

City of South San Francisco
Minutes of the Commission on Equity and Public Safety

Monday, November 18, 2024
City Hall: City Manager Conference Room
6:00 p.m.

Committee Members:

Present: Arnel Junio, Paula Claudine Hobson-Coard, Carol Sanders, Steven Yee,
Ruby Harrison, Bianca Bedigian

Absent: Krystle Cansino

Staff Members:

Present: Devin Stenhouse, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer
Ernesto Lucero, Economic Development Coordinator
Michael Guss, Economic Development Specialist
Scott Campbell, Chief of Police

CALL TO ORDER

The Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

AGENDA REVIEW

There are no changes to the agenda.

ITEMS FROM STAFF MEMBERS

1. Report regarding the City of South San Francisco receiving an Advancing Economic Mobility Grant from the National League of Cities to Provide Enhanced Outreach for the Promotores Program to the Asian American Community

Specialist Guss provides a presentation on a grant received for their outreach program. He provides an overview of the Economic Advancement Center (EAC). He explains what the Promotes Program is. He says that the City identified outreach to the Asian American population as an area for improvement. The City applied for and received a \$20,000 grant from the National League of Cities (NLC). Specialist Guss talks about upcoming events and plans for the initial stages of this program funded by the grant.

Coordinator Lucero clarifies that the grant received is a small amount that allows the City to test a pilot program.

Commissioner Yee asks what metrics are being used to measure success with the pilot program. Specialist Guss says the goal is to increase the number of Asian American clients in the Promotores Program by 10%. The target date is the end of March. Coordinator Lucero is hoping the events will provide exposure and garner interest in the Promotores Program. Commissioner Yee says Lunar New Year will be a good opportunity.

Chair Junio asks why the number of Asian Americans receiving services from the Promotores Program is so low. Specialist Guss explains that much of the outreach to date has been in Spanish, and some of the bilingual Promotores speak Spanish. Therefore, many of the clients are Hispanic. Coordinator Lucero says they are looking to expand into other languages, like Portuguese.

Commissioner Yee asks if there's a metric breakdown of the Asian languages. Specialist Guss says there is no information on that at this time.

Commissioner Harrison asks about the metric for equity. Specialist Guss says ideally the proportions of the program clients would match the City as a whole, though the needs of one community may be higher than another, and that can change over time. Currently, the hope is to increase the number of Asian American clients using EAC services. Coordinator Lucero says they may conduct a survey with new clients. South San Francisco is one of three EACs in the County, and they are working with each other to learn what the needs are, and those needs may change in the next few years.

Commissioner Bedigian asks how most clients find out about the EAC. She wants to know what the current outreach efforts are. Specialist Guss says they table at events, generating outreach by word of mouth. There is some social media outreach. Materials have been in English and Spanish, and moving forward they will include Chinese and Tagalog. Officer Stenhouse explains that the Promotores within the County collaborate with each other, and not all Promotores offer the same services, but the network of referrals is comprehensive.

Coordinator Lucero mentions that they will be convening in D.C. to share the progress, which will provide publicity to South San Francisco.

Commissioner Sanders asks if there is a citizenship requirement for services and if things will be harder next year. Coordinator Lucero says yes. Part of the program is Federally funded, and they are navigating around funds to support those who cannot provide sufficient documentation. He anticipates challenges in the coming year. Specialist Guss says they are looking into State and other local grants for funding.

Coordinator Lucero goes into details about the upcoming events they hope to participate in. Specialist Guss says they are looking to bring translators on board.

Commissioner Yee asks if there is any collaboration happening between the cities before the

January meeting in D.C. Specialist Guss says they have monthly meetings and are working closely with other cities that have similar programs. The NLC also provides training and many resources.

Coordinator Lucero says he will share the dates of the upcoming events when they are confirmed so that the Commission can help with the outreach. Officer Stenhouse asks what the highest priority is for the immediate future that the Commission can assist with. Specialist Guss says finding translators is a priority. He says it would be helpful if Commissioners can promote the upcoming events and refer others to the EAC. Word of mouth is the best method of outreach. Officer Stenhouse suggests places of worship as a good way to reach the community. He also says Google Translate is a good tool to use for communication. Commissioner Yee says Microsoft's translator offers live translation.

Specialist Guss provides his contact information.

Commissioner Bedigian asks if there is specific language to use when speaking with community members who are fearful of identifying themselves. Coordinator Lucero explains the importance of the referrals coming directly from community members. He hopes that there is trust that has been built in the last four years. Specialist Guss reveals that the records kept by the Promotores are confidential.

Officer Stenhouse recommends connecting with the Parks and Recreation department, as they have an existing relationship with community members.

Commissioner Harrison says it would be helpful to hear success stories of those who have used the program. Specialist Guss says they have collected those success stories.

Commissioner Yee wonders if there is an opportunity to promote the program at the biotech speaker series. Specialist Guss explains that it might not be a good fit because of certain dynamics. Coordinator Lucero talks about the different angles they've tried to take to bridge the communities. Commissioner Yee suggests using different success stories that would resonate with the "East of 101" community. Coordinator Lucero says he was surprised by the success of the biotech speaker series and that there are plans to expand next year.

Chair Junio thanks the presenters and says the Commission will likely invite them back for an update in March.

Coordinator Lucero and Specialist Guss leave the meeting at 6:37 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made.

Chair Junio motions for a 3-minute recess at 6:40 p.m.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Approval of Minutes from October 21, 2024.

Vice Chair Hobson-Coard motions, and Commissioner Bedigian seconds. The Commission votes to approve the minutes 6-0.

2. Discuss priorities and goals for the rest of the current year and review draft presentation for December 11 City Council meeting.

Officer Stenhouse reminds the Commission that Councilmember Nagales requested an update, so a presentation has been drafted. He suggests providing a quick summary for the current year and goals for next year.

Officer Stenhouse shows the group the slide deck he drafted.

- Introduction
- Commission Members
 - Commissioner Harrison suggests explaining what the Commission is in the introduction so that people at the City Council meeting know who they are.
- 2024 Goals
 - Officer Stenhouse reminds the group that he is still waiting for everyone to submit their bios for the Commission's web page.
 - Commissioner Yee asks about the City's "Age-Friendly" designation. Officer Stenhouse details the process involved and the many steps that have been taken so far.
 - Commissioner Yee suggests working with ECD (Economic and Community Development) and tabling at the same events.
 - Commissioner Bedigian asks when they can expect to hear an update regarding the Child Care Master Plan. Officer Stenhouse explains that it has been difficult scheduling a presentation because the person responsible is not a City employee. Commissioner Harrison would like to see presentations that are more focused on the Commission's goals and include tactics and metrics. Commissioner Bedigian says she wants to know more about the City's vision for child care before making any type of recommendation. Chair Junio wants more information on access to child care. Commissioner Bedigian agrees that more communication on the process is needed. Officer Stenhouse talks about looking into child care services located within the city but not provided by the City (like private day care). Commissioner Yee emphasizes that they don't need to necessarily know *what* these alternative services are, but *how* the public would know about these options.
 - Officer Stenhouse brings up that subcommittees can be created to have more frequent discussions about important topics.
 - Commissioner Sanders asks if biotech companies, when recruiting, inform potential employees about child care options offered in the City.

