

**Princeton Human Services Commission Minutes**

Monthly Meeting

**June 18, 2014**

Monument Hall – East Meeting Room

One Monument Drive, Princeton, NJ 08542

**Present:**

**Board Members:**

Elizabeth Bidwell Bates  
Laura Encinas  
Leticia Fraga  
John Heilner  
Thomas Parker  
Paul Rorem, PhD  
Larry Spruill  
Ross Wishnick, Chairman

**Staff:**

Elisa Neira, MSW  
V Bea Snowdon

**Liaisons and Guests:**

Jeffrey Grosser, MHS, MHO  
Heather Howard, J.D., Town Council

**Absent:**

Robert Hackett

**I. Open Public Meeting Statement**

At 7:06 PM, Chairman Ross Wishnick called the meeting of the Princeton Human Services Commission to order by reading: "Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice was provided of the date, time, and location of this regular meeting by posting a copy of the adopted schedule of the regular meetings with the Clerk's office and by mailing copies to the Trenton Times and Princeton Packet."

**II. Approval of May 2014 meeting minutes**

The minutes of the May 21st, 2014 Board meeting were reviewed. John Heilner asked to strike one line that is incorrect, to add Ms. Neira's name to one sentence, and to rewrite a paragraph. Mr. Rorem proposed that these corrected minutes be accepted. Mr. Heilner seconded this, with all members present in favor.

**III. Public Comments and Special Guests**

A public comment period was announced. There was no response from those present.

Executive Director Neira introduced Jeffrey Grosser, Princeton Health Officer.

Mr. Grosser shared that the Princeton Board of Health is somewhat unique, as it can alter and create local health ordinances based on need. This allows the department to quickly and effectively respond to public health issues. Health inspections and permits for food establishments, public health nuisance complaints, environmental inspections, and interventions, for such things as air pollution and noise pollution, are some of the services provided daily. Disease reporting and control are other areas of service to the community. As an example, Mr. Grosser provided an update on the Meningitis vaccine program at Princeton University. The vaccines given to students and faculty offer protection for approximately five years, when taken in the two part series.

The Health Department also works with different agencies in Princeton. For example, department staff monitor test results with Hi-Tops, ensuring that those with positive STD results receive follow-up and treatment.

The Health Department and Human Services Department have been cross training their staff members, to better support the community. HSC clients, with reportable diseases, receive coordinated care as a result. The case of a child kept out of school, for a false positive test result, was shared as an example of effective teamwork. The departments work together to fully support Medicaid enrollment needs, as well.

Mr. Heilner asked Mr. Grosser about public health response plans, in the event of a biological weapon. Mr. Grosser outlined the entire process from discovery to decontamination.

#### **IV. Director's Report**

##### **WIC**

Mr. Grosser and Ms. Neira are working together to retain the federally funded *Women Infants and Children's Program* (WIC) in Princeton. A decline in local enrollment threatens the provision of WIC services in the future. The *Children's Home Society* facilitates this offering in Princeton, working closely with the Human Services and Public Health departments. WIC offers bi-lingual family health education and health care referrals. A local PSA was produced and additional outreach is underway, to boost participation of families. Mr. Grosser has encouraged referrals, of those in need of WIC services, from neighboring health departments. WIC flyers are being distributed throughout the community. The University Medical Center at Princeton is placing WIC flyers in all maternity "take home" information packages.

Mr. Wishnick expressed the support of the HSC Board Members for this mission. Assistance in spreading the word was offered by all. Mr. Rorem will distribute WIC brochures at Princeton Theological Seminary, with hopes of informing eligible graduate students. Ms. Howard expressed the Mayor's and the community's appreciation, for the teamwork and creative energy of Ms. Neira and Mr. Grosser.

### **Affordable Care Act**

Ms., Neira reports that the Health and Human Services departments also work together to support *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) insurance enrollment events and counseling. The last ACA event had excellent participation, with over 50 people attending. Three events are planned for the fall. Ms. Howard reports that Mayor Lempert recently presented photos and descriptions of this teamwork in support of ACA, at an *ENROLL AMERICA* conference in Washington DC.

### **General Assistance Program**

Ms. Neira reviewed the General Assistance Program report for the month of May. 42 cases were recorded, with 40 still active.

She reports concern about the severe delays her clients experience, at the County level, with processing and approvals for vital Medicaid and emergency Food Stamps. The delays may be caused by an increased volume of applications, from those now eligible for Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act. There are smaller caseloads for Food stamp approvals, where delays are also experienced.

Mr. Wishnick and Ms. Howard suggest meetings with the County Executive, Brian Hughes, and others, to discuss remedies for these delays.

Ms. Neira and her staff are conducting an audit of all HSC client files, in the coming month.

### **Summer Youth Employment Program 2014**

There are 29 young people employed by this year's *Summer Youth Employment Program*. Overall, the program launch this year was a great success. Bethanny Andrade and Calvin Reed, Summer Youth Employment Program Coordinators, created a fun "match-making" process to successfully introduce employers and employees. Workshops for participating youth will be staged throughout the summer. Goal setting, skill development, use of the Free-B, personal financial management, and other topics will be covered to boost their overall proficiency. Funding for this program comes from the HSC budget and PHA. Placement counseling is offered by Ms. Neira.

