

SAN FRANCISCO HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

M I N U T E S

March 25, 2025 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the Human Services Commission was held on Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 2pm in person in the Born auditorium at 170 Otis Street, San Francisco and remotely via Webex and telephone for disability accommodations.

MEMBERS PRESENT IN PERSON JAMES MCCRAY, JR., Vice President
SALLY COGHLAN MCDONALD

MEMBERS PRESENT REMOTELY VIA WEBEX DARSHAN SINGH

MEMBERS ABSENT (EXCUSED) SCOTT KAHN, President

OTHERS PRESENT IN PERSON Trent Rhorer, Executive Director, SFHSA
Elizabeth LaBarre, Commission Secretary
Dan Kaplan, Deputy Director – Finance & Administration
Anna Pineda, Deputy Director – Economic Support & Self-Sufficiency (ESSS)
Susie Smith, Deputy Director – Policy, Planning & Public Affairs
Joan Miller, Deputy Director – Family & Children’s Services (FCS)

CALL MEETING TO ORDER Vice President McCray called the meeting to order at 2:05pm.

ROLL CALL Commission Secretary Elizabeth LaBarre took roll and noted the presence of Commissioners McCray and Coghlan McDonald in person in the Born auditorium. Commissioner Singh was present remotely via Webex from his home and his wife, Olivia Singh, was sitting next to him to assist him with the Webex features. President Kahn had an excused absence. There was a quorum.

AGENDA Vice President McCray’s call for public comment related to the meeting’s agenda yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission adopted the agenda as posted.

FEBRUARY 11, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES Vice President McCray’s call for public comment related to the meeting minutes yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the adoption of the February 11, 2025 Special Meeting minutes.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT Executive Director Rhorer provided updates on Human Services Agency (“SFHSA” or the “Agency”) programs and federal, state and local policy and activities as they relate to the Agency.

FEDERAL

Executive Director Rhorer updated the commission and those attending on what is going on at the federal level and its potential impact on the state and then, ultimately, potentially, on the Agency. Specifically, the Republican-controlled house passed their budget resolution on February 25, authorizing \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts through 2034. To partially offset the tax cuts, the House authorized \$2 trillion of cuts from programs and services, including \$880 billion from Medicaid (referred to as Medi-Cal in California) nationwide and \$230 billion in SNAP benefits (in California that is funding for CalFresh) nationwide. These actions serve as a blueprint, directing the policy committees which oversee the budgets for these programs to find that level of savings. While Speaker Johnson wants the committees to determine the cuts by Memorial Day, it will likely take much longer.

In the Senate, a placeholder resolution was passed.

The most likely scenario for the Medicaid cuts nationwide would be to reduce the federal share for the expanded Medicaid coverage (for single adults without children ages 19 to 64 who are under 138% of the federal poverty level) from the current 90/10 share (90% comes from federal funding and 10% from state funding) to a reduced federal responsibility and increased state responsibility. Since the Affordable Care Act was passed, San Francisco has enrolled tens of thousands of adults in this population into Medi-Cal. The change in the share of cost will likely lead to states ending coverage altogether for this specific population because they can't afford the additional cost, or states will fund a portion and spread the rest of the cost to counties or localities. Currently, California receives about \$170 billion annually for Medicaid. A dramatic reduction in the federal share would be difficult to shore up by state revenue. As the cuts in federal funding aren't likely to be enacted by the state's new fiscal year commencing July 1, the state legislature would likely call a special session thereafter.

In terms of federal cuts to SNAP (CalFresh) benefits, initial discussions are around reducing or eliminating the 20% benefit increase from the Thrifty Food Plan that happened under the Biden administration and requiring states to pay a share of the cost of food (the federal government currently covers 100%). Currently, states cover a portion of the administrative costs of SNAP and 0% of the benefits. San Francisco alone receives around \$30 to \$35 million per month from the federal government to pay for CalFresh benefits for over 90,000 residents. A special session of the legislature would contemplate the options for the state if/when congress determines that the states should share in the cost of SNAP benefits.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) posted that they are reducing federal support for refugee resettlement cash and medical services from the current 12 months to four months. This policy change will go into effect in 45 days. In California, it is referred to as the Refugee Cash Assistance program which SFHSA administers for San Francisco. It provides cash support to refugees (who qualify and meet the federal definition of refugee or asylee) along with Medicaid (Medi-Cal) benefits.