- Officer Stenhouse mentions past events and presentations that focused on senior citizens. He says those are open to commissioners to attend. Commissioner Yee asks if there are recordings. Officer Stenhouse will look into that. Officer Stenhouse recommends that commissioners go to more events and attend more meetings to help increase the Commission's visibility and to learn more about the needs of residents.
- Commissioner Harrison says she's looking forward to seeing the senior survey results.
- Officer Stenhouse shares that he has learned that different target audience groups require different methods of communication and marketing.
- Commissioner Yee asks who is responsible for keeping the "Age Friendly" designation. Officer Stenhouse does not believe that the designation can be taken away. He says there is a task force that he is a part of. He suggests that maybe a presentation regarding the "Age Friendly" designation should be arranged.
- Commissioner Harrison says that she saw a survey in the Mayor's Newsletter that only seniors can fill out. She says the problem was that caregivers were not able to fill out the survey. She clarifies that the wording used and the way the survey was presented indicated that seniors need to fill out the survey themselves. She says there are many reasons why seniors may need someone else to help fill out the survey (language barriers, vision challenges, etc.).
- Officer Stenhouse says the subcommittee focused on seniors currently consists of Commissioner Hobson-Coard and Commissioner Cansino. He asks if anybody else wants to join the subcommittee. Commissioner Yee raises his hand and says yes.
- Commissioner Harrison says she is interested in learning the percentage makeup of different community groups. Officer Stenhouse says getting the data will help drive discussions and the next steps. He says that they will need to talk to the groups directly to gather information.
- Commissioner Sanders says she is a senior, but she does not feel included in the services offered to seniors. Commissioner Hobson-Coard says her father is a disabled veteran, and finding available services that he qualifies for was complicated.
- Commissioner Sanders asked Chief Campbell about SSF Police Officers helping to connect veterans with services. Chief Campbell said officers connect veterans who are houseless or experiencing mental health issues with Veterans of Foreign Wars at the Elk's Lodge or the VA or other officers who are veterans. Commissioner Hobson-Coard says it's frustrating trying to access the services for her dad. Commissioner Yee finds the parallel interesting between the difficulties in access for child care and access for seniors.
- Officer Stenhouse wonders what the best method is for senior veterans to communicate their needs. He reiterates it may be more successful to go directly to where they are to gather information.

- Commissioner Sanders asks about gathering data from the DMV.
- Commissioner Harrison asks why the focus is on the subset of senior veterans. Officer Stenhouse, Commissioner Yee, Chair Junio, and Commissioner Sanders give a brief history of how that specific group became a goal to focus on. The Commission discusses whether they should focus on a larger, more general group or a smaller, specific subset.
- Commissioner Harrison says she wants to see a breakdown of the different groups within South City (by age, gender, race/ethnicity, disability status, veteran status). She explains it would make sense to see what makes up the population before forming subcommittees. Commissioner Sanders states that the Commission needs to focus on equity, and that the smaller groups in the demographics should be the focus. Commissioner Harrison sees her point and says that they need the data first in order to determine what the next step is to make it more equitable. Officer Stenhouse agrees having the information is important to point the Commission in the correct direction, but in the meantime, they can still attend events and meetings. Chair Junio agrees.
- Officer Stenhouse confirms with Chair Junio that the Chair will do the presentation to Council. He provides the City Council meeting details and encourages all to attend.
- Chief Campbell leaves the meeting at 8:24 p.m.
- 2025 Goals
 - Officer Stenhouse recommends hosting a public forum to be able to hear concerns from the public.
 - The group revises the wording in the slide to clarify their goals for next year.
 - Commissioner Harrison suggests talking about how the Commission has heard from different departments and now want to hear from the public.
 - Commissioner Sanders is in favor of having multiple public forums.

ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS, COMMISSIONERS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. **Commissioner Hobson-Coard invites everyone to her upcoming shows.**
Commissioner Hobson-Coard will be performing on December 20th and 21st at Fort McKinley in South San Francisco from 9 p.m. – 1 a.m.
2. **Commissioner Sanders asks if anyone wants kittens.**
Commissioner Sanders is looking to home some stray kittens.
3. **Commissioner Yee says he will be at the Fun Run.**
Officer Stenhouse says he will not be there this year, but he encourages everyone to go.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Junio adjourns the meeting at 8:45 p.m.