

**HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES DRAFT  
February 8, 2022  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.  
Virtual Meeting via Cisco Webex**

**Members Present:**

Wanneh Dixon, At-large Member and Chair	Amanda Schwartz, At-Large Member
Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver Member	Lauren Lehman, At-large Member
Deborah Moore, Consumer Member	Stacey Erd, Caregiver Member
Wesley Hickens, At-large Member	Leon Suskin, Caregiver Member

**Members Absent:**

Anne Wallerstedt, At-large Member	
Henry Elowitch, At-large Member	Kelly El’Amin, Consumer Member

**Mayor and Council Liaison Present:** Councilmember Mark Pierzchala

**Staff Present:** Frederika Granger, Community Services Manager and HSAC staff liaison  
Ali Hoy, Grants and Programs Analyst, HCD

**RE: Call Meeting to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 6:65pm by Chair, Wanneh Dixon

**RE: Community Forum**

None.

**RE: Approval of Minutes from January 11, 2022**

A motion to approve minutes was issued and seconded. Minutes approved with unanimous vote.

**RE: Move to Work Presentation (James Hedrick, Chair of Board of  
Commissioners, Rockville Housing Enterprises)**

The HSAC invited Mr. Hedrick to address the following with regard to Move to Work (MTW) grant with Federal Government that RHE recently received:

- Move to Work challenges for the grantee, RHE
- How will it affect residents?
- What are its goals?
- Why is RHE doing it?

RHE had several goals for applying for MTW, changing David Scull Public Housing to voucher-based housing and to renovating it being the greatest. This change from public to voucher-based housing is happening throughout the country. This means that the tenant’s voucher goes with them rather than being attached to a property/project. Housing Commissions much larger than

RHE tend to apply for MTW grant. RHE wanted to do so because they could repurpose David Scull with it. They also could take advantage of the flexibility with funding. As important, they wanted the advantages for tenants and owners as well. And RHE staff are skilled enough to complete the MTW application and navigate the change. The three statutory objectives for MTW are: cost effectiveness, self-sufficiency, and housing choice. RHE wants same objectives for housing and for tenants and owners. What RHE receives with the MTW funding and designation is financial flexibility (even moving capital funding to operations), regulatory exemptions (i.e., every three-year recertification rather than annually), and repositioning of properties (project-based to voucher-based). Changes that have occurred with MTW and/or in other ways to housing status is that the asset maximum value is now \$50,000 rather than \$5,000 and that a tenant may have and still qualify for a voucher based on income. As well the earned income disregard would take care of itself with three-year recertification. Mr. Hedrick provided his email address for further questions: jamesjhedrick@gmail.com.

Questions from HSAC:

- Explain “clearing the waitlist.” Mr. Hedrick reported that every 9-10 years a housing authority will call everyone (thousands) on the wait list to confirm status. The waitlist becomes drastically shorter because many have found housing elsewhere or their status has changed. Currently, the RHE waitlist is approximately 100, which translates into a 1-2 year waiting period for housing, depending on the size needed.
- What can HSAC do to help? Attend events, promote events. RHE does programming on behalf of its tenants in addition to providing for housing.

**RE: Community Services Division Report (Frederika Granger)**

Ms. Granger shared that school-based services, Counseling, Mentoring, Latino Youth Development, Therapeutic Recreation, and Linkages to Learning are still very busy. Counseling caseloads continue to be full, with a 20-student waitlist; hours will increase at Rockville HS. Counselors are working hard to increase hours at RMHS who is trying to find space for an additional half or full day. The Latino Youth Development Program and Mentoring Program are going well. Postponed for a week due to COVID. LYDP will recruit middle school students in Feb and March. Linkages has started winter programming and will include Edutainment again with So What Else, classes at Gilchrist encouraged for parents, food and nutrition program (EFNP) for the students, CPR for adults, and parent enrichment. Holiday Drive will be presented, and major donors recognized by name at 2/28 M&C mtg. Niambi Powell continues to assist residents with navigating the County rent relief program.

**RE: City of Rockville Budget, including American Rescue Plan, \$9.6M  
(Frederika Granger)**

- Ms. Granger shared that HCD continues to advocate for more affordable housing, needs assessment, Bank on Rockville, electronic client record keeping system, and more mental health services in the ARPA or the FY23 budget. Bank on Rockville is getting attention

from the Mayor and Council. It will be presented at one of the M&C budget hearing meetings in last March.

- Budget hearings are in March and April.

**RE: Caregiver Grants FY23 Update (Frederika Granger)**

- Ms. Granger shared that the grants panel met and submitted their recommendations to staff for FY23 grants. Next step is that the City Manager will review them and put forth his recommendation to the Mayor and Council, at 2/28/22 M&C meeting.
- The 1% proposal that Caregiver Program be allotted 1% of the City's previous year's budget is being considered for testimony and HSAC wants more information on it. Mr. Suskin referred to a reverse sunset approach for holding future Mayors and Councils to the 1% rule.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Granger will provide at next meeting.

- The FY22 Caregivers have submitted their six-month reports, which look good.
- Ms. Granger shared that the Kaseman Clinic is doing well at its temporary location in the basement of the Rockville United Church on Linthicum.

**RE: HRC Community Survey Partnership Update: Report and Presentation (Wanneh Dixon)**

- Ms. Dixon shared that the HRC/HSAC Joint Committee are writing the report, and are scheduled to present a report to Mayor and Council on March 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Preliminary findings show that: mental health services are needed, due to heightened stress; childcare and family support are needed due to reduced wages from pandemic; respondents are not aware of HSAC and HRC or the new Community Policing Advisory Board; and that there is discrimination in access to services and support in pursuing services.
- A planner in the City of Rockville helped some with mapping. A member of the HRC is helping with charts, bar graphs, tables and cross tab analysis.
- A draft will be ready for circulation soon, as the final draft needs to go to the City on February 16<sup>th</sup> for Department and then City Manager review before going into the Mayor and Council packet for March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**RE: HSAC FY21 Annual Report and FY22 & FY23 Goals Presentation to the Mayor and Council; (Wanneh Dixon)**

- Ms. Dixon will draft a report for Mayor and Council with plan to present on March 7<sup>th</sup>, in addition to Community Survey report.
- A draft will go to HSAC soon for review.

**RE: Testimony to M&C (Wanneh Dixon, Frederika Granger)**

- **Dates for testimony: 3/7, 3/21, 3/28, 4/4, 4/25, 5/2, 5/9, 5/16, 5/23, 6/6**, those in bold are public budget hearings.
- Testimony for HSAC has to be approved through voting by HSAC members, so allow enough time for that when preparing to testify.
- Councilmember Pierzchala shared again that, due to the pandemic effect of the Great Resignation of staff and of residents' having difficulty paying taxes that the finances and staff availability are uncertain. With that said, he shared that HSAC should ask for it, testify for it, anyway and to be sure to prioritize what HSAC supports in budget testimony, i.e. top three.

- **Testimony Calendar (Budget hearings are in bold)**
  - December 20<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3 min): Bank on Rockville, Lauren Lehman
  - **March 7<sup>th</sup> Budget Hearing (5 min):** mental health in City schools, Amanda Schwartz (Rika will provide info)
  - **March 7<sup>th</sup> Budget Forum (5 min)** Needs Assessment, Deborah Moore
  - **March 21<sup>st</sup> Budget Hearing (5 min):** Caregivers 1% Amanda-stories; Wanneh--broader
  - March 28<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3 min)
  - **April 4<sup>th</sup> Budget Hearing (5 min):** Leon, Stacey, Lauren
  - April 25<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3 min)
  - May 2<sup>nd</sup> Community Forum (3 min)
  - May 9<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3 min)
  - May 16<sup>th</sup> Community Forum (3min)
  - May 23<sup>rd</sup> Community Forum (3 min)
- **Possible Topics for Testimony:**
  - Needs Assessment
  - Bank on Rockville
  - More mental health services
  - Electronic Record keeping system
  - Caregiver additional funding, 1%
  - More affordable housing
  - Rent and utility assistance
  - Caregiver Funding Task Force recommendations  
Maryland Office of Home Energy Programs excludes water utility assistance from their program that provides an ongoing electric/gas utility subsidy for low-income household-
  - on this one, M&C write to State?
- ACTION ITEM: Ms. Granger will get a history of 1% from City Finance.

**RE: Federal Legislation Advocacy (All Members)**

- Ms. Schwartz shared that an early childhood special education bill is being introduced in House and Senate at Federal level.
- Ms. Sushinsky shared that she has been attending meetings of the JCRC (Jewish Community Relations Council) on right to vote. Ms. Granger shared that the City Board of Supervisors of Elections is working with the Human Rights Commission and the Asian Pacific American Task Force on voter outreach and registration.

**RE: Other Items**

- None.

**RE: Agenda items for next meeting, January 11th**

- Usual report items: Community Services, Caregivers, ARPA, FY23 budget
- Report on Survey presentation
- Report on HSAC Goals and Accomplishments presentation
- Review testimony calendar and plan testimonies

**RE: Adjourn**

Ms. Moore made motion to adjourn; Mr. Suskin seconded. Unanimous to adjourn, 8:17pm.