

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION 2016-2017 BIENNIAL REPORT

I. ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

As established in Ordinance 4106, the Human Services Commission exercises the following responsibilities in its efforts to ensure the highest quality and maximum effectiveness of human services provided for the benefit of the citizens of the County:

- A. Guide long-term planning regarding meeting the socio-economic needs of low income, disabled, disadvantaged, and at-risk people in Santa Cruz County;
- B. Advise the County Board of Supervisors on policies and priorities that affect the socio-economic needs of low income, disabled, disadvantaged, and at-risk people;
- C. Provide advice and counsel to the director and senior management of the Human Services Department on best practices in the operation of department programs;
- D. Provide a forum for citizens affected by County human services programs and policies;
- E. Advise the Board of Supervisors on funding decisions affecting the socio-economic needs of low income, disabled, and disadvantaged people, including county allocation of resources to County programs and community programs funding;
- F. Integrate efforts and initiatives affecting the socio-economic needs of the poor, which cross departmental, divisional, and interest group lines; and
- G. Advise the Board of Supervisors on legislative matters concerning the County human services programs.

II. MEETING DATES, TIME AND LOCATION

During reporting years 2016 and 2017, meetings were held from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. on the third Wednesday of every other month. The Commission's usual meeting location was the United Way of Santa Cruz County, 4450 Capitola Road, Suite 106, Capitola. The Commission very much appreciates the United Way's generosity in making its facility available for its meetings.

The following provides information on Commission meetings not held at the United Way of Santa Cruz County:

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- The May 18, 2016 meeting was held at the Capitola City Hall Council Chambers, 420 Capitola Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010
- The November 16, 2016 meeting was held at the City of Watsonville Civic Plaza Community Room B, Watsonville, CA 95076
- The September 20, 2017 Commission meeting was held at the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History, 705 Front Street, Santa Cruz, 95060

III. COMMISSION STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

The Human Services Commission consists of 10 members appointed by the Board of Supervisors.

As of December 2017, the members of the Human Services Commission included: **First District:** Sandra Skees and Heidi Boynton; **Second District:** Danny Keith (Commission Vice-Chair) and Martina O'Sullivan; **Third District:** Betsy Clark (Commission Chair) and Monica Martinez; **Fourth District:** Stoney Brook and Tony Gregorio; and **Fifth District:** Jennifer Anderson-Ochoa and Denise Hitzeman.

In 2016, the members of the Human Services Commission were: **First District:** Laura Grossman; **Second District:** Danny Keith and Martina O'Sullivan; **Third District:** Betsy Clark (Vice Chair) and Monica Martinez; **Fourth District:** Stoney Brook and Tony Gregorio; and **Fifth District:** Jennifer Anderson-Ochoa (Commission Chair and, and Denise Hitzeman. The First District had one vacancy.

IV. COMMISSION STAFF

The Commission was staffed by Cecilia Espinola, Human Services Department Director (HSD) (2016), Ellen Timberlake, HSD Director (2017), and Jessica Scheiner, Senior Human Services Analyst.

V. ATTENDANCE

Please see the attached 2016 and 2017 attendance rosters.

VI. BIENNIAL GOALS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Community Programs/CORE Investments

The Commission was very active around the development and implementation of the new Community Programs funding model, now known as the *Collective of Results and Evidence-based (CORE) Investments*. Commission activities related to the Community Programs/CORE investments included:

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- Being kept apprised of and providing feedback on the proposed changes to the Community Programs' funding model;
- Sponsoring a Community Programs Provider Input Forum;
- Reviewing correspondence from the Human Care Alliance regarding proposed changes to the Community Programs;
- Submitting a letter to the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors providing recommendations on the CORE Investments program; and
- Receiving regular updates on the implementation of the new CORE Investments.

State and Local Budget Impacts.

The Commission was provided updates on the status of State and local budget deliberations and their implications for the Department's programs.

State and Federal Legislation

The Commission was provided regular updates on State and federal proposed legislation and enacted bills, and their implications on both the Department's programs and the persons it serves.

Child Care Developer Fees Loan Program.

The Commission was provided updates on the status of the Child Care Developer Fee Loan program and was asked to consider and provide recommendations on next steps for the program.

Housing Authority Family Self-Sufficiency Program Coordinating Committee

In its capacity as the Santa Cruz County Housing Authority's Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinating Committee, the Commission heard updates and provided recommendations on the program.

