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**ALL CHILDREN ACHIEVE COMMITTEE**

Meeting Report  
June 10, 2004

PRESENT: Chair Ken Yeager, Vice-Chair Judy Chirco, and Councilmember Terry Gregory

ABSENT: Vice Mayor Pat Dando (excused)

STAFF: Jim Holgersson, Barbara Jordan, Avo Makdessian, Sara Hensley, Jane Light, Angel Rios, Zulma Maciel, Norm Satake, Janette Elizondo, Betty Montoya, Cindy Ludwig, Megan Doyle, Trang Nguyen, Diane Miller, Christina Gilmore

GUESTS: Dr. Pete Ellis, Erica Garcia, Adