

# City of Fresno

2600 Fresno Street  
Fresno, CA 93721  
[www.fresno.gov](http://www.fresno.gov)



## Meeting Minutes - Final

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

5:00 PM

Regular Meeting

Fresno City Hall, 2nd Floor  
Room 2165N (Room A)

## Housing and Community Development Commission

*Chair Barbara Fiske*

*Vice Chair Bob Reyes*

*Commissioners:*

*Barry Falke, Bob Farrar, Marina Harutyunyan, Chong Yang*

*Staff:*

*Jennifer K. Clark, AICP, HDFP, DARM Director*

*Kelli Furtado, Assistant DARM Director*

*Thomas Morgan, Housing Manager*

*Susie Williams, Recording Secretary*

**A) CALL TO ORDER**

*Chair Fiske called the meeting to order in the City Council Chambers at 5:09 P.M.*

**B) ROLL CALL**

**Present** 5 - Commissioner Bob Farrar, Chairperson Barbara Fiske, Commissioner Marina Harutyunyan, Vice Chair Bob Reyes, and Commissioner Chong Yang

**Absent** 1 - Commissioner Barry Falke

**C) COMMUNICATIONS**

*Development and Resource Management Department Assistant Director, Kelli Furtado, confirmed that parking around City Hall was relaxed.*

**D) APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*On motion of Commissioner Farrar, seconded by Commissioner Reyes, that the agenda be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.*

**E) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**On motion of Commissioner Harutyunyan, seconded by Commissioner Farrar, the above hereby be approved. The motion duly carried, RESOLVED by a unanimous vote.**

[ID19-0013](#) Approval of HCDC minutes for November 28, 2018.

*On motion of Commissioner Harutyunyan, seconded by Commissioner Farrar, the above minutes be approved. The motion carried by a unanimous vote.*

**F) GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

[ID19-0157](#) HEARING-Annual Housing and Community Development Needs Public Hearing for Development of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019-2020 Annual Action Plan

*Ms. Furtado provided a brief description of the 2019-2020 Annual Action Plan process and introduced the Housing and Community Development*

*Division Manager, Thomas Morgan. Mr. Morgan provided a presentation of the 5-Year Consolidated Plan goals and reviewed activities that are eligible under U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Community Planning and Development funding. Programs reviewed by Mr. Morgan included: 1) Community Development Block Grant housing and public service activities, 2) Home Investment Partnership Act, 3) Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS/HIV, and 4) Emergency Solutions Grant. Mr. Morgan provided upcoming dates with additional public participation opportunities.*

*Chair Fiske opened the Public Hearing. Upon call for public comments, comments were stated by the public and considered by the HCDC. All public comments will be addressed in the Annual Action Plan submitted to HUD and available on the City's website. Public comments were made by twenty-four individuals, ending at 6:40 P.M.*

*1. Kristina Chamberlin – City of Fresno Parks, After School, Recreation and Community Services (PARC) Department: Ms. Chamberlin thanked the HCDC for previous support of PARCS programs, and spoke about the year-round senior hot meals program at seven sites throughout Fresno. PARCS has worked to serve over 20,000 meals throughout the community from July 1, 2018, through December of 2018.*

*2. Rich Rodriguez – City of Fresno PARCS Department: Mr. Rodriguez added that PARCS also offer recreation and leisure activities. Quality of life programs, and crafts, 708 seniors are currently participating. For the ceramics program 556 seniors have participated. Low impact exercises program has 1072 participating, and passive activities such as billiards, cards, table games have 2972 seniors who have participated. Bingo is very popular with 5284 participating to date. Participation was due to CDBG's previous generous support.*

*3. Kyle Jeffcoach – City of Fresno PARCS Department: Mr. Jeffcoach spoke about the need for quality after school programs. PARCS provides service for 10 low income neighborhood centers throughout Fresno such as Holmes playground, Ted C. Wills, Romain and Fink-White neighborhoods.*

*Neighborhood Centers range in size from 1,500-41,000 square feet and are open Monday through Friday from 3:00-7:00 or 8:00 P.M. In addition some facilities are open on Saturdays 12:00-5:00 P.M. Average daily attendance is one thousand unique youth inside facilities, at any given time with an additional six hundred individual youth outside on the fields. There are a total of 35 temporary staff and nine permanent staff responsible for the program development, implementation and supervision of the youth in these facilities. PARCS offers wonderful activities, such as performing arts, plays, talent shows and a haunted house. Their family fun nights promote family fitness, unity and family recreation. An empowerment management team focuses on job skills, youth job skills, and they volunteer over 2,000 hours per year. They teach character development, holiday camps, provide homework help, partner with the Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission, and provide arts and craft classes, karate, cooking, community clean-ups, special events, Santa's Village, and more. Mr. Jeffcoach expressed that the Neighborhood Centers are a vital foundation for youth ages 5-17 years of age to help them recreate, socialize and learn.*