As has been mentioned during Executive Director Rhorer's reports in prior months, a federal TANF pilot awarded to California was rescinded. Locally known as CalWORKs, the pilot would have further advanced the state's focus on metrics for a family's long-term success by looking at employability or employment advancement, wage growth, family stability, etc. instead of workforce participation rates (i.e., whether or not a family is doing something). California was one of five states to be approved for the pilot.

With widespread fear in the immigrant community, the Agency is tracking caseload trends, looking for reductions in application numbers which has not been the case yet. Programs are staying in close contact with CBO partners and with other City departments including the City Attorney's office in order to receive real-time updates. None of the rules around benefits and access for immigrants have changed. However, there is a lot of fear and uncertainty so the Agency is trying to share information as quickly as possible.

STATE

Regarding the state budget, the revenue outlook has improved in recent months. It is about \$3 billion better than projected.

Executive Director Rhorer attended CWDA's Lobby Day a few weeks ago. Among the legislatures they met with, the big concerns were around Medicaid/Medi-Cal. Lobby Day coincided with the date of a letter sent by the governor to the Assembly and Senate budget chairs asking for their authority to borrow money from the state controller to cover a current year \$6.2 billion gap in Medi-Cal funding driven by many factors (e.g., population growth on the program, increased costs, etc.). If this is what the current budget year looks like, future years will likely be much more intense. Needless to say, there were many unsettling conversations around what are the options if the state sees a big federal cut.

AGENCY

CAAP

An executive directive signed by the Mayor on March 17 entitled Breaking the Cycle affects the Agency & got some media attention. The Directive is a roadmap for City agencies to address homelessness and behavioral health needs in the community. It focuses on enabling more effective coordination across departments, using evidence and data to drive policy change, and increasing accountability among contracted services throughout the behavioral health system under the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH). The directive laid out "100-day milestones" and then "six-month milestones" and beyond. Included is the County Adult Assistance Program ("CAAP" or the "Program") which will be reformed to ensure it continues to effectively serve San Francisco residents. The SF CAAP grant is twice the state average at \$714/month because of the expense to live in this city. A potential unintended consequence of the higher cash grant, coupled with the Program's commitment to making the application for benefits as easy as possible, is its attraction to single adults without children who live outside of San Francisco and move here for the

higher benefits in spite of the higher cost of living. To support this theory, the CAAP caseload has grown by 14% over the last 12 months. Generally, increases in the CAAP caseload follow increases in unemployment, but SF isn't experiencing an increase in unemployment. There are two CAAP administrative changes in the executive directive that the Agency is currently working on which will be implemented in May: (1) strengthening the residency verification process for applicants who do not have a fixed address by replacing self-attestations and letters from CBOs with technologic solutions internally via systems of record like CalFresh EBT transactions and the Coordinated Entry One System; individuals who can't verify residency through one or more of these systems would not be eligible to receive aid in San Francisco until they were here for 15 days, which is the state minimum requirement; and (2) reverting to the pre-pandemic policy of applying for benefits in person with a required in-person employability assessment performed by CAAP triage staff before getting approved for benefits. The Program changed to telephonic applications when in-person appointments were considered unsafe during the COVID-19 pandemic. While the Program has controls on the back end to flag CAAP recipients if they are using their benefits in other cities for a period of time, the Mayor wants to bring some integrity to that part of the program where applicants are physically in San Francisco applying for benefits in person.

FINANCE/ADMIN

Finance

The budget team submitted the Agency budget in late February after the Commission's approval. Currently, the team is in communication with the Mayor's Office, back and forth, as they continue to project revenue. The third quarter financial report should be released soon which will clarify where the targets should be. Ultimately, the Mayor's proposed budget is submitted in June. So far, in terms of the Agency's \$8 million target, nothing has changed.

FCS

March is Social Work Appreciation month, reminding the Commissioners that they passed the resolution last month, claiming their support for the Agency's social workers and all the great work that they do. During the month of March, the Agency takes the time to recognize the incredible contributions of social workers who are in every Agency program. Social workers are at the heart of the Agency's work providing services and advocacy support for some of the most needy San Franciscans, helping to empower them, promoting dignity and helping people navigate their challenges. Their dedication ensures that San Francisco continues to serve its vulnerable populations. As part of the month of appreciating social workers, Executive Director Rhorer is attending an event at the 3801 Third Street location on Thursday afternoon.

The communications team in partnership with FCS launched the second and final phase of the Foster Care Recruitment campaign on Tuesday, March 18, which then closes May 31. The new ads break down myths about who can foster and portray the joys of being a resource parent and will be running in multiple languages on social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube,

Google). The strategy is to raise awareness about the need for foster parents, dispel myths as to who is “allowed” to be a foster parent, and emphasize that all kinds of folks are needed to support our kids in San Francisco.

Alternative Family Services (AFS) and Parenting for Permanency College (PPC) in partnership with the Family & Children’s Services Resource Approval Program are hosting a Resource Parent Appreciation event this year on Saturday, May 17. All commissioners have been invited. This is an annual event where FCS recognizes the San Francisco resource parents and celebrates them and thanks them for their dedication to the foster children kids and partnership with the Agency

Implementation of the Family First Prevention Services (FFPS) Act continues. Nonprofit partner Safe & Sound continues to take referrals from the FCS Hotline team for families who have been referred but do not meet the criteria for child welfare involvement but may need some support and services that are a lighter touch. Over the last 10 months, 135 families from the hotline were referred for prevention services; 73 of those families agreed to engage with nonprofits to get support. This is one of a number of prevention strategies to get families the support they need before they end up in the child welfare system. Another strategy is through a partnership with the Early Intervention Program, Program Development, Safe & Sound and Instituto Familiar de la Raza. The idea is to spread the responsibility for care of at-risk families to community-based organizations in a more structured way and with federal funding.

Operations

A recent, welcome change organizationally in the Human Services Agency is that the Mayor’s Office of Disability is joining SFHSA, specifically, under the Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS). The Office is going to be renamed the San Francisco Office on Disability (ODA) and its role will expand from a technically-driven office focused on compliance with the ADA to a more community-driven organization focusing on disability rights more broadly. This change allows DAS to align with the disability office on a shared mission of supporting and empowering adults who have disabilities and complements the Agency’s mission and strategic direction.

Facilities

A lease for 1455 Market St. is moving forward to the Board of Supervisors as a resolution for their approval in April or early May. 1455 Market will replace this building (170 Otis St.) and 1235 Mission St.; both buildings are seismically rated four, which is the least safe rating. 1455 Market is a co-location with several other City departments. Executive Director Rhorer hopes the BOS will approve the resolution so that the Moves team can move forward on tenant improvements and permitting. The projected move-in date would be some time in 2026 or perhaps even later as there is a lot of work that needs to be done. The existing open floor plan needs to be changed to a service center model (e.g., 1440 Harrison).

The Agency is in negotiations to purchase a building in the Bayview that would provide the full array of SFHSA services.

ESSS

SFBN

EBT cards, which are used as cash in CAAP and CalWORKs and for CalFresh, have been fraught with fraud, particularly card skimming. The state and the nation have lost tens of millions of dollars as a result. EBT cards will now be equipped with a chip tap, which is added security. The state is mailing out EBT cards to all benefits recipients. They have six months to activate them. The Agency is also printing EBT cards in-house, and so far the transition process is going smoothly as the rejection rate for job transactions has been less than 1 % across the state.

Vice President McCray's call for public comment related to the Executive Director's Report yielded no responses. He then reflected, "As I sat here listening to Mr. Rhorer's report and looked out at your faces, I want to ask all of the employees, would you stand up?" and they did. All staff in the audience stood up as Vice President McCray mentioned the "we" that the Executive Director continually references in his reports, we, we, we, we... and so he wanted to see who the "we" are in the audience and commend them and thank them and let them know, "I will be thinking much of you in the days ahead because all that's been talked about, not only are you trying to bring calming and the absence of confusion to the public, but you're also dealing with your own lives and your own homes, and your own families. So, we will have to get through it together." Vice President McCray then commended Mr. Rhorer for his day-to-day management, administration and care.

