

Princeton Human Services Commission Minutes

Monthly Meeting

October 15, 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
Thomas Parker
Larry Spruill
Ross Wishnick, Chairman

Absent:

Robert Hackett

Staff:

Elisa Neira, MSW
V Bea Snowdon

Guests:

Craig Garcia, Working Families
Emily Klockenbrink, PHS Senior
Angela Lee, Hun Senior

I. Open Public Meeting Statement

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.

Corner House Liaisons to the Human Services Commission introduced themselves to the Board Members present. Angela Lee, a senior at The Hun School, has an interest in Finance and community service. Emily Klockenbrink, a senior at Princeton High School, is interested in Languages, International Business, and the work of the Human Services Commission. Everyone in attendance introduced themselves to the new liaisons.

II. Public Comments & Guests

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

Craig Garcia, of **Working Families**, was welcomed as a guest. Mr. Garcia has worked closely with Ms. Neira, Mr. Heilner, and other members of the HSC Immigration subcommittee on wage theft. His visit is intended to support this evening's discussion of these initiatives and to introduce a new initiative for consideration.

III. Approval of September 2014 minutes

Mr. Heilner's motion to accept the minutes was seconded by Ms. Fraga. All voted in favor of acceptance.

IV. Director's Report

General Assistance Report

The General Assistance Report was distributed, to share complete statistics of HSC casework. Two new clients brought the September statistics to 39 cases. Two cases were closed. New clients pending will go through the registration process.

WIC

The WIC clinic program will continue to be offered in Princeton in 2015. A meeting with the Children's Home Society will determine the 2015 clinic schedule. Participation by families in Princeton's has increased, with patient encounters doubling from July to September.

Financial Literacy Project

JP Morgan offers one-on-one financial coaching and is interested in training outreach personnel to facilitate this service. This approach has been found to work best for those in need of educational support on money matters. **Family Guidance** is another organization that offers these programs. Ms. Mann suggests promoting a program on financial literacy during the Christmas Gift Program, with information given to participating families on any programs offered.

V. Human Services Committee Reports

Earned Sick Days

Mr. Garcia gave a presentation on a working bill now in the assembly, requiring payment of wages for earned sick days to workers in businesses of all sizes. He stated, "Earned sick days are good for NJ". The bill provides up to 5 paid sick days per year. These days don't roll over or accrue year-to-year if not used. In small businesses, of 10 or less employees, 3 paid sick days per year can be taken. This is a positive bill from a public health and workers' rights perspective, as sick individuals will be able to stay home to avoid the spread of illness without loss of essential income. Mr. Garcia hopes this bill can become an ordinance in Princeton. In areas where this bill has passed, people take on average 2.5 days. An employer can require a sick note.

New Labor and **Working Families** have had success in promoting this approach to fair wages. This bill has been adopted in 6 municipalities and is now on the ballot in Trenton and Montclair.

Ms. Bidwell Bates requested the wording of the proposed ordinance. Mr. Garcia stated that there is a uniform model with standard language in the bill, with hopes that benefits will be understood and enforceable on a National level someday. Enforcement for violations would likely emanate from complaints from the public health board.

Mr. Heilner suggests that the Human Services Commission support a resolution in favor of the adoption of an ordinance for earned sick days in Princeton. Ms. Bidwell Bates expressed her support of this action, pending review of the language. Ms. Mann suggested that the HSC obtain policies of many employers locally, such as Princeton University, other towns, local teachers, Bristol Myers Squibb, etc.

Landscaper Registration – Wage Theft Ordinance

Mr. Heilner shared a report on aggressive efforts to increase awareness about the wage theft ordinance. Bilingual flyers are being printed and will be a useful tool to spread the word. The registration form will also be sent to all previously registered employers, with information about wage theft. Mr. Garcia explained that a four-prong approach to outreach will be most successful and will include: worker education, the provision of flyers, educating registered Landscapers, and encouraging those without landscape licenses to register.

Restaurant Wages

Mr. Heilner met with Mr. Grosser to discuss incorporating language regarding wage theft into Princeton's restaurant regulations, for retail food establishments. Wage theft ordinance language, workers compensation, the possibility of license revocation, and possible fines for employers who do not comply with humane business practices were some of the areas discussed. A restaurant wage theft ordinance was recently adopted in New Brunswick and is working very well. The HSC will meet to discuss this

further on October 28th. Any ordinance revisions deemed appropriate will be supplied to the ordinance review committees in November.

Civil Rights Subcommittee

Outreach continues to create interest and support for the Princeton **Community ID Program**. Last week, 9 ID cards were issued.

Send Hunger Packing Princeton

Chairman Wishnick shared news that over \$30,000 has been raised, in the recent SHUPP campaign.

VI. News and Upcoming Events

Support for the Affordable Care Act open enrollment period will be offered by the Human Service Department. The first ACA outreach event will be held on November 15th, in the Community Room of the Princeton Public Library.

130 applications have been received to date for the **Princeton Holiday Gift Drive**. Mary Heilner has been assisting with the planning for this year's holiday gift drive. Sponsorship donations of \$75 or more will be accepted, through checks that can be made out to "Princeton". Gift drop off dates are December 5th and 6th, for those interested in donating new goods.

VII. Chairman's Report

Communications

Board Members wishing to write a public comment or wishing to speak about HSC initiatives with other departments are encouraged to copy or notify Ms. Neira before proceeding. This may facilitate a smoother reception and more effectively promote HSC.

Police Community Relations

Dr. Eddie Glaude, of Princeton University, has been asked to conduct a public discussion about what is happening with law enforcement in the nation. Police Chief Sutter agreed to meet for the purpose of a positive dialogue on this important topic.

VIII. Discussion

Initiatives, Needs Assessment and Planning

A 3 to 5 minute presentation will be presented to Town Council on December 1st. Board Members are asked to provide thoughts on moving forward in 2015, in light of successful initiatives and accomplishments thus far. Ms. Neira suggests that a strategic planning meeting occur in November.

Wage Theft Workshop

Ms. Neira shared her experience and insights from the Wage Theft workshop in Minneapolis. In this event, hosted by the Mayor of Minneapolis, labor experts talked about this issue as it effects vulnerable populations.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business Mr. Parker motioned to adjourn. Ms. Bidwell Bates seconded that motion. With all in favor, the meeting adjourned at 8:52PM.

Respectfully submitted, V Bea Snowdon