

**HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

**May 17, 2023**

**6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

**Virtual Meeting via Cisco Webex**

**Members Present:**

Tal Shahar, At Large Member

Camille Kroll, At Large Member

Deborah Moore, Consumer Member

Wesley Hicken, At Large Member

Stacey Gold, Caregiver Member

Leon Suskin, Caregiver Member (30m late)

Ricky Mui, At-large Member

Amanda Schwartz, At Large Member and  
Chair

Jessica Peterson, Consumer Member

**Members Absent:** Nancy Sushinsky, Caregiver  
Member

Leah White, At Large Member

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

**Staff Present:** Frederika Granger, Community Services Manager

**Councilmembers present** for Jamie Raskin's Visit by Phone: CM Ashton, CM Myles

**RE: Call Meeting to Order**

Meeting was called to order at 6:35pm by Amanda Schwartz, Chair

**RE: Community Forum**

Melissa Regan, Paul Scott, Kate Fulton were there for beginning and for Jamie Raskin's visit

**RE: Approval of Minutes from April 19, 2023**

Minutes approved unanimously.

**RE: Annual Report on HSAC Accomplishments and Goals**

Ms. Schwartz went over her list of priorities, FY23 accomplishments and FY24 goals. See attached document. A vote was taken to approve the content. Ms. Schwartz will polish the outline and give to Ms. Granger no later than May 24<sup>th</sup>. Highlights include collaborating more with other Commissions, i.e. Human Rights Commission, Youth Commission and Education Commission, address need for outreach at community level on health by joining other events already occurring such as Salute to Nonprofits, National Night Out, Farmer's Market, equity, diversity and inclusion, and testimony every other month to Mayor and Council. An added goal is to pursue the forming of coalition to advocate for laws against gun violence. The increased prevalence of demonstrations of hate was raised. Supporting legislation against hate and education in schools and communities about hate was included. Dr. Peterson suggested trying to be at the PRIDE events in Rockville. She will invite the Rockville Rainbow Youth Alliance for a Roundtable Presentation. CM Ashton raised that there are local efforts, city, county, state,

around anti hate education efforts. The goal to include students in HSAC meetings to support SSL, badges, and civic classes. ACTION ITEMS: Ms. Granger will reach out to school counselors, Mr. Mui to Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, Ms. Schwartz to Girl Scout Service Units.

**RE: Congressman Jamie Raskin Visit by Phone to discuss Gun Violence**

- **Congressman Raskin is working on three items in Congress related to gun violence:**
  1. Universal violent criminal background check, to close up loopholes found from the Brady Background Check Regime, through sales that are at private gun shows, on internet, and person to person. Hundreds of thousands of firearms are sold this way.
  2. Federal Red Flag Laws, which have worked at State level.
  3. Ban on assault weapons, which has shown to cut by 1/4-1/3 the deaths by firearms
- He shared that after recently passing the first federal gun safety law in 30 years, that supports programs for mental wellness, post pandemic, at the federal level, there is now political paralysis around the right to own firearms and the interpretation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment. In 2008, the Supreme Court ruled in a case that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment intended for one to be able to protect oneself with a handgun and to be able to own a hunting rifle for recreational hunting. Per this case, that one would need to be ready to overthrow the government is not the intention of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment, which is part of what supporters of the NRA believe, per Congressman Raskin.
- Congressman Raskin shared that, at the local level, constituents can work on Red Flag Laws and closing loopholes, and on developing coalitions that support laws around gun safety. He encouraged participants to keep in touch with state representative, Cheryl Kagan, on state level efforts as local laws typically follow state laws.

**RE: Community Services Report**

Ms. Granger shared highlights from her Community Services written report that she had sent to the HSAC members. All are seeing youth who are struggling with mental health, learning to identify emotions and ways to cope with them.

**RE: City of Rockville FY23 and FY24 Budgets and ARPA Updates**

- **FY23** – HCD is looking for an additional \$30,000 in its current budget to augment the \$83,000 set aside for the Human Services Needs Assessment. Bank on Rockville is busy and plans to expand soon.
- **FY24** – Budget was adopted last night. It will be published soon.

**RE: Caregiver Grants FY23 Update**

Caregivers are doing well.

**RE: Caregiver Grants Program Process for FY24**

Funding for 17 programs is in the City's adopted budget. The adopted budget will be published soon.

**RE: Testimony to M&C**

Ms. Moore shared that she intended to submit written testimony on April 24<sup>th</sup>, but actually submitted it on May 1<sup>st</sup> as there was a confusion on Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup> among the HSAC about written vs. in person

testimony. Ms. Schwartz stated that it would be good to have all members testify at least once and that the goal could be every other month. It was decided that procedure would be that person giving testimony would email testimony to members at noon on Wednesday before the Monday Mayor and Council meeting and all would respond by noon that Friday with their edits/vote so that the person testifying may submit to City Clerk Friday afternoon. Testimony should include stories, facts, data, actionable items. Mr. Mui will testify soon on youth and gun violence. He will work on his testimony with Ms. Schwartz. He hopes to testify in June. Mr. Shahar will testify in July. Topics include affordable housing, mental health, food insecurity, homelessness, support of LGBTQ+

- June 5- HSAC annual report Ms. Schwartz
- June 12 – Rick Mui?
- July 17 – Tal Shahar in July
- July 31
- Aug 7

**RE: Caregiver Coalition and Salute to Nonprofits**

Had the Caregiver Coalition meeting yesterday. The Caregivers were glad to meet to collaborate and to learn what is going on in Rockville, including the Needs Assessment. They confirmed that the priorities are affordable housing, food insecurity, vocational training, health. They want to have the Salute to Nonprofits and to have it at Farmer’s Market in October, to start. It was suggested by Dr. Peterson that it include Community Health Fair components as well which HSAC can help with. CM Ashton said she could share list of community organizers. ACTION ITEM: Ms. Granger will follow up with her.

**RE: Roundtable Discussions**

For next meeting, on the topic of anti-hate, ACTION ITEM: Dr. Peterson will invite Rockville Rainbow Youth Alliance to present.

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

Debt Ceiling is likely to be resolved. If not, foundations and donors are typically asked by nonprofits for help. HSAC will reach out to nonprofits if need be. At state level, Wes Moore is doing a lot, including youth post high school service year program. Would be good to have something that supports those going into teaching.

**RE: Other Items**

None

**RE: Agenda items for next meeting, June 21st, 2023, Virtual**

- Usual report items: Forum, Minutes, Community Services, Caregivers, budget update, testimony update, Federal Legislation
- Roundtable: Rockville Rainbow Youth Alliance and think about one for July
- Salute to NonProfits/Community Health Fairs
- Needs Assessment
- Debrief Annual Report presentation

**RE: Adjourn**

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn; unanimous vote to adjourn at 8:35pm