*4. Pastor Tom Simms – 4141 Ministries Executive Director: Pastor Simms spoke about the need to increase the capacity of individuals in poverty. Granny's Park, near Blackstone corridor, is high poverty, high crime location. The park is owned by City of Fresno, there is a trailer at the park, and PARCS is contracted to provide recreation services. The Build a Child Program is located at Granny's Park and 20 to 30 participants are enrolled each time due to staffing and facility capacity. They offer programs after school and during the summer, including meals, tutoring, recreational activities, writing, and character and skill development. The program teaches good citizenship, community development and how relate to one another, resilience, and patience. This is an investment in children and their success, CDBG funds for program expenses are needed, the neighborhood is where children go to school across from freeway, and it's an undeserved neighborhood. Council District Seven and Kaboom recently helped build a playground. Pastor Simms hopes to receive funding to increased capacity and meet the needs of children as well as increasing space to serve children.*

5. *Nick Sanchez - Compassionate Care Home Health Care Agency Chief Operating Officer: Mr. Sanchez stated they have the lowest readmission rate in California. Most patients in the hospital are discharged and have to come back. They onboard with major hospitals and have a monthly meeting where they review readmission complications in the community. Homeless population is one of the biggest issues. Mr. Sanchez indicated they have over 4,500 visits to Community Regional Medical Center alone, which cost our community over \$9.8 million dollars last year. Before they can discharge, the hospital has to have them set up with emergency medical. While waiting for this in the hospital, the taxpayers are covering the cost. Mr. Sanchez expressed a need for a mobile wellness clinic for the homeless population as part of the UCSF Residency Program, where together nurses and social workers get the homeless population back on their feet and thriving in the community.*

6. *Emelia Morris – Central California Legal Services: Ms. Morris shared that the agency offers free services to low income individuals. They open 5,000 cases per year, 70% are housing cases. They state there are three unmet needs among their clients. 1) Lack of incentives for landlords to accept housing vouchers. Landlords decline to accept vouchers, the total of people searching for housing a unit with a voucher recently is about 1,400. Barriers include lack of incentives, and concerns about damage to units. Incentives could be providing funds to compensate for tenant damages; Los Angeles has a similar program. Tulare and Kings Counties also have compensation programs for landlords. 2) Lack of short term funding including rental assistance. Hundreds maybe thousands could avoid eviction if there was somewhere that would help with rental assistance or late fee issues. Late fee issues can snowball quickly and can even result in evection. There is also a great need for deposit assistance, what exists is not enough. Revolving funds where people can borrow the money and then later re-pay it so the money can be used by someone else. 3) Lack of immediate relocation assistance among tenants who are in red-tagged properties. By law landlords are required to pay relocation funds to units that are uninhabitable. A lot of landlords don't want to do that. Relocation assistance could be provided by the City, the City could later recover funds from landlord.*

7. John Shore – Community Housing Council Executive Director: Mr. Shore shared that as a local housing counseling agency, they help with financial literacy, getting people mortgage ready and first time home buyer classes. They assist renters with landlord issues, and work with lenders. They are the only housing counseling agency in the county of Fresno. Their employees are trained to look for predatory lending, fair housing, fair lending, and loan modification scams. They work closely with the California Department of Real Estate and HUD, CFPD, the California Attorney General, and the local District Attorney's Real Estate Fraud Division. According to Mr. Shore, 75% of the 900 served over 12 months were Hispanic, and 63% were less than median income. Of the 446 families who attended the first time homebuyer classes, 132 became homeowners and 262 families attended mortgage default counseling where 124 families saved their homes. They have been part of the National Foreclosure Program and California Keep Your Home Program, and have always been one of the top five agencies. However, those programs are sun-setting and there is no funding to keep the work running. A lot of folks have been laid off, and need help. Mr. Shore spoke of the need for funding to keep this program operating, it was the HCDC who funded the agency 10 years ago to get them started and he is asking for help again.

