

**Princeton Human Services Commission Minutes**

Monthly Meeting

**November 19, 2014**

Monument Hall – East Meeting Room  
One Monument Drive, Princeton, NJ 08542

**Present:**

**Board Members:**

Elizabeth Bidwell Bates  
Laura Encinas  
Leticia Fraga  
John Heilner  
Stacey Mann  
Robert Hackett  
Larry Spruill  
Ross Wishnick, Chairman

**Staff:**

Diana Forero

**Guests:**

Emily Klockenbrink, PHS Senior  
Angela Lee, Hun Senior

**Absent:**

Elisa Neira, MSW, Director  
Thomas Parker  
V Bea Snowdon

**I. Open Public Meeting Statement and Call to Order**

At 7:00 PM, Chairman Ross Wishnick called the meeting of the Princeton Human Services Commission (HSC) to order by reading: “ This is to affirm that the regularly scheduled meeting of the Princeton Human Services Commission has been duly notified and is being conducted in compliance with all provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act”. A public comment period was announced, with no response from those in attendance.

**II. Public Comments**

There was no response to the Chairman’s request for public comments.

**III. Approval of September 2014 minutes**

Ms. Fraga’s motion to accept the minutes, with one name correction, was seconded by Ms. Encinas. All voted in favor of acceptance.

**IV. Director’s Report**

**General Assistance Report**

Chairman Wishnick reviewed the humane mission of the HSC. He then distributed and introduced The General Assistance Report. Briefly summarized, the month began with 37 cases, 6 new cases were approved, and 9 cases were closed. The month ended with 34 cases still active.

**Affordable Care Act**

HSC Health Department and the Princeton Public Library have joined together in hosting two recent events. Turn out was very good for the introductory event and the enrollment event.

**WIC**

Outreach for the Princeton WIC program continues, for monthly clinics that will be offered throughout 2015. The hospital has been contacted regarding participation in the Plainsboro clinic. Chairman Wishnick requested a monthly report of the number of clinic visits..

### **Holiday Gift Drive**

Holiday Gift Drive applications to serve 177 children have been received. This number is slightly less than last year's 207 applications. Enough donors have come forth. They will deliver their gift donations on December 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. Distributions of gifts will occur beginning December 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Needs Assessment**

Four focus groups, comprised of four populations: Singles, Families, Latinos, and the Elderly/Disabled, were conducted. Concerns expressed by group participants include, but are not limited to, such things as: high utility (electric) bills in affordable housing, lack of local jobs, lack of transportation for jobs outside of Princeton, and the ability to get professional qualifications/education because of lack of funds.

Chairman Wishnick suggested that the group needing financial support for professional licensing contact the INTERSECT FUND. Mr. Heilner and Ms. Fraga shared information about ESL and GDP programs.

Participants in the Seniors/Disabled group expressed a desire for holiday meals and gifts. The holidays are especially difficult for them.

These findings and more will be presented to the Community, in a series of gatherings to be scheduled.

## **V. Human Services Committee Reports**

### **Immigration**

Mr. Heilner reported that HSC representatives met with Jeffrey Grosser, to discuss the introduction of wage theft protection ordinances for the local restaurant industry. Craig Garcia (of Working Families) is drafting a general wage theft ordinance as a model. Princeton's wage theft ordinance is now in effect for the landscape industry and is working well. Director Neira currently handles, and likely will handle, the reports that lead to contacts with employers who violate worker's trust. Community outreach regarding wage protection, in light of this ordinance, was discussed.

An article co-written by Councilwoman Howard and Mayor Lempert, entitled "New Policies are "Building Trust Between Law Enforcement and Princeton's Immigrant Communities", was published in *NJ Municipalities Magazine*. Councilwoman Howard shared this article, as well as her account of work on a panel discussion entitled "Building Relationships of Trust with Immigrant Communities". The panel included: Craig Garcia, Councilwoman Howard, Mayor Lempert, Elisa Neira, Chief Sutter, and a Council person from New Brunswick. It was well received by those in attendance at the NJ conference of Municipalities.

### **Send Hunger Packing Princeton**

Chairman Wishnick reported that the upcoming 2015 TRUCKFEST will be larger and more organized. The 2014 TRUCKFEST raised approximately \$5,000 for TASK.

Director Neira and Chairman Wishnick are working with Princeton's Middle School staff, with hopes of launching a SHUPP program for middle-schoolers in need.

## **Public Relations Committee**

Ms. Encinas requested articles for the upcoming newsletter. She reviewed the proposed color scheme and design of the new brochure. She thanked those Board members who have contributed and dedicated their time to these projects.

## **Civil Rights Subcommittee**

Ms. Fraga reported that subcommittee members continue to refine goals and procedures, as part of the strategic planning process for their future work. The need for mechanisms to mediate and resolve the concerns of community members was also discussed.

The monthly progress in issuing Community IDs was shared.

## **VI. News and Upcoming Events**

On February 3<sup>rd</sup>, the next enrollment event for Affordable Care Act coverage will be held. This event will be staged in the Princeton Public Library.

## **VII. Discussion**

A draft of suggested initiatives was distributed, for Board consideration. New programing, research, and resources for those in need are noted as areas that deserve energy. The Chairman expressed hopes that these suggestions will be considered for the mission and work of the Human Services department. Board members are encouraged to share feedback at any time, and will be asked to comment on this document in the next meeting.

Stress and lack of connection, as negative factors in human development, were discussed.

Details for the HSC community awards breakfast were discussed.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Hackett motioned to adjourn. Ms. Bidwell Bates seconded that motion. With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 8:53PM.

Respectfully submitted, V Bea Snowdon