Mr. Wishnick expressed hopes that the workshops can be videotaped and placed as links on the website, as valuable resources.

Mr. Heilner asked about the related Career Night. He reported that Marcus Jenkins has volunteered to speak to the youth about careers in sports. There will be a number of guest speakers for that evening.

## **V. Committee Reports**

### **Public Relations Subcommittee**

Laura Encinas provided the Public Relations committee report. The next issue of the HSC Newsletter is being created, for distribution in August. Ms. Neira will provide a Director's Report. Ms. Bidwell Bates and Dr. Rorem are writing articles on the *Wheels Rodeo* and *Youth Employment* programs. WIC and ACA announcements, penned by Mr. Grosser, will be included. An article on civil rights affirmative action is in production, for the coming fall edition.

For visual interest, Ms. Encinas hopes to change background colors for each edition. Useful links to resources will also be included in each edition.

### **Wheels Rodeo**

Ms. Bidwell Bates reports that the *Wheels Rodeo* was a greater success this year and was enjoyed by all in attendance. The Police Department had hoped for 100 children. Over 120 children participated, with family members present. Despite the growth in participation since last year, Ms. Bidwell Bates shared that a pleasant community feel and engaging spirit remained clearly evident throughout the event. She requests a cost benefit analysis in relation to the community outreach goal, for effective planning of the event in the future.

### **Send Hunger Packing Princeton (SHUPP)**

Mr. Wishnick reports that over 22,000 meals have been provided to date, by The *Send Hunger Packing Princeton* opt-in program. This program currently seeks to address food insecurity, in nursery and elementary school aged children.

Mr. Heilner asked why reported distribution in some weeks is much higher than others. Mr. Wishnick explained that extra meal packages are provided for holiday and school vacation periods. An investigation into what happens with the unused meals is planned, to ensure accuracy in the numbers reported.

SHUPP's expansion and future were discussed, with Mr. Wishnick suggesting the eventual inclusion of middle school students. Fundraising is needed for this expansion. Mr. Wishnick has discussed grant opportunities and funding with others. He met with a Stuart student who is now pursuing grant opportunities for SHUPP. A fundraising event at Community Park is also being considered. The recipients by school are reported as: Community Park 34, Johnson Park 58, Littlebrook 9, Riverside 17, and Nursery School 25. *Mercer Street Friends* determines need for the handling of cases in the summer, when school is not in session. A preview of The *Send Hunger Packing* website was shown to all in attendance: <http://rabnergraphics.com/shup/>

### **Immigration Subcommittee Report**

The landscape registration ordinance was coming up for approval last month. Mr. Heilner realized this provided a great opportunity to address wage theft. As a result, new wage theft ordinance language was drafted by Craig Garcia of *NEW LABOR*, John Heilner, and Heather Howard. If adopted, this will add wage theft protection to this industry's requirements in Princeton. The Mayor and town council members have been supportive. After the second reading of the ordinance on July 14<sup>th</sup>, the revisions will hopefully be adopted.

The licensing enforcement department, in the Department of Infrastructure and Operations, was also consulted for the creation of this theft deterrent. New business registration forms will have an acknowledgement and checklist for such things as workers compensation insurance.

To protect the rights of all immigrants, HSC's Immigration Subcommittee provides wage theft assistance. Mr. Wishnick shared that it is appropriate for Princeton to be a leader in wage theft and labor protection. He suggests a colloquium to discuss this issue regionally.

Elisa and her new intern are working on a financial literacy program, to add enriching education for those in need. Mr. Wishnick hopes to see resource materials and links for this program on the HSC website.

OSHA training sessions are planned and will be facilitated by Craig Garcia.

Mr. Heilner and Ms. Fraga recently attended a large event, staged by the NJ Alliance for Immigration Justice. New legislative initiatives, to foster positive change and protection, were discussed in that forum.

### **Civil Rights Subcommittee Report**

Leticia Fraga, Committee Chair of the Civil Rights Subcommittee, reports that her committee will meet soon.

## **VI. Discussion Period**

The Clay Street Block Party was discussed. Princeton police are now focused on the *Community Night Out* event, to be held on August 5th. Mr. Parker feels it is worthwhile to continue staging the Clay Street event. Ms. Neira shared that *Community Night Out* is intended to unite all of Princeton, now that we have consolidated. Noting that "ownership matters", Ms. Bidwell Bates shared that the participation of community members in planning is critical for event success. Support of both community events was expressed.

The option to schedule or cancel the August Board meeting was discussed. Paul Rorem motioned in favor of cancelling. Laura Encinas seconded this motion, with all voting in favor. The next HSC meeting will be in September.

## **VII. Upcoming Events**

*Community Night Out* will be held on Tuesday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, from 5pm-8pm. All are encouraged to attend the summer events that are staged for Princeton.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

A beautiful display of historical photos was presented to Ms. Neira, in honor of her first anniversary as the Director of HSC in Princeton. Those present expressed much gratitude for her fine work.

There being no further business, the request to adjourn was motioned by John Heilner, Laura Encinas seconded, with all voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:58PM.

Respectfully submitted, V Bea Snowdon