

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Community Services Commission convened in a regular session at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 6, 2005 in Garden Room B at the Cultural Arts Center, Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL/MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Present: Commissioners Adams, Gilbert, Hazell, Ning, and
Chairperson Orpe.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Senior Recreation Supervisor Kelso and
Recreation Services Administrator Jones.

3. FLAG SALUTE

Chairperson Orpe led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Gilbert, seconded by Commissioner Ning, moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 22, 2005

MOTION: Commissioner Gilbert moved for the approval of the September 22, 2005 Torrance Community Services Commission meeting minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Adams and passed by unanimous voice vote approval.

6. APPROVAL OF 2004-2005 COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

This item was considered out of order following 8B.

7. STANDING COMMITTEES

7A. SOCIAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT: NONE

7B. HARVEST HEALTH FAIR – NOVEMBER 5, 2005

Senior Recreation Supervisor Kelso noted that fliers announcing the November 5, 2005 Harvest Health Fair were available at this meeting.

8. GRANT PROGRAM FOR NON-PROFIT SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCIES

8A. 2006 GRANT HEARING

Chairperson Orpe explained the ground rules for the evening's presentations, noting that agency representatives would have a maximum of five minutes for their presentations followed by a five-minute Commissioner question and answer period.

The following agencies supplied a brief summary of the purpose of their organizations and how the requested funds would be utilized:

6:06 p.m. to 9:08 p.m.

**8a. BEING ALIVE – SOUTH BAY
Tuesday Lunch and Support Group**

Rick Platt, Executive Director, provided an overview of services offered for persons living with HIV/AIDS in the South Bay. He stated that grant funds would provide a well-balanced, nutritional lunch at least once a week with a support group to update and educate individuals living with HIV/AIDS. He indicated that the agency has been Torrance-based for the past 14 years.

Responding to Commissioner Adam's inquiry, Mr. Platt explained that grant funds would provide lunches for 52 weeks and that, if not funded, they would be able to maintain the program through donations from a general community.

In response to Commissioner Hazell's inquiry, he stated that the youngest participant was four years old and that guest speakers were provided once a month at the group luncheons.

Responding to an inquiry by Chairperson Orpe, he advised that the meals were brought in and prepared at the site.

In response to Commissioner Ning's inquiries, he stated that the increase in Torrance residents being served was due to advertising and that approximately 60% of persons living with HIV/AIDS in the City were being served.

He explained to Commissioner Gilbert that the program began four years ago, that the agency receives minimal funding from other non-profit agencies and that those served are on fixed, limited incomes.

**8b. BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES, INC.,
South Bay Senior Services,
Torrance Senior Emergency Funds Program**

Bill Larson, Senior Services Supervisor with Behavioral Health Services, reported that their mission was to help disabled and low income senior citizens to stay in their homes as long as possible by providing short-term emergency financial assistance and crisis intervention. He noted that with the grant they would be able to serve between 16

and 25 at-risk seniors in 2006 and expressed appreciation for grants received from the City the past two years for the successful program.

Responding to Commissioner Ning's inquiry, Mr. Larson explained that the projected increase for need of services was due to growth of an aging population and less preparation for retirement. He commented that the agency could easily spend four to five times the amount of funding requested due to increasing need.

When Commissioner Hazell inquired about follow up services, Mr. Larson explained that most assisted seniors are signed up for long-term care management.

He explained to Commissioner Adams that he doubted that there would be any repeat clients in 2006 because they were connected with other resources for assistance and clarified that funding would assist Torrance residents only.

8c. COMMUNITY HELPLINE, A DIVISION OF HELPLINE YOUTH COUNSELING

Jeff Farber, Executive Director for Community Helpline, requested financial support for the operation of their toll-free helpline/hotline, which is the foundation of the success of the Community Helpline Program that has been Torrance-based for 34 years. He stated that there are 170 trained volunteer listeners from the community and that of the 8,400 calls received last year, approximately 14% were from Torrance.

Responding to Commissioner Ning's inquiry, he explained that their success rate was tracked by information received from repeat calls.

In response to Chairperson Orpe's inquiry, he described outreach efforts that include Torrance Unified School District schools, faith-based organizations, senior centers, community service centers, and private and non-profit partners.