Veterans Services

Commissioner Stoney Brook, Veterans Liaison to the Human Services Commission, provided regular reports on programs, activities, and issues related to Veterans in Santa Cruz County.

Child Support Services

The Commission continued to act as a citizens' advisory group to the Department of Child Support Services, and received reports on the Department's activities.

Ongoing Review and Input on Human Services Programs and Issues.

In order to meet its advisory, guidance, and counseling responsibilities under Ordinance 4106, the Commission was routinely provided with reports and briefings on HSD's programs and activities and issues related to the socio-economic needs of persons in Santa Cruz County who are low income, disabled, disadvantaged, or at-risk. Highlights of the reports and briefings provided to the Commission are summarized below:

- Commissioner Betsy Clark, representative of the Commission to the Child Welfare Systems Improvement Planning Committee, provided reports on the Committee's progress and activities;
- The Commission received a tour of the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History's exhibit: Lost Childhoods: Voices of Santa Cruz County Foster Youth and the Foster Youth Museum;
- The Commission received information on and was asked to provide recommendations on:
 - Proposed changes to the General Assistance program regulations;
 - HSD's Benefits Collaborative
 - HSD's CalFresh Systems Improvement Project;
 - The new continuum of care for child welfare;
 - The new Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program;
 - The County's Thrive by Three initiative;
 - HSD's Adult and Long Term Care division's initiatives and priorities; and
 - The CalWORKs Housing Support Program.

VII. FUTURE GOALS

In 2018-2019, the Commission expects to carry out activities including, but not limited to, the following:

- Providing advice and counsel to HSD's Director and senior management regarding best practices for the operation of the Department's programs;
- Receiving periodic reports on Veterans Services and the Child Welfare System Improvement Plan committee;
- Providing advice and counsel to the Department of Child Support Services on initiatives sponsored by the Department that will benefit or otherwise impact low income Santa Cruz County residents;
- Providing advice and counsel to the Santa Cruz County Housing Authority's Family Self-Sufficiency program as its Coordinating Committee;
- Providing advice and counsel on potential changes to the Child Care Developer Fees Loan program;
- Providing advice and counsel on issues related to homelessness in Santa Cruz

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County;

- Reviewing issues affecting the low-income community and considering potential strategies to respond to newly emerging and/or recognized service needs;
- Monitoring state and federal legislation that impact local human services, and advising the Board of Supervisors as necessary; and
- Responding to matters referred by the Board of Supervisors, and providing advice and counsel to the director and senior management of the Human Services Department upon request.

HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION ATTENDANCE FOR 2017

District - Commissioner	1/18/17	3/15/17	5/18/16	7/19/17	9/13/17	11/16/16
1 st Sandra Skees		P	P		P	P
1 st Heidi Boynton (as of 5/18/17)		X	P		P	P
2 nd Danny Keith		E	P		U	U
2 nd Martina O'Sullivan		A	U		U	P
3 rd Betsy Clark		P	U		P	P
3 rd Monica Martinez		P	P		P	P
4 th Tony Gregorio		P	E		P	U
4 th Stoney Brook		P	P		E	P
5 th Jennifer Anderson-Ochoa		E	P		P	E
5 th Denise Hitzeman		P	E		P	E

* The January 18, 2017 and July 19, 2017 meetings of the Human Services Commission were cancelled.

P – Present

E – Excused Absence

A – Unexcused Absence

X – Not a member of the Commission

HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION ATTENDANCE FOR 2016

District - Commissioner	1/20/16	3/16/16	5/18/16	7/20/16	9/21/16	11/16/16
1 st Laura Grossman	P		P		P	P
1 st Vacant	NA		NA		NA	NA
2 nd Danny Keith	P		A		A	E
2 nd Martina O'Sullivan	A		A		P	P
3 rd Betsy Clark	E		P		P	P
3 rd Monica Martinez	P		P		P	P
4 th Tony Gregorio	P		A		P	P
4 th Stoney Brook	P		P		P	P
5 th Jennifer Anderson-Ochoa	E		P		E	P
5 th Denise Hitzeman	P		P		P	E

* The March 16, 2016 and July 20, 2016 meetings of the Human Services Commission were cancelled.

P – Present
 E – Excused Absence
 A – Unexcused Absence
 X – Not a member of the Commission