

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Social Services Commission convened in a regular session on Thursday, February 25, 2016 at 6:05 p.m. at the West Annex Commission Meeting Room, Torrance City Hall. Management Associate and Staff Liaison Hoang led the meeting.

2. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioners Chiota, Gow, Matucci, Scotto, See, and Svolos*.

Absent: Commissioner Ragins.

Also Present: Mayor Furey, Management Associate Hoang, Deputy City Attorney Sarigumba, Management Associate Megerdichian, and City Clerk Poirier.

*Commissioner Svolos arrived at 6:10 p.m.

MOTION: Commissioner Gow moved to grant Commissioner Ragins an excused absence for the February 25, 2016 Social Services Commission meeting. Commissioner Mattucci seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected 6-1 approval (Commissioner Ragins absent).

3. FLAG SALUTE

Management Associate Hoang led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. REPORT FROM STAFF ON POSTING OF AGENDA

Management Associate Hoang reported that the agenda for this meeting was properly posted on February 19, 2016.

5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 - None.

6. TRAINING FOR SOCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION

6A. Mayor Furey welcomed Commissioners to the new Social Services Commission. He stated that their first six months was important because they would be creating a work plan and preparing for a joint meeting with City Council. He noted that City Council's long-term vision is for the Commission to create something that is workable, working all the time, taking in a lot of information, and helping people get the services they need. He cautioned Commissioners to use their titles only when doing something related to the Commission.

6B. Former Mayor Dee Hardison provided her background in the City as a teacher, Commissioner, Mayor, Vice-Chairperson of the Centennial Committee, and Chairperson of the Ethics Committee. She reviewed the relationship between an elected body and an

appointed body as well as what recommendations and information City Council would consider useful. She noted that this Commission is in a unique position because all Commissioners are starting at the same time and receiving the same information. She discussed how the Commission could best focus its efforts in addressing the needs of four different populations: veterans, homeless, intellectually challenged adults, and special needs children. She stated that the Commission should try to find commonality among the four areas, and suggested how the Commission should set its goals and remain responsive once it has completed its work plan.

6C. City Clerk Poirier discussed public service ethics and general categories of ethics laws. She stated that the public has a right to know the City's business and asked that Commissioners always be open and transparent. She discussed the importance of ensuring they do not give the perception that they have already made a decision or have met with other Commissioners outside of a meeting. She stated that Commissions should not accept any perks and should limit their advocacy. She reminded Commissioners that they are required to complete two hours of Ethics Training within one year of appointment and every two years thereafter. She stressed the importance of regular attendance and provided information about meeting agendas, stipend payments, summary style minutes, Form 700 Statement of Economic Interests, and Council Rules of Order. She distributed the flier "Working with the City Clerk."

6D. Deputy City Attorney Sarigumba, Legal Counsel to the Commission, provided an overview of the Brown Act. She discussed the Legislature's intent when they adopted the Brown Act in 1953 and noted that Commissions and Standing Committees are subject to it. She stated that the public has a right to know how decisions are made, a right to access the decision-making information, that all meetings are open and public, and all persons are permitted to attend and speak at meetings. She discussed quorums, meeting elements, agenda postings, adding items to an agenda, and information that can be considered. She reviewed exceptions to the meeting requirement, limits on the conduct of meetings, and oral communications. She cautioned Commissioners to avoid serial meetings through e-mail and telephone and described consequences if the Brown Act is violated.

6E. Management Associate Megerdichian discussed the Commission procedure: to be an ear for City Council, forum to encourage citizen participation, in-depth analysis of specific issues, broad perspective on focused topics, and advisory recommendations to City Council. She noted that a Commission does not make policy, direct budget decisions, impact operations, or direct staff on priority of workload. She explained how a Commissioner can request an agenda item and how to request excused absences.

In response to Commissioner Chiota's inquiry, she explained that an item would be agendized for a future meeting if requested by the public under Orals.

Commissioner Chiota questioned if there would be a penalty if a Commissioner attends a meeting that has a Brown Act violation.

Deputy City Attorney Sarigumba explained that it would have to be a meeting under the Commissioner's subject matter jurisdiction. She recommended notifying the staff liaison or City Attorney's office of any violations.

7. APPOINT COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON, VICE-CHAIRPERSON

Management Associate Hoang recommended that the Commission appoint a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for the remainder of the fiscal year. He stated that there is no set procedure in place or City guideline in electing officers and suggested that Commissioners make nominations or self-nominations.

When Commissioner Mattucci stated that it would be helpful to know which Commissioners have had previous Commission experience, Commissioners took turns providing their experience on any appointed bodies.

Commissioner Gow, seconded by Commissioner Mattucci, nominated himself for Chairperson. There were no further nominations and Commissioner Gow was elected Chairperson on a 6-0 roll call vote (absent Commissioner Ragins).

Chairperson Gow led the remainder of the meeting.

Commissioner Chiota nominated Commissioner Svolos for Vice-Chairperson. There were no further nominations and Commissioner Svolos was elected Vice-Chairperson on a 6-0 roll call vote (absent Commissioner Ragins).

8. APPROVE AND ADOPT COMMISSION RULES OF ORDER

Management Associate Hoang noted that the draft Social Services Commission Rules of Order was included in agenda packets. He presented staff's recommendation that the Commission approve and adopt the Commission Rules of Order.

MOTION: Commissioner Chiota moved to approve and adopt the Social Services Commission Rules of Order as presented. Commissioner Svolos seconded the motion; the motion passed on a 6-0 roll call vote (absent Commissioner Ragins).

9. ACCEPT AND FILE PROPOSED SIX-MONTH WORK PLAN FOR THE COMMISSION

Management Associate Megerdichian presented staff's proposal for a six-month work plan for the Commission with two desired outcomes: first, to educate the Commission about programs, community organizations, and partner agencies germane to the Commission's four subject matter areas, and second, provide public workshops to identify long-range goals and objectives for the Commission. She outlined proposals for Commission meetings of March 24, April 28, May 26, June 23, and July 28, with anticipation of a joint meeting with City Council in August.

Chairperson Gow raised the possibility of establishing subcommittees for each of the four focus areas, and Management Associate Hoang recommended waiting until the third or fourth meeting for that discussion.

MOTION: Commissioner Svolos moved to accept and file the proposed six-month work plan for the Commission. Commissioner Mattucci seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected 6-0 approval (absent Commissioner Ragins).

10. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2

10A. Commissioner Chiota suggested selecting a name for the people in the four subject matter areas and Management Associate Megerdichian recommended using “populations.”

10B. Commissioner Svolos shared that she is a special education teacher and has broad knowledge about mentally disabled adults and youth.

10C. Commissioner Chiota advised that he is a retired Army officer and Vietnam veteran.

10D. Commissioner Mattucci received clarification from staff that it is appropriate for him to invite veteran friends to speak under Orals at Commission meetings.

10E. Dee Hardison suggested that staff provide Commissioners with the item that went before City Council that set up this Commission.

10F. John Warhank stated that he is a disabled Vietnam veteran and asked how he can obtain statistics about the numbers of the four populations.

Management Associate Hoang stated that obtaining those numbers is one of their goals.

10G. Chairperson Gow stated that he is excited to be on the Commission because there is huge potential for what can be accomplished.

10H. Commissioner Mattucci thanked Mr. Warhank for coming and encouraged him to invite his veteran friends to future meetings.

11. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 7:44 p.m., Commissioner Svolos moved to adjourn this meeting to March 24, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission Meeting Room. Commissioner See seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected approval.

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Approved as submitted March 24, 2016 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