8. Rodney Downs: Mr. Downs is representing residents from his neighborhood nearby the Westbrook canal. He spoke about the revitalization program in Webster, and explained that the canal is a "t" street, at the end of the street is a canal with no barrier or wall. He commented that there are a lot of accidents and drownings involving cars and kids in the canal, homeless bathing in the canal, and trash. Mr. Downs stated that residents are worried about neighborhood kids, and see a need to build a wall or a barrier because it is currently unsafe. Many of his neighbors didn't make it to speak because of the rain, so he is representing several neighbors. Again, Mr. Downs clarified that the location is Fresno and Olive, by McDonalds where Hedges runs straight into the canal. He stated that many people (pizza delivery, Uber drivers) who are unfamiliar with the neighborhood streets think it is a bridge so they keep driving straight into the canal.

9. *Cherella Nicholson – Representing St. Rest Baptist Church: Ms. Nicholson spoke about how the agency has been serving the community for over 70 years and is located in the heart of Southwest Fresno between the King and Kirk neighborhoods. For the past 5 years, they have participated in the City's revitalization efforts and Area Wide Corridor Plan, Southwest Specific Plan and the Transformative Climate Community efforts. They are committed to being property owner, to unite change on the Elm corridor. They have a 10 year campus plan that includes green space and they are walkable to many schools. They are serving a growing youth population by having space available to them. The community needs more open space. The Church owns four acres, two are not yet developed but they have plans to develop that space. St. Rest Plaza on Elm was recently converted from a Brownfield lot to usable space. The place was thought up, built and managed by the community, they had two community build-days, where over 300 residents, including partners; Habitat, Fresno Housing Authority, City of Fresno, Action and Change, and more. They will be using the space for open events, it is a privately owned church but all space is for public use. It will be used for outdoor events, community and youth events. The sky is the limit, they are asking for youth feedback on programs and activities. They have already received \$85,000 in donations, but Ms. Nicholson spoke of the need for lighting and infrastructure such as benches, running electric supply, and generators.*

10. *Michaelynn Lewis – Action and Change: Ms. Lewis stated that she comes here every year and would like to support the needs previously expressed for St. Rest Plaza. She indicated it is something that the community has needed for a long time. She indicated that this is first project and it will open up Elm Avenue so that it can become a place of destination. She spoke about a recent Winter Wonderland, supporting 300 children coming out to see Santa Claus. The community helped by gathering donations of \$3,000, food, and more. She would like to have other events at the plaza, and also help give support for other organizations in the area such as the Sweet Potato Project, where a number of children plant, harvest and sell products that they have grown. Ms. Lewis is seeing enthusiasm in the community and would like to see funds used to continue*

projects.

11. *Lucio Avila – Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability: Mr. Avila is a policy advocate has invited residents to workshop, and he has been a community organizer over four years in south Fresno. He works with residents and reported that for housing, they want programs to become homeowners. Homeowners and tenants want programs to repair homes. For public services they need childcare for community engagement activities, transportation, tenant landlord counseling, how to become homeowner, and education on tenant rights. For housing issues they want programs to help with security deposits, and rental housing subsidies, to prevent homelessness, could be short term and long term. For public facilities Mr. Avila spoke about a resident who has been advocating for six years to get stop signs at Winchell Elementary, at Orange and Lowe and Butler and 8th, for the safety of the school age children and community, they have seen people getting hit, and multiple accidents. For economic development they would like to see rehabilitation of commercial spaces, specifically the blighted commercial area at Cedar and Butler that is vacant and creates a bad area, relocation and cleanup of contaminated sites such as the Darling Rendering Plant. They also want strong outreach to parents and to make sure information is getting to schools, so all the parents get it, as well as outreach to mobile home areas and organizations working with residents around Fresno.*

12. *Brandy Nuse-Villegas: Ms. Nuse-Villegas spoke about how the homelessness crisis is growing and changing. There are issues and needs, outreach and connecting with agencies, homeless that should go to hearings to share directly. She wants to effectively meet the needs of the homeless through funding but there are gaps in the services that keep the homeless from using them. She would like to encourage ideas that can help with these gaps and for the City to consider small organizations. Ms. Nuse-Villegas stated the need for more organizations, new recipients, and asked that those that fall outside of scope of the larger organizations be considered. If the funding stays the same, we may miss emerging problems that other agencies can help with. She indicated a need for people to advocate directly for the homeless, against injustices, against things with*



*government for their own rights. She shared issues with the MAP Point, transportation, and being afraid of Poverello area. Please look at those organizations that are innovative and smaller.*

