area near the center.

CommuniCare's Director of Behavioral Health Sara Gavin along with Associate Clinical Director of Behavioral Health Tegwin Millard and Respite Center Supervisor Yvonne Page shared the services, successes and challenges that the respite center has dealt with the past two years. Staff focuses on providing basic human dignity to each client. Most clients are between ages 40-64, majority are male, and about half are Caucasian. Eighty-one percent identify as living in Davis. There have been 255 unique visits. Service linkages include links to housing, benefits, primary care, and other vital services. Also noted was the Davis Pet Advocacy and Wellness program, which provides veterinary services to pets of the unsheltered. Yvonne Page also shared story about guest, who collected recyclables to earn money, and used respite center as a refuge. The center also assisted the guest with housing and other linkages.

No public comment.

Commission Discussion:

Vaitla asked how the number of actual visits compared to the expectations. Gavin stated that the program has expanded services in various areas since the center opened and respite staff continue to offer services to all individuals who visit the center.

Commissioner Perez arrived (7:30pm)

Shaw-Battista asked for clarification about new proposed clinician position at the center.

Gavin stated that the intention of the additional clinician position will meet the expanded needs of the program.

O'Brien asked if the center tracks data about students accessing services at the center. Millard stated they do not believe students have accessed the center. O'Brien shared the possibility of collaborating with student groups to bring awareness about the services provided at the center.

Ennis asked if there are plans to increase volunteers. Fierros explained that City staff are working to revitalize the volunteer program.

Ennis attended the February 17 neighborhood meeting and shared the concerns that were expressed by individuals at the meeting. Ennis asked if there were plans in place to remediate some of the issues. Page stated they are working with the City's code enforcement to clean up areas in front of the center and are trying to build trust with guests to improve outcomes. Page also noted that building the trust takes a long time.

Vaitla asked if CommuniCare has considered using community navigators. Gavin stated that CommuniCare currently has eight peer advocate positions that serve as community navigators.

Perez asked how the someone can be a better neighbor to the unhoused. Page stated the best way to be a better neighbor to the unhoused is to try to understand their perspective and be gentle. Fierros stated that volunteering at the center is one possible way to be a better neighbor to the unhoused.

Public Comment:

Jeremy stated that unhoused individuals could use a sense of responsibility such as a paid job as a way to improve their life.

Commissioners discussed the continuation of CommuniCare's contract, as well as neighborhood issues related to the respite center, particularly shopping carts used by the unhoused and possible solutions.

MOTION: Ennis moved, with second by Vaitla, to recommend the extension of CommuniCare's contract through June 2023, and exploration of opportunities of Peer Support Advocate roles.

AYES: Ennis; Fulp-Cooke; Mouat; O'Brien; Perez; Shaw-Battista; Vaitla

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Fulp-Cooke and O'Brien jointly moved, with a second by Vaitla to recommend that the City Council explore the idea of creating an ordinance that requires large businesses to have a boundary and locking system on shopping carts, survey residents to find out how carts are being used and then create needs based solutions, and continue neighborhood outreach.

AYES: Ennis; Fulp-Cooke; Mouat; O'Brien; Perez; Shaw-Battista; Vaitla

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Fulp-Cooke or Ennis will attend City Council meeting to provide Commission feedback to Council on March 1.

B. Environmental Scan Subcommittee Presentation

Fulp-Cooke, Wong-Chen, and Shaw Battista shared that the survey, which was sent to local service providers and asked questions (who they are, who they serve, what their needs are, how the Commission can help). Response rate was almost 59% (17 of 29 organizations).

Findings: Majority of respondents have not applied for CDBG. Critically important were improving availability to services and linking clients to services. Most pressing needs for clients: housing, food insecurity, and financial insecurity. Recent obstacles have been COVID, increased service needs and staffing barriers. Successes have included continuous service operation, increase program capacity, specific benefits provision (provision of housing, rental support). regardless of mission, affordable housing remains the top issue for every organization.

Commissioners suggested that the commission could help by finding more affordable housing solutions, providing financial assistance in finding funding, connecting community members to services, and creating social awareness.

As for next steps, commissioners suggested the use information to inform the work plan, consider how to share information about CDBG, connect individuals with services and programs, invite organizations to present at Commission meetings, and find ways to support and market these organizations.

Shaw Battista: would like to make this a living document and share the information publicly.

Vaitla asked if the commission continue to support organizations that have been supported in the past through CDBG or does the commission take a step back and do something else based on this survey? Fulp-Cooke stated that there is an opportunity to support more organizations moving forward.

Ennis suggested the commission take a role in providing community needs recommendations to the city's newly created social services and housing department. Fulp-Cooke and Shaw-Battista supported the suggestion.

Public comment: None.

C. University Student Advocacy Groups Outreach Subcommittee Presentation

O'Brien shared university student outreach subcommittee presentation. Hoping to inform and involve students. O'Brien would like to give this presentation to student groups to get them more involved in City initiatives.

Perez stated that the Social Services Commission is here to help amplify the voices of the community. Perez also suggested ways to make the city website easier to navigate.

Mouat stated that the subcommittee outreach could also serve to connect volunteer students to various programs that present at commission meetings.

Perez moved, with a second by Shaw-Battista to extend meeting to 9:15pm

AYES: Ennis; Fulp-Cooke; Mouat; O'Brien; Perez; Shaw-Battista; Vaitla

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Public comment: None.

7. Subcommittee Updates

A. Community Outreach Efforts Subcommittee (Ennis, Fulp-Cooke, O'Brien)

Ennis stated that council would support increased outreach efforts from the commission. Ennis shared the following goals:

- 1. Would like to share knowledge with existing forum (regular meetings), would like to bring guest speakers in to have a platform. Would like a monthly topic, taken from environmental scan survey. Can focus outreach on the topic that month. (Start with affordable housing, food insecurity, child care access/affordability.) Should be coupled with a social media push.*
- 2. Would also like to do a Farmers Market day, have a short presentation on each type of organization, allowing organization to fundraise and get volunteers.*
- 3. Would like to host some special events. Explore collaborations with other commissions.*

No public comment

Vaitla asks if a commissioner would join the Natural Resources Commission to get update on the Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, at request of City staff member Kerry Loux. Commissioner Perez will attend the first part of the upcoming Natural Resources Commission meeting.

8. Commission and Staff Communications

A. Development Projects and Affordable Housing Properties Update

Held over to future meeting

B. Social Services Commission Long Range Calendar

Held over to future meeting

9. Adjourn

Vaitla moved, with a second by Perez, to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:17 pm with the following vote:

AYES: Ennis; Fulp-Cooke; Mouat; O'Brien; Perez; Shaw-Battista; Vaitla

NOES: None

ABSENT: None