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County of Santa Cruz

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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FOURTH DISTRICT

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FIFTH DISTRICT

AGENDA: 2/1/00

January 20, 2000

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

RE: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

Dear Members of the Board:

Attached is the Annual Report of the Human Services Commission for calendar year 1999. I recommend that the Board accept and file this report and direct the Chair to thank the members of the Commission for their efforts on the County's behalf.

Sincerely,

MARDI WORMHOUDT, Chair
Board of Supervisors

MW:ted

cc: Human Services Commission

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County of Santa Cruz

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HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

(408) 454-5459

FAX (408) 454-4642

1000 Emeline St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060

January 19, 2000

Jeff Almquist, Chairperson
Board of Supervisors
County of Santa Cruz
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

1999 ANNUAL REPORT - HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

Dear Chairperson Almquist:

The Human Services Commission is pleased to forward our 1999 Annual Report which was approved by the Commission at our regular meeting on January 19, 2000. The report summarizes our activities and accomplishments during reporting year 1999, and outlines our major goals and priorities for the new year.

Very truly yours,

PHYLLIS WASSERSTROM
Chairperson

PW/GM
Attachment

**SANTA CRUZ COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
1999 ANNUAL REPORT**

I. ROLE OF THE COMMISSION

As established in Ordinance 4106, the Human Services Commission exercises the following responsibilities in its efforts to ensure the highest quality and maximum effectiveness of human services provided for the benefit of the citizens of the county:

- A. Guide long-term planning regarding meeting the socioeconomic needs of low income, disabled, disadvantaged, and at-risk people in Santa Cruz County;
- B. Advise the County Board of Supervisors on policies and priorities that affect the socio-economic needs of low income, disabled, disadvantaged, and at-risk people;
- C. Provide advice and counsel to the administrator and senior management of the Human Resources Agency on best practices in the operation of the agency's programs;
- D. Provide a forum for citizens affected by county human services programs and policies;
- E. Advise the Board of Supervisors on funding decisions affecting the socioeconomic needs of low income, disabled, and disadvantaged people, including county allocation of resources to county programs and community programs funding;
- F. Integrate efforts and initiatives affecting the socioeconomic needs of the poor which cross departmental, divisional, and interest group lines;
- G. Advise the Board of Supervisors on legislative matters concerning the County human services programs.

II. MEETING DATES, TIME AND LOCATION

During Reporting Year 1999, regular meetings were held on the third Wednesday of each month, except for July (when no meeting is traditionally held) and August and December (when the scheduled meetings were canceled. The Commission's meeting location was the conference room of the United Way of Santa Cruz County, 1220 41st Avenue, Capitola, with the exception of the October meeting which was held at the Cabrillo Sesnon House. The Commission very much appreciates the United Way's and Cabrillo's generosity in making these facilities available. The 2000 regular meetings

will continue to be held monthly (except for July) on the third Wednesday of each month (or the fourth Wednesday if the third Wednesday is a County-observed holiday) from 8 to 10 a.m. at the United Way Conference Room.

III. COMMISSION STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

The Human Services Commission consists of 10 members appointed by the Board of Supervisors. As of December 1999, the members of the Human Services Commission included: **First District:** Toni Campbell; **Second District:** Stephanie Camacho; **Third District:** Marilyn Moore and Phyllis Wasserstrom (Commission Chairperson); **Fourth District:** Mary Carlon and Linda Mower (both appointed 12/99); and **Fifth District:** Ann Russell and Evelyn Hengeveld-Bidmon. There remains a vacant seat in both the First District and the Second District.

IV. COMMISSION STAFF

The Commission was staffed by Cecilia Espinola, Human Resources Agency Administrator, and Gail Groves, Senior Human Resources Agency Analyst through February. Sue Gilchrist, Senior Departmental Analyst staffed the Commission April through October, and Gary McNeil replaced Ms. Gilchrist in November.

V. ATTENDANCE

Roster attached.