*13. Dalia Arenas: Ms. Arenas has four beautiful children who like sports, especially soccer. But they can't practice because they have no good field. Where they play, the goal post comes down when the children kick a ball. Ms. Arenas spoke of the need for a goal post in their neighborhood at Fink White Park. Lots of children will enjoy going to the park and having a safe place to play soccer and other games. She indicated that the City PARCS Department supports this as well and that the total cost is \$10,000. The children, others in the neighborhood, and the soccer team coach from Manchester United will appreciate the help.*

*14. Elis Fierro: The Clark Street Canal, on Clark Street in between an area where people from Blackstone can go through it, is in need of a barrier. Drivers from Blackstone traffic cut through the residential neighborhood here, and there are several points where unfamiliar drivers could go over and into a canal. Mr. Fierro reported that there have been several incidents already in the past year, especially during weather events such as rain and fog. The area also has a problem with stray dogs, because of no guard rail, they are drowning and becoming a hazard for those receiving water but also flies and pestilence are attracted to this biohazard. Situation in this intersection on other side (railway) there are a lot of homeless that bathe and fish in canal.*

*15. Maryann Knoy – West Care California: Ms. Knoy spoke about those at risk of becoming homelessness. Through ESG services they provide rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention, just in the last calendar year through the funding they assisted 63 individuals 47 through rapid rehousing and 22 through homeless prevention services. They also work with the HOPWA program. They receive CDBG funding for residential treatment facility, for substance abuse, but sometimes they also assist those experiencing homelessness at that treatment facility. Facilities need repairs, they connect all programs through coordinated entry. Ms. Knoy echoed what Ms. Morris commented on previously, that existing funds are*

*exhausted quickly for preventing those from falling into homelessness. She also spoke to a need for connecting individuals to housing, but when identifying units through credit histories and evictions it becomes challenging. There is a need in the community for landlord mitigation funds. She appreciates existing support and indicated that the master list of all the homeless in the community is 2,027. Of those, based on their vulnerability score, close to half need rapid rehousing intervention. They request funds because this is a large need.*

16. *Yolanda Randles –West Fresno Family Resource Center: Ms. Randles spoke about the agencies social service programs, and that for the past four years the agency has been housed at Maxie Parks Center, and takes the lead role to operate the facility. Some of the programs they provide are things like health insurance enrollment, health education, nutrition education, summer youth zoo camp, sweet potato program. They operate out of a huge beautiful facility, NBA basketball area, and recreation room. But there is no air conditioning. Ms. Randles is advocating for an HVAC system at the Maxie Parks Center. Every summer they do their back to school health fair, where over 2,000 family members participate. She is concerned about the heat and there have been incidents where youth and adults have passed out. Ms. Randles indicated that they have a great relationship with PARCS, they continue to coordinate on events, after school programs, free meals, arts and crafts, and more. The homeless also utilize the center, and can use the address for getting their mail.*

17. *Estela Ortega: Ms. Ortega is a resident of City Council District Seven, an areas that needs improvements. They have three schools, two primaries, and one middle school, Yosemite, MayFair, and Levenworth. A lot of kids that go to school walk along Floradora Street. This is worrisome because there are no sidewalks. She has identified a need for fixing potholes and adding sidewalks on that street. She wants kids to get safely to school and for there to be no accidents in the area. Ms. Ortega also spoke to the need for more lighting.*

18. *Gregorio Oregon - Soccer League President: Mr. Oregon spoke of the soccer program, serving hundreds of kids over the last 10 years. He has*

*seen a lot of success, they tell kids not to graffiti, don't insult other people, get good grades, and to keep grades up to play soccer. But here is the problem, the football fields have a lot of potholes. During summer, it is dry, there is a lot of dust for the kids to play and breathe. There is only one bathroom. He has talked to City about this problem for five years and understands that there aren't funds to fix. He knows that kids that go through program are well behaved and the area doesn't receive a lot of support. He stated there is a need for the football fields to be a shining example, like Clovis. He asked for support at Fink White Park by Freeway 99 and Stanislaus. He also indicated that soccer goals are needed, they are in bad condition and fall down. Mr. Oregon clarified that existing fields are baseball fields utilized for soccer (football) and that while there is some kind of irrigation, it is not adequate.*

19. *Doreen Eley – Fresno Housing Authority: Ms. Eley thanked the HCDC past and continued supports for the HOME Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program. Since 2014, the agency has served 200 households, includes rental assistance that includes security deposit assistance for up to 24 months. In addition they offer homeless prevention activities for families that are eligible. She acknowledged the partnership with Fresno Madera Continuum of Care when implementing the Emergency Solutions Grant. Street outreach, rapid rehousing and emergency shelter are all activities that have been made available, and they are invaluable for community.*

