



**Social Services Commission Minutes
Monday, November 21, 2022**

1. Call to Order

Members Present: Judith Ennis, Chair; Jenna Shaw-Battista; Julia Mouat; Susan Perez; Bapu Vaitla

Members Absent: Rachael Fulp-Cooke; Alana O'Brien; Judy Wong-Chen

Others Present: Dana Bailey, Social Services and Housing Director; Kelly Stachowicz, Assistant City Manager

2. Approval of Agenda

Perez moved, with a second by Shaw-Battista, to approve the agenda. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Ennis, Shaw-Battista, Mouat, Perez, Vaitla

NOES: None

ABSENT: Fulp-Cooke; O'Brien; Wong-Chen

3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commissioners, and Liaisons

Commissioner Vaitla announced he anticipates this will be his last Social Services Commission meeting pending the final outcome of the City Council election.

4. Public Comment

Carol Gavin – suggested commission consider how Davis could build affordable housing units for teachers and public safety officers.

5. Consent Items

A. Approval of Minutes – November 21, 2022

Shaw-Battista clarified her request to invite a representative from UC Davis Housing to an upcoming meeting to provide an update on the development of affordable student housing.

Ennis moved, with a second by Perez, to approve the agenda. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Ennis, Shaw-Battista, Mouat, Perez, Vaitla

NOES: None

ABSENT: Fulp-Cooke; O'Brien; Wong-Chen

6. Regular Items

A. Presentation and Discussion: UC Davis Aggie Compass Basic Needs Office

Leslie Kemp, Director, UC Davis Aggie Compass Basic Needs Office, provided the Commission an update on activities. She outlined the office's 4 Pillars of Support developed as the result of the findings of a 2018 study of student needs. The office and programs include emergency rental assistance, Cal Fresh food support, and financial skills building. The office is looking to hire a full time housing navigator to connect students to housing assistance and to hire two case managers to connect students to other services. The office is piloting "Aggie Eats", a pay-what-you-can food truck for students.

Ms. Kemp noted the office saw a substantial increase in need when the campus re-opened this Fall, attributing this to the end of CARE cash assistance, lack of jobs that pay living wages, end to eviction protections and inflation. The office hopes to address the "lease gap" experienced as student housing transitions take place during the summer.

Commission comments included the following:

- Concern about student access to mental health services, particularly for Medi-Cal eligible students.*
- Suggestion to collaborate with local community-based organizations*
- Closure of Solano Park housing exacerbated the lack of affordable housing options. UC Davis student families often priced out of the community.*
- Suggestion that community navigators could help address the "lease gap"*
- Request for Office to consider other low-hanging fruit the Commission might help address.*

Public Comment:

- Carol Gavin: Noted students often unaware of the power to influence campus policy and suggested ways they might address issues*
- Martha Teeter: Supported activities for students to share experiences related to housing affordability to influence housing legislation.*

B. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)/HOME Critical Needs List/Annual Request for Proposal

Kelly Stachowicz shared background on the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program requirements for the development of a Critical Needs list. In 2021 the Commission moved to prioritize services to extremely low/ very low income residents. No substantial changes were made to the List. Request for Proposal (RFP) scheduled to be released mid-December with proposals due in late January.

Commission Questions:

- When will funding recipients report on the impact of the funds received? (Outcomes information provided in the annual CAPER.)*

- *Will technical assistance be provided to applicants during the RFP process? (Applicants will receive technical assistance at several points, though most are seasoned recipients of funding.)*

Public Comment:
None

Ennis moved, with a second by Vaitla, to recommend that Council approve the Critical Needs List, with the change of raising the minimum award limit to \$7,000 from \$5,000, and support the RFP schedule. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Ennis, Shaw-Battista, Mouat, Perez, Vaitla
NOES: None
ABSENT: Fulp-Cooke; O'Brien; Wong-Chen

C. Presentation on Community Navigator Project

Robb Davis and Ryan Collins presented a proposal to consider a Community Navigators project. The role of Community Navigators is to assist people in connecting to social and health services in the community. According to the World Health Organization, navigators can provide promotive, preventative and curative health services, including mental health services. Navigation could offer health education outreach, relationship building with disconnected communities, data collection, and other benefits. The proposed project would consist of volunteer navigators, trained and supported to provide services to unhoused individuals, non-native English speakers, low-income/isolated seniors and other targeted populations. Navigators could place citizens in direct relationships with people who are marginalized and disconnected from systems of support. The proposal suggests the project be housed in the Davis Department of Social Services and Housing to facilitate connections to community-based organizations serving the unhoused.

Commission Questions and Comments:

Shaw-Battista expressed familiarity with the structure having seen it applied effectively through the promotoras model. A promotora is a lay Hispanic/Latino community member, often an identified community leader/influencer, who receives specialized training to provide basic health education in the community without being a professional health care worker. She noted the project has a particular opportunity to address diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) by promoting cultural and linguistic advocacy and suggested the proposers identify local programs serving the migrant community and First 5 (serving children age 5 years and below) as a benchmark.

Perez considered comments made during the Reimagining Public Safety process where some people with lived experience of homelessness expressed concerns about volunteer reliability and potential bias.

Vaitla expressed appreciation for the nuanced comments brought forth by the Commission. He was pleased the project is taking a public health approach to social issues and viewed the proposal as an opportunity for community education and platform to deliver services to those in need.

Public Comment

Carol Gavin: Commented on the importance of community navigation to establish public trust.

The Commission asked to revisit the topic at the December meeting.

7. Subcommittee Updates –

The Commission will consider additional subcommittees after selecting a new Chair/ Vice Chairperson, reviewing and revising the work plan and setting goals for the upcoming year.

Commissioner O'Brien will be contacted by the City Clerk to review attendance.

- A.** DJUSD Student Support Services Collaboration (*Perez, Shaw-Battista, Wong-Chen*) – *No report*
- B.** University Student Advocacy Groups Outreach (*Mouat, O'Brien, Vaitla*) – *No report*

8. Commission and Staff Communications

A. Development Projects and Affordable Housing Properties Update

Stachowicz: Nothing to report.

B. Social Services and Housing Department Update

Bailey: The Emergency Winter Shelter Action Plan is complete and the congregate (Davis Community Meals and Housing) and non-congregate (Motel 6) sites will accept clients beginning Monday, November 28, 2022. The program will operate through March 31, 2023.

C. Social Services Commission Long Range Calendar

Reviewed long range calendar. Added Election of Chair/Vice Chair in December, requested discussion of potential new subcommittees, requested an update on the Temporary Affordable Housing ordinance, and suggested a presentation on childcare at a future meeting.

The Commission agreed to move the following meeting dates:

- *January 16, 2023 (MLK Holiday) to January 23, 2023*
- *February 20, 2023 (Presidents Day Holiday) to February 27, 2023.*

Public Comment:

None

9. Adjourn

Ennis moved, with a second by Perez, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Ennis, Shaw-Battista, Mouat, Perez, Vaitla

NOES: None

ABSENT: Fulp-Cooke; O'Brien; Wong-Chen

Meeting adjourned at 9:33pm.