VI. ANNUAL GOALS & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Welfare Reform and Related Issues. In 1999, the Human Services Commission played an ongoing role in reviewing and commenting on Santa Cruz County's implementation of welfare reform, which was initiated in January, 1998. At the Commission's monthly meetings, staff reports were given on the progress of welfare reform legislation and planning, and its implications for the State of California and the County of Santa Cruz. Commissioners discussed these issues in detail at each meeting, and provided the HRA Administrator with their thoughts and ideas regarding the implementation of welfare reform in our community. At the Commission's January meeting the Commission received a report on Cabrillo College's Fast Track to Work program, developed through the Packard foundation funded LADDERS Project. At the November meeting, the Commission reviewed expressed satisfaction with the welfare reform outcomes reported in HRA's initial evaluation of the CalWORKs program. The Commission also reviewed and endorsed a program to assist successful Welfare to Work participants with time limited housing subsidies, an effort designed to address one of the most imposing barriers to self-sufficiency previously identified by the Commission- the high cost of housing in Santa Cruz County. The Human Services Commission will continue to

participate actively in the ongoing process to shape welfare reform in our community.

Community Programs and Latino Equity. In the spring of 1999 the Commission continued in its role in assisting the Board in assuring culturally appropriate services to Latino families under 200% of poverty level. The Commission continued to participate in the County's ongoing efforts to improve funding and service provision to Latino residents of the County, working with HRA and the Latino Affairs Commission to develop recommendations for the allocation of Latino Equity funds. Commissioners were instrumental in proposing objective criteria rating applications for Latino Equity funding and suggested changes, which will be incorporated in the review process. The Commission was pleased to note that, during the June budget hearings, the Board allocated \$60,000 in new funding for services to the Latino community.

The Human Services Commission will continue to play an active role in Community Programs and Latino Equity issues in 2000, and will make recommendations to the Board as appropriate.

Child Care Developer Fees Loan Evaluations and Recommendations.

The Commission is charged with developing recommendations to assist the Board of Supervisors in allocating child care fees collected under the Child Care Fees and Exactions Ordinance. A working committee including members of the Human Services Commission, members of the Children's Commission, and County staff, reviews and evaluates the applications based on the guidelines and criteria approved by the Board. Based on the committee's evaluations, the Human Services Commission develops recommendations which are presented to the Board of Supervisors and utilized by the Board in making its decisions for distribution of the funds to child care centers and day care homes. In 1999 the Commission made slight modifications in the process to increase outreach and to enhance program goals. Applications were received in the fall of 1999 and the Commission recommended the allocation of \$260,000 to nine child care programs. It is anticipated the recommended loans will be approved by the Board of Supervisors in early 2000.

Ongoing Review and Input on Human Services Programs & Issues. On a regular basis, the Commission receives reports and briefings in order to stay informed concerning Human Resources Agency programs, human services community programs and significant issues affecting disadvantaged people in the County. In 1999, the Commission received monthly reports on welfare reform from the HRA Administrator, as well as a number of briefings by various HRA staff regarding specific aspects of welfare reform. In March 1999 the Commission held a joint session with the Housing Advisory Commission to consider solutions for addressing the affordable housing needs of youth aging out of the foster care system. In addition, the Commission received special briefings in 1999 on the potential benefits to the community of the Community Reinvestment Act, the possible impacts on the County to provide In-Home Supportive

Services through a public authority, and initiatives to coordinate Long Term Care resources.

VII. FUTURE GOALS

In 2000, the Commission expects to carry out activities including, but not limited to, the following: Continuing active participation in welfare reform implementation planning and evaluation; encouraging the expansion of available and underutilized social services programs such as Healthy Families, Medi-Cal and Food Stamps; Actively Participating in other initiatives which will coordinate with HRA services, such as implementation of the Workforce Investment Act and Proposition 10; Continuing the Commission's role in the Child Care Developer Fees and Community Programs funding allocation processes; Continued review of **Latino** equity issues and consideration of strategies to respond to newly emerging and newly recognized service needs; Participating in the development of a program to provide affordable housing and services to youth aging out of the foster care system; and An examination of the outlook and issues for human services programs in the first year of the new millennium and beyond.

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