20. *Ken Warkentin – Valley Center for the Blind: Mr. Warkentin shared that in 2011 his 15 year-old daughter was tragically blinded by an accident, which was his calling into this work. At that time the Center was \$50,000 in debt and about to close and receives no funding from City or state other than the Department of Rehabilitation for training to establish quality of life. In mid-2018 a young man lost his vision and is still in subacute hospital, but doesn't know where to go at release. He was also contacted by a sheriff that has short term inmate who was in fight, hit on the head and was blinded in prison, from an infection and detached retina that left him completely blind and homeless. These men have no training and no support, nor a place to go. Valley Center for the Blind had a budget of \$200,000 and a staff of eight, they now have a budget of \$700,000 with staff of 15. Mr. Warkentin*

*would like a home to get folks a place to stay and train so that they can be successful. There is a need to find a solution.*

21. *Margarita Rocha – Centro La Familia: Ms. Rocha discussed the services offered throughout the county of Fresno, provided to over 10,000 families. Services include health and wellness, peer support groups, linkages to other resources, parenting programs, home visitation, and immigration services. She specifically spoke about the need for domestic violence and sexual assault programs. They need support in assisting victims with finding shelter and emergency shelter, relocation and financial assistance so they don't return to perpetrator. Victims and children need guidance and support while working through the violence issues that they have suffered. She is asking for an advocate to work with these families walking them through a system where they can find housing. Years ago the agency had a similar position for intervention, negotiated with landlords, payment plan, and tenant responsibilities that they would like funding to reestablish.*

22. *Nicole Linder – Marjaree Mason Center: Ms. Linder shared that it was over 40 years ago when Marjaree Mason was murdered, leading to the YMCA starting to house victims of domestic violence. She thanked staff for being resourceful, and the HCDC for previous support and reviewed that because of previous funding, there are currently 35 adults, 83 children, and 6 families with a safe place to stay. She reported that the Police Department relies on Marjaree Mason Center for emergency shelter to be open and house families in need. Although they are working through the Continuum of Care and HUD to expand capacity, the demand is greater than what any agency can currently handle. They have spent \$51,000 in hotel vouchers this year because even with 129 safely housed in the Fresno safe house, and 27 in Clovis, they are still full almost every day of the year.*

23. *Michaelynn Lewis – Action and Change: Ms. Lewis commented on the need in the Kirk Neighborhood for the Maxie Parks Center to get air conditioning. She supports the request of the West Fresno Family Resource Center and has seen seniors in the programs struggling during hot summer weather. She commented that children are unable to really play because it*

*is too hot. Ms. Lewis stated that the West Fresno Family Resource Center does an awesome job supporting the community, and HVAC would help participants using the facility. She went on to state that they anticipate a new track, and would like to host events to recognize the children inside an air-conditioned facility after the track meets.*

*24. Mary Hastelum: Ms. Hastelum heard about this meeting on the Next Door App, and was born and raised in Fresno. She lives near Manchester Center by First and Fresno. She spoke about the decline of the neighborhood and supported advocacy for homelessness. The park near her home is overrun with negative activity, including homelessness, and while she doesn't know of a solution, she knows it is not a quick fix. She would like to see Manchester Park revitalized, and the wading pool and fields to be used by leagues again. Now, the homeless are camping there and she is working with her new council member to better understand fencing and other matters related to that park.*

*Upon call for Commissioner comments, Commissioner Harutyunyan asked staff if this is the only opportunity before the funding distribution to hear the public comment? Ms. Furtado explained that this is the Public Needs Hearing and only one of several opportunities for citizen participation. She went on to state that the draft Annual Action Plan will be completed based on the public needs expressed during the hearing, and there will then be a 30 day public review period that will allow for additional review and public comment opportunities. Ms. Furtado added that the draft Annual Action Plan will then be presented to the HCDC for review and recommendation(s) to the City Council. During that time, the HCDC will hold another public hearing that allows for public comments. Last, there will be a public hearing and comment opportunity at the City Council meeting when the City Council considers the HCDC recommendation(s) and adoption of the final Annual Action Plan for submission to HUD.*

*Chair Fiske closed the Public Hearing at 6:40 P.M.*

#### **G) INFORMATIONAL REPORTS**

*None.*

**H) COMMISSIONER ITEMS**

*None.*

**I) UNSCHEDULED ORAL COMMUNICATION**

*None.*

**J) ADJOURNMENT**

*Chair Fiske adjourned the meeting at 6:44 P.M.*

The next scheduled HCDC meeting is February 13, 2019.