

**Quality of Life  
Council Committee Meeting  
Minutes**

**Tuesday, February 10, 2009**

**4:30 p.m.**

**Media Briefing Room**

**Members Present:** Councilmember Delicia Herrera, *District 6, Chair*  
Councilmember Mary Alice Cisneros, *District 1*  
Councilmember Jennifer Ramos, *District 3*

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**Members Absent:** Councilmember Diane Cibrian, *District 8*

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**Staff Present:** Frances Gonzalez, *Assistant City Manager*; Ramiro Salazar, *Library Director*; Kendra Trachta, *Library Assistant Director*, Jeanetta Tinsley, *Grants Monitoring & Administration Manager*; Dennis Campa, *Community Initiatives Director*; Melody Woosley, *Community Initiatives Assistant Director*; Denise Monday, *Assistant City Attorney*; Shreya Shah, *Assistant City Attorney*; Edward Guzman, *Assistant City Attorney*; Steve Whitworth, *Assistant City Attorney*; Melinda Cerda, *City Manager's Office*, Carri Wiggins, *Office of the City Clerk*

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**Also Present:** Rod Radle, *SAAHC*; Fred Cardenas, *Head Start Policy Council*

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**Call to order**

Chairperson Herrera called the meeting to order.

**1. Approval of the Minutes of the Quality of Life Council Committee Meeting on January 13, 2009**

Councilmember Cisneros moved to approve the Minutes of the January 13, 2009 Quality of Life Council Committee Meeting. Councilmember Ramos seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**2. Update on New Initiatives at the San Antonio Public Library**

Presented by Kendra Trachta, Library Assistant Director and Ramiro Salazar, Library Director

Ms. Kendra Trachta, Library Assistant Director, stated that the San Antonio Library had kicked off the *One in a Million Library Card Campaign* on Saturday January 24, 2009. The goal of the campaign is to sign up 300,000 more library cardholders to reach a million cardholders. She added that the Library had partnered with local corporations, schools, universities and colleges, military installations and health care providers to sign up their employees for Library Cards. A new partnership had also been formed with Scholastic, and the San Antonio Library Foundation to introduce a new literacy campaign "Leer da poder" (Reading empowers), targeting the Hispanic community.

Councilmember Cisneros asked which of the schools were being targeted. Ramiro Salazar, Library Director, replied that the Edgewood ISD Superintendent was the only individual that had

met with them to date, but all schools and all levels were targeted. Councilmember Cisneros stated she would like the program to be implemented in her District at Crockett and Margil Elementary Schools and she would like to be a part of the campaign.

Dennis Campa, Department of Community Initiatives (DCI) Director, stated that all of the After School sites and those places that DCI had daily contacts with would be used to sign up Library cardholders. Councilmember Ramos agreed that all City events should be used to promote the campaign.

Councilmember Herrera stressed the importance of keeping funding in the budget for materials for said program. She asked what the Library was doing to increase the literacy rate. Mr. Salazar and Ms. Trachta replied that the following programs were in place to encourage literacy:

- Lap Time in all Libraries
- Outreach services unit to get the community more involved
- Little Red Wagon program for childcare providers
- More Bookmobile visits
- Get parents engaged in early childhood education
- Junior League Literacy San Antonio Project
- Partner with other programs in the City to generate interest
- Visit childcare providers and inform them of programs

Councilmember Cisneros asked how to get the bookmobile to schools. Mr. Salazar replied that the contact person was Ramona Lucius in the Outreach Department. He added that a request had been submitted to the Library Foundation for a new Bookmobile at a cost of \$230,000 and additional early learning centers and computers for younger children.

### **3. Update on Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)**

Presented by Jeanetta Tinsley, Grants Administration Manager, Office of Grants Monitoring and Administration.

Jeanetta Tinsley, Grants Administration Manager, reviewed the events of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) since the previous Quality of Life Council Committee Meeting. Ms. Tinsley stated that the proposed program was made available for public review November 5, 2008 and the NSP Application was submitted to Housing and Urban Development (HUD) November 21, 2008. She added that three (3) stakeholder meetings had been conducted: Internal, January 16, 2009; External Housing Partners, January 22, 2009; and Financial Institutions, February 3, 2009. Notification of approval of the NSP Application was received January 29, 2009, but the grant agreement had not yet been received.

Ms. Tinsley stated that San Antonio could receive up to \$8,635,899 and the State of Texas could receive up to \$101,996,848. The City had been given eighteen (18) months to commit NSP Funds with four (4) years to expend the funds. She added that NSP would concentrate efforts in five (5) areas within the City. She noted the following implementation strategies for all target areas: 1) Acquisition and Rehabilitation of foreclosed and abandoned properties for resale, lease, and temporary housing; 2) Acquisition of vacant lots for the purpose of new housing construction or title transfer; 3) Housing counseling for homebuyers; 4) Down payment assistance; and 5) Soft second mortgages.

Councilmember Cisneros asked where the targeted foreclosures were located. Ms. Tinsley replied that areas with highest concentrations were targeted and when the Grant had been received, an inventory list would be provided to all councilmembers.

Ms. Tinsley stated the City would execute the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with housing providers and banks and added that May 1, 2009 had been targeted as the date to implement the program. She added that the Council had already given staff the authority to execute and should report back to QoL with projects as they proceed. In addition, Ms. Tinsley stated that outreach was provided to housing partners and would continue throughout the program.

Rod Radle, SAAHC, spoke in support of the creation of Individual Development Accounts (IDA) that would give providers the money up front. He stated that an assessment had already been done on available properties through City and Chase Banks and the inventory portfolio for those banks was available online.

Adolph Torres, Housing and Neighborhood Services, stated that the mandatory counseling course for first time buyers had been initiated. This was one way that homebuyers had been identified in anticipation of the NSP Program's need for home buyers.

#### **4. Presentation on Foreclosure Education Efforts**

Presented by Dennis J. Campa, Director, DCI

Dennis Campa provided background information and stated that foreclosure filings were at the highest level in San Antonio since the late 1980s. He noted that in an effort to assist and educate families, DCI began providing foreclosure prevention counseling and referral services to non-profit advocacy groups and lenders. Mr. Campa stated that foreclosures damaged communities and families by causing negative credit records, decreasing home values, increasing neighborhood blight, creating emotional stress on families and children, and disrupting children's education. He added that foreclosure counseling had been provided to 948 families, the Emergency Assistance Program had helped 207 families to avoid foreclosure, and DCI had also provided reverse mortgage counseling to 175 Seniors.

Mr. Campa stated that the next steps were to expand financial education and multi-benefit enrollment efforts through coordination with the Center for Working Families, After School Challenge, and other City of San Antonio Departments. In addition, CPS and SAWS had initiated a program that provided information for toilet and refrigerator replacement in an effort to conserve resources and assist citizens with lowering their utility bills.

#### **5. Update on Head Start and Workforce Transition Plan**

Presented by Dennis J. Campa, Director, DCI

Mr. Campa presented an update on the Head Start and Workforce Transition Plan. He stated that seven (7) partners were recommended by the RFP review panel as follows: 1) AVANCE – San Antonio, 2) San Antonio ISD, 3) Edgewood ISD, 4) Education Service Center – Region 20, 5) University Health Systems, 6) San Antonio Metropolitan Health District, and 7) Family Services Association. He added that the RFP and refunding process timeline were three (3) months behind and to maintain continuity of services for Head Start children and families, DCI recommended continuing services with Parent Child Incorporated (PCI) through August, 2009. Mr. Campa stated that the timeline allows for a phased approach by closing down 75% of

PCI's Head Start Centers in early June and the remainder by the end of July, 2009. He stated that DCI had engaged PCI in developing a comprehensive transition plan, taking into account the needs of the community and new providers that coordinated the following: workforce, facilities, inventory, financial, communications, program planning and protocols.

Mr. Campa assured Councilmembers that the communication and outreach plan was in place and DCI Staff would continue to work with parents. He added that the workforce transition had engaged Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA), PCI and its Employee Union, and the new Head Start Providers. The displaced Head Start Staff seeking employment will receive priority assistance with resume building and interview skills, job interviews and placement, as well as education and training. The job fairs will begin in March and will be held on Saturdays. Councilmember Herrera stated that she would attend the Job Fairs to show support.

**6. Citizens to be Heard**

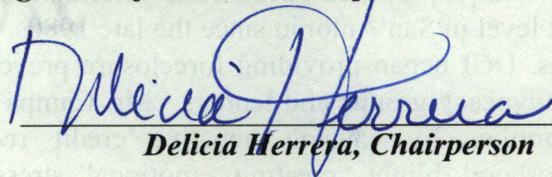
There were no citizens to be heard.

**7. Upcoming Meeting and consideration of items for future meetings**

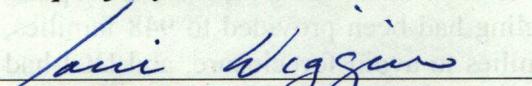
- a) Next Meeting: March 10, 2009

**8. Adjournment**

**There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.**

  
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**Delicia Herrera, Chairperson**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

  
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**Carri Wiggins**  
**Office of the City Clerk**