Responding to Commissioner Adams' inquiries, he stated that requested funds would be used to pay for the toll-free telephone line that costs approximately \$300 per month and that supporters were listed in their printed materials. He further noted that the agency has lost some donation sources but that restructuring has allowed them to decrease paid staffing and increase volunteers.

At Commissioner Hazell's request, he explained problem solving techniques and resources provided to callers. He described the 45 hours of training and 20 hours of mentoring that volunteer listeners receive before responding to callers.

8d. HARBOR INTERFAITH SERVICES HIS Kids Club

Tahia Hayslet provided an overview of Harbor Interfaith Services' programs and services for the homeless and working poor in the South Bay area since 1975. She requested funding to provide daily care and instruction for their after-school program for up to 50 children who reside in their homeless shelter and transitional housing complex in the City of San Pedro. She described collaborative partners that offer in-kind support, outreach efforts, and noted that Harbor Interfaith Services receives funding from government sources as well as private foundations.

Responding to Commissioner Gilbert's inquiry, Ms. Hayslet explained that the organization assists Torrance residents who are in a homeless situation and may need rental assistance and/or childcare, noting that transportation is provided.

When Commissioner Ning inquired about the shortfall reported in 2004-05, Ms. Hayslet explained that the figures reflected depreciation and not a decrease in income.

Responding to Commissioner Hazell's inquiry, she stated that the South Bay Volunteer Center provides volunteers who work with the children who usually come to their facility through lack of housing.

In response to Commission Adams' inquiry, she explained that in order to receive after-school care, a Torrance resident would need to go to San Pedro for services. She noted that families who are in a homeless situation prefer to be surrounded by people who are in a similar situation.

**8e. H.E.L.P. (Healthcare and Elder Law Program Corporation) –
Torrance Senior Consults**

Cathy Grove, Director of Development, requested funding to cover the costs of updating, printing and distributing 20,000 copies of the 2006 edition of "The Torrance Guide to Services for Older Adults." She provided details of the guide, noting that it was the most concise and useable resource guide in the South Bay and probably Southern California and that there were at least 32,000 seniors living in the City. She stated that they had only 5,000 brochures left from their last printing and that it was time for a new and updated edition.

Responding to Commissioner Adam's inquiry, Ms. Grove stated that the guides were distributed by mail and by providing them to City libraries, hospitals, and senior citizens homes. She clarified that the cost per brochure was \$0.375, that Torrance providing funding for the 2004 edition of the brochure, and that the 5,000 remaining brochures would be distributed in this calendar year.

Ms. Grove, responding to Commission Hazell's inquiry, explained that resources listed in the guide were from Torrance and other areas.

In response to Commissioner Ning's inquiry, she stated that the program was very important to them and that they would make every effort to find other funding sources if not funded by Torrance.

Responding to Commissioner Gilbert's inquiry, she stated that considerable revision was necessary to update resources.

**8f. HOPE (Home Ownership for Personal Empowerment, Inc.)
HOPE Carson Property**

Jennifer Bryam provided background on the organization and thanked the Commission for their support over the last seven or eight years. She reported that HOPE was requesting \$3,000 to repair and remodel a bathroom in a condominium unit on Carson Boulevard where persons with developmental disabilities reside. She distributed updated information regarding their 2005-06 budget and noted that

Washington Mutual Foundation would fund the balance of the expected \$8,000 needed for the project.

Paul, a resident of the Carson property, thanked the Commission for its support and stated that he works at the Harbor Regional Resource Center.

**8g. NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM & DRUG DEPENDENCE
Recovery and Education Groups for Adolescents**

Betty Batenburg, President and CEO of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence/South Bay, presented a request for \$3,000 for counseling services at two Torrance high schools for adolescents with alcohol and other drug related problems. She stated that funds would provide individual as well as 16 group counseling sessions per month, eight groups at each high school. She discussed the increase of drug use on school campuses.

Responding to Commissioner Hazell's inquiry, Ms. Batenburg explained that counseling was strictly confidential and that groups were voluntary as well as mandatory referrals. She advised that the high schools currently being serviced are North High School and South High School.

She explained to Commissioner Ning that they needed a skilled professional for this service and could not use a volunteer.

She described the court referral program and clarified that the recovery and education groups was an on-going program that was requested by the high schools. She indicated that there was an approximate 45% success rate and explained that a concentrated program at one high school instead of two schools might be viewed as clinical treatment.

**8h. NEW LIFE ADVOCACY
Domestic Violence Survivors Support Group**

Karol Sikie, Executive Director of New Life Advocacy, reported that requested funding would be used for Torrance-based survivors of domestic violence to meet in a safe setting for group counseling to learn how to break the cycle of violence. She stated that funds would pay for a facilitator, supplies and materials, cell phones, and community meeting room rental for the 20-week program.

Responding to Chairperson Orpe's inquiry, she clarified that approximately 52 Torrance residents would be served by the support group and thanked the Commission for funding office rental space near the courthouse last year.

She explained to Commissioner Adams that cell phones were used to call clients back.

In response to Commissioner Hazell's inquiry, she explained that there were two different groups, one that met in a conference room in the daytime, and the other that would meet at night in the Civic Center Library meeting room in a safe setting.

Responding to Commissioner Ning's inquiry, she stated that the agency was now able to file a 990EZ and would move forward with the program if the City did not provide funding or funded less than the amount requested.

Ms. Sikie invited Commissioners to a community solutions event in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness month and Senior Recreation Supervisor Kelso offered to distribute the invitations.

**8i. RSVP OF SOUTH BAY
America Reads**

Thomas White, Executive Director of RSVP of South Bay, requested support for the America Reads program that helps children from limited English speaking households to become proficient in reading and compete successfully at grade level. He discussed the epidemic of illiteracy and reported that senior volunteers would be recruited and assigned to the Torrance Unified School District as tutors for reading deficient students in 17 elementary schools. He reported that last year 58 senior citizens volunteered in the District, and that this year they hoped to have 60 or more.

Responding to Commissioner Gilbert's inquiry, Mr. White stated that the cost of the program was \$218 per senior volunteer per year and the cost for the entire program was \$20,000 per year.

He explained to Commissioner Ning that the \$1,800 requested for materials and supplies were for brochures, fliers, paper, and postage. He noted that supporters were acknowledged at the annual volunteer recognition luncheons.

In response to Commissioner Hazell's inquiry, he explained that students were evaluated by assessment testing at the beginning of each school year and that teachers recommended students for the program.

He introduced RSVP's Program Manager who explained that tutors met with students during regular classroom time. She stated that America Reads was an existing program and that students were also tested at the end of the school year to determine success of the program.

The Commission was in recess from 7:28 p.m. to 7:37 p.m.

**8j. SOCIETY TO AID RETARDED, INC.
Temporary Relocation of Residents**

Tom Mullin, President of Society to Aid Retarded, provided an overview of the organization that has provided long-term residential care since 1974. He stated that funding was requested to assist the temporary relocation of residents at Caribou House for women and Scalabrini House for men during reconstruction of these homes.

Pamela Broderick, Executive Director, explained that expansive soil in the southwest region of Torrance has caused irreparable damage to the homes. She stated that the grant would be used for moving expenditures, start-up utility costs, and additional rental fees for the temporary housing. She noted that the name Society to Aid Retarded, Inc. has been changed to Caribou House, Inc. and Scalabrini House, Inc.

Responding to Commissioner Gilbert's inquiry, Ms. Broderick advised that reconstruction would take from nine to twelve months.

In response to Commissioner Adams' inquiry, she reported that the requested amount of \$7,500 would pay for immediate relocation expenses that include packing and moving resident's belongings.

**8k. SOUTH BAY CHILDREN'S HEALTH CENTER ASSOCIATION, INC.
Support Group Therapy for Parents/Guardians of Adolescents**

Herbert Masi, Executive Director of South Bay Children's Health Center, provided background on the organization based in the South Bay for the last 59 years and introduced Political Director Christine Byrne.

Ms. Byrne requested funding to provide weekly support groups for low-income parents/guardians of preteens and adolescents ages 11-17. She reported that the group would focus on developmental stages and parenting needs as well as address specific topics such as substance abuse, children with Attention Deficit Disorder, and extended family members raising children. She explained that funding would help provide staff time, supplies, materials to develop the program, and to recruit participants.

Responding to Commissioner Gilbert's inquiry, Mr. Masi reported that licensed therapists were utilized. He noted the high cost of therapists, and requested support to get the program started.

In response to Commissioner Ning's inquiry, Ms. Byrne explained that this was a new program and discussed means of evaluating success by follow-up calls. She estimated that 80 or more Torrance residents would be served in addition to out-of-area participants.

**8l. TORRANCE LOMITA MEALS ON WHEELS, INC.
Thermal Bags**

Gen Gorciak with Torrance Lomita Meals on Wheels provided an overview of the organization that buys, prepares, cooks, and delivers two meals per day to the housebound and handicapped. She reported that 39,000 meals were prepared and delivered in the Torrance/Lomita area last year. She stated that requested funds would be used to purchase thermal bags that are necessary for the timely delivery of hot and cold meals in compliance with regulations of the County Health Department. She demonstrated a sample of a hot box, noting that each box holds 16 meals.

When Commissioner Adams noted the deficit reported on their agency expenditure vs. income budget, Ms. Gorciak explained that the amount paid by clients for the meals was not reflected.

Responding to Commissioner Hazell's inquiry, she explained that each bag costs \$100 and that 16 hot bags and 16 cold bags were needed. She noted that the heating elements did not need replacing.

**8m. TORRANCE-SOUTH BAY YMCA
Senior Nutrition and Socialization Program**

Elizabeth Haig, Development Director of Torrance-South Bay YMCA, requested support for the program that began in 1977 to provide nutritious meals daily in four senior community centers. She reported that the Torrance YMCA was their largest site, with 72 meals served daily. The purpose of the requested funds would be used as financial assistance to aid from 50 to 104 Torrance senior citizens who cannot afford to participate in the program due to financial limitations. She described other services provided to seniors in the South Bay that include free health screenings, day trips, and yoga classes.

Commissioner Ning received clarification that 950 to 1,000 Torrance residents participated in the nutrition program and that any profit made was given back out in scholarship aid.

In response to Commissioner Hazell's inquiries, she explained that hot meals were served five days a week, with take-home meals on weekends. She noted that meals are prepared at Harbor-UCLA Hospital and cost approximately \$8 each.

**8n. THE WELLNESS COMMUNITY – SOUTH BAY CITIES
Prostate Cancer Networking Groups**

Tom May, Program Director, distributed brochures from The Wellness Community and reported that prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men in all race/ethnic groups in California. He stated that support from the City would be used to fund an ongoing, free, professionally facilitated Prostate Cancer Networking group for men and a Prostate Partners Networking Group for women. He advised that funding would pay for the licensed psychotherapists that facilitate the groups and that they receive minimal government funding.

In response to Commissioner Adam's inquiry about promoting the program, Mr. May explained that they receive referrals from a 22-member professional advisory board with several urologists as well as promoting the service through clinics, medical offices, hospitals, and health fairs.

Commissioner Hazell received clarification that residents often attend all three monthly networking group sessions and that they average 16-22 participants who are both undergoing treatment and who have completed treatment.

8B. DELIBERATION DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2005, 6:00 P.M., AT THE WEST ANNEX COMMISSION ROOM

Senior Recreation Supervisor Kelso requested that Commissioners submit their recommendations for grant awards by October 14, 2005, noting that \$40,000 was available for funding.

6. APPROVAL OF 2004-2005 COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

This item was considered out of order.

Commissioner Ning noted a minor correction regarding his appointment date.

MOTION: Commissioner Adams moved to accept and approve the 2004-2005 Community Services Commission Annual Report as amended. Commissioner Hazell seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

9. YOUTH COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

9A. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS – Selection Committee: October 19-20, 2005

It was noted that the date on the agenda for selection of Youth Council members was inaccurate.

Commissioner Adams volunteered to participate on the interview panel on both evenings and received clarification that it would be held at the ATTIC.

9B. YOUTH COUNCIL REPORT

No report.

9C. COMMISSIONERS' ASSIGNMENTS

Postponed to the October 27, 2005 Commission meeting.

10. ORALS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Adams commented that this evening's grant hearings ran smoothly and thanked Commissioners for their concise questions.

Chairperson Orpe thanked staff for their assistance.

Senior Recreation Supervisor Kelso initiated a brief discussion on the grant hearing process. It was the consensus of Commissioners that this year's setting offered a more casual and less intimidating process.

Commissioner Gilbert received clarification from staff that all applicants receive exactly the same application but that some have used application forms from previous years.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 9:21 p.m., Commissioner Adams, with a second by Commissioner Hazell, moved to adjourn the meeting to Thursday, October 27, 2005 at 6:00 p.m. at the West Annex meeting room.

Approved as Written October 27, 2005 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
