



PRINCETON HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION

Regular Meeting Minutes

April 19th, 2023

Zoom Meeting * Princeton, NJ 08540

Board Members – Present

Leticia Fraga, Council Liaison
Veronica Olivares-Weber,
Chair
Ari Meisel, Vice-Chair
Larry Spruill

Maya Wahrman
Rebecca Balaguer
Greg Sarjeant
Nakia Barr
Staff – Present
Rhodalynn Jones, Ex Officio

Salum Hur Bukhari-Board
Secretary

Board Members Absent

Ming Kuang
Khristina Gonzalez
Jean Durbin

Call to Order:

The Regular Meeting of the Princeton Human Services Commission was called to order by Council Liaison Leticia Fraga at 6:09. Commissioner Maya Wahrman then recited the acknowledgment: *“We gather today on the land of the Leni Lenape. As members of the Princeton Human Services Commission, we aspire to show appreciation, respect, and concern for all people and our environment. We honor the Lenape and other Indigenous caretakers of these lands and waters, the elders who lived here before, the Indigenous today, and the generations to come.”* Roll Call was completed with those present indicated. Earlene Baumunk was present as a member of public.

Election of the Vice Chair: The Council Liaison explained the process of elections in detail to the Commission Board. Commissioner Ari Meisel was nominated and then unanimously elected as the new Vice-Chair for the Commission of Human Services.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: March 2023

Meeting Minutes for the month of March 2023, were approved unanimously after a motion was started by Commissioner Larry Spruill and were seconded by Commissioner Greg Sarjeant.

Director’s Report:

Director Jones informed the Commission that:

- **COVID-NJ Medicaid Renewal & NJ SNAP Emergency Allotments:** Director Jones reminded the Commission that beginning April 1st 2023, all Medicaid applications now require renewal in-order for individuals to continue receiving their medical benefits. She encouraged all members to spread the word among their networks, so that no one lapses behind on receiving their medical benefits. She noted that renewal must only be made after the package is received by the residents.
- **Summer Youth Employment:** Director Jones briefed the Commission on the 23rd Summer Youth Program that will be organized by the Department. She noted that under this year’s program, only 35 eligible students will be selected to work for the Municipality and other non-profits in contrast to last year’s 40 student’s quotas. She noted that this change came due to a decrease in the number of applications. Upon surveying it was discovered that several families and students were not happy with the stipend that the Municipality offers. This is because the Department must follow the stipend guidelines of the Department of Labor. However, it must be noted that these students will garner a vast range of experience through various workshops, particularly those that will help them develop skills such as resume writing and interview skills. Furthermore, there will be facilitators called in on a bi-weekly basis who will educate these students on the dynamics of money and time management and more.
- **Basecamp:** Director Jones further touched on the initiative of the Basecamp, which is precisely a project management tool, that will be used to enhance the communication between community partners. Director Jones updated the Commission that more community members are still being brought on board and the latest members to come on board are Food Security Task Force Partners, along with having 15-20 other active members.
- **Discussion:**



- Commissioner Rebecca inquired about the total number of hours that the students are expected to complete in a week. Director Jones informed her that the number of hours is 25 in total, i.e., 5 hours each day and the program runs for 8 weeks from July till the end of August. Students can make up to \$2600 through this initiative.
- Commissioner Larry and Director Jones discussed the possibility and issues surrounding providing students with transport services for these jobs.
- Commissioner Ari enquired about the number of vacancies available through this program?
- Director Jones explained the vast number of employees both within the Municipality's various Departments and other non-profits who can take up to 9 students at a time. She further noted that over 15 employees are looking eagerly to hire students through this program, as of now.

Council Updates:

• Community Building Event:

- Council Liaison Fraga informed the Commission about the success of Community Building Loteria Event, which was scheduled for April 15th, 2023, at the Art on Hulfish Gallery. She acknowledged the efforts of Commissioners Larry, Rebecca, Ari, Ming, and Maya for participating and donating gift baskets. Over 50 gift baskets were distributed among the residents.

• Wheels Rodeo:

- Council Liaison informed the Commission that the Police Department will be hosting the Wheels Rodeo event in the Municipal Parking lot, which can be attended by the Commission members. She stated that she will be looking for volunteers for her face and tattoo painting table.

Subcommittee Reorganization/Goals & Priorities:

Mental Health:

- The Council Liaison Informed Council Chair Veronica and Commissioner Rebecca that she is still waiting to hear back from the Administrator and Governing body for the initiative of Mental Health. She advised them to set a meeting with the Health Department, Corner House, and the Board of Health to see what initiatives they are already working on and what areas require more attention. She further informed them that they can still begin working under the subcommittee, while waiting for the approval.
- The Council Liaison suggested the Commission to plan a retreat where everyone can meet each other in-person to enhance integration within the Commission and boost team support.

Immigration and Welcoming Week:

- Commissioner Maya informed the Commission Board that the Sub-committee had their first meeting, where they agreed that more focus and information is needed regarding understanding the Welcome Week event. She requested Director Jones to elaborate on the details for the event.

Discussion:

-Director Jones responded to Commissioner Maya and elaborated briefly on the specifics of the Welcoming Week. She noted that the event runs through September 8th-17th of each year and the fundamental purpose of the event is to promote inclusion within the community for the immigrants.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn at 6:50p.m was made by Commissioner Larry, seconded by Commissioner Maya and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by:



Salum Hur Bukhari

Recording for Princeton Human Services Commission.