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Vice President McCray presented the March 2025 Employee of the Month Award to ANNE GOMEZ, Senior Business Analyst, IT Digital Services. After Vice President McCray relayed details about Anne's stellar work, Executive Director Rhorer congratulated Anne and thanked her for the important work she does largely behind the scenes, "When our technology works well and when we can innovate, and we can make it easier for our staff, easier for our clients, it means we're serving the public better, and that's what we're all about." He added that the Agency has come a long way since the late '90s when HSA, along with local government generally, was behind in technology. It is exciting to see how far the Agency has come thanks to the IT division under Natalie Toledo's leadership. In fact, the Agency's IT division is one of the best in the City. Anne accepted the engraved desk clock from Vice President McCray with thanks to all, adding that the Mayor's recent directive to come into the office more often will not only affect Anne personally but will negatively impact climate change.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Vice President McCray's call for public comment related to the consent calendar yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the consent calendar, comprising actions

taken by the Executive Director since the February 11, 2024 Special Meeting in accordance with Commission authorization of March 25, 2025:

1. Submission of request to encumber funds in the total amount of \$7,483,532 for purchase of services or supplies and contingency amounts.
2. Submission of 5 temporary positions for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period 2/8/25 to 3/19/25.
3. Submission of 4 temporary appointments for possible use in order to fill positions on a temporary basis made during the period 2/8/25 to 3/19/25.

COMMISSION BUSINESS – ACTION ITEMS

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH PROCLAMATION – APRIL 2025

Joan Miller, Deputy Director, Family & Children’s Services, and Jenny Pearlman, Chief Policy Officer, Safe & Sound, presented a resolution proclaiming April 2025 as CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH .

Proclamation: Recognition of April 2025 as Child Abuse Prevention Month

WHEREAS, child maltreatment impacts not just the child, but the family, the community, and society at large. The physical, mental, and emotional effects of maltreatment persist long after child maltreatment occurs and result in ongoing costs to society; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco had a reported 4217 youth with an allegation of child abuse and 391 youth with a substantiation in 2024. The preliminary estimations of the cumulative financial impact to the San Francisco community for the 391 verified child victims in 2024 is in excess of \$331 million. Abused children are more likely to experience negative educational, health, and behavioral outcomes, which contribute to many of San Francisco’s challenges, such as homelessness, chronic health issues, high school dropout rates; and

WHEREAS, rates of both allegations and substantiation of child abuse disproportionately impact BIPOC families, requiring us to address long- standing issues of structural and systemic racism. Society has a moral and ethical obligation to protect families from unnecessary intervention of child welfare and ensure the availability of services and supports that strengthen all families; and

WHEREAS, direct investment in social programs for children and families and community protective factors--such as economic supports, community institutions and services, high-quality childcare, and policies and educational campaigns that promote equity and inclusion and change social norms- prevent child abuse and provide short- and long-term benefits, far outweighing the overall cost of downstream interventions to address the costly results of child maltreatment and trauma; and

WHEREAS, effective prevention efforts succeed because of collaboration between community and public organizations, recognition of the strengths, experiences, and wisdom of families, and accessible, non-stigmatizing services. San Francisco has invested in several key prevention strategies, including the Family Resource Center Initiative, jointly funded by the Human Services Agency, First 5, and the Department of Child Youth and Families; and

WHEREAS, it is essential to continue to invest in child abuse prevention and raise awareness about child abuse and the need to support all vulnerable children and

their families. Healthy children and families create the foundation for communities to thrive; and

NOW, THEREFORE, We, the Human Services Commission, join with others, including the Human Services Agency and Safe & Sound, to recognize April 2025 as Child Abuse Prevention Month. We urge all San Franciscans to take shared responsibility for child and family well-being and for ensuring that every family has what they need to be safe, healthy, and strong.

Vice President McCray's call for public comment yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the resolution proclaiming April 2025 as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

GLIDE FOUNDATION Cathy Huang, Food Access Program Analyst, presented the request to enter into a new grant agreement with GLIDE FOUNDATION.

Vice President McCray's call for public comment yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a new grant agreement with GLIDE FOUNDATION for the provision of the Free Meals Program; for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029; in the amount of \$12,832,588 plus a 10% contingency for a total grant amount not to exceed \$14,115,847.

CPS HR CONSULTING Rosa Ortiz, Manager, Human Resources, Learning & Organizational Development, presented the request to enter into a new contract agreement with CPS HR CONSULTING.

Vice President McCray's call for public comment yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a new contract agreement with CPS HR CONSULTING for the provision of Executive Leadership Training for HSA Staff; for the period of April 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028; in the amount of \$75,750 plus a 10% contingency for a total contract amount not to exceed \$83,325.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION Ken Ho, Program Monitor, presented the request to enter into a new governmental agreement with STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION.

Then the representative from the Department of Rehabilitation added a comment that the contract will allow their consumers to receive training [to assist with] job retention. The Department of Rehabilitation will make sure that the consumer or the client has everything they need to be successful.

Vice President McCray's call for public comment yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a new governmental agreement with the STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to HSA clients with disabilities, including clients of CAAP, CalWORKs, and CalFresh; for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028; in the amount of \$171,849 plus a 10% contingency for a total amount not to exceed \$189,034.

CELL-ED

Ken Ho, Program Monitor, presented the request to enter into a new contract agreement with CELL-ED.

Jennifer Hernandez from CELL-ED addressed the Commissioners, stating that she appreciated the Commission's consideration. CELL-ED has been offering learners across the country, including in California and now in San Francisco, the opportunity to learn since the early days of COVID-19. "We know that there are so many skills that folks can benefit from. One of the new areas that we've been growing is around digital skills, which goes in line with the innovation that San Francisco has really been pushing forward, so we hope for your consideration and approval of this proposal. Thank you."

Vice President McCray asked about a possible error in the Memo. Executive Director Rhorer thanked the Commissioner for his sharp eye and confirmed there was indeed a typo. This won't affect the vote, however, because the data in the contract are correct. The team will correct the Memo so that the Commission Secretary can repost it.

Vice President McCray's call for public comment yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Singh, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to enter into a new contract agreement with CELL-ED for the provision of Mobile Learning Platform and Support; for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029; in the amount of \$198,000 plus a 10% contingency for a total contract amount not to exceed \$217,800.

URBAN Y SERVICES (a branch of the YMCA of SF)

Vladlena Gulchin, Administrative Analyst with Family and Children's Services, presented the request to modify the existing grant agreement with URBAN Y SERVICES (a Branch of the YMCA of SF).

Ms. Gulchin introduced the representatives from Urban Y Services in attendance: Evelyn Daskalakis, Vice President of Mental Health and Social Services, Peer Parent partners Whaticia Patterson, Shales Hogan, Margarita Tabora, Administrative Assistant Jamila Vang, and Peer Parent Director Anjru Jaezon de Leon who shared that, "it has been an honor to serve this city and this agency with our peer parent partner program for the last year and a half. As a person who has lived experience with the foster care system, I see the importance of having those who have gone through the system to help guide others to navigate the system. I see on a daily basis my team supporting families and helping parents go through an ostensibly difficult and rigorous

process with the system. I'm happy to be here and I'm happy to serve the community. Thank you.”

Vice President McCray’s call for public comment yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Coghlan McDonald, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing grant agreement with URBAN Y SERVICES (a Branch of the YMCA of SF) for the provision of the Parent Partner Program; for the period of March 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028; in the additional amount of \$2,772,679 plus a 10% contingency for a total grant amount not to exceed \$5,017,656.

SAFE & SOUND

Denard Ingram, Program Support Analyst, presented the request to modify the existing contract agreement with SAFE & SOUND.

Vice President McCray’s call for public comment yielded no responses.

On motion of Commissioner Singh, seconded and unanimously carried, the Commission approved the request to modify the existing contract agreement with SAFE & SOUND for the provision of FCS County Self-Assessment Services; for the period of March 1, 2025 through June 30, 2025; in the additional amount of \$42,059 plus a 10% contingency for a revised total contract amount not to exceed \$166,621.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice President McCray’s call for general public comment yielded no responses.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice President McCray adjourned the meeting at 3:15pm.



Elizabeth LaBarre
Commission Secretary
Human Services Commission

Posted: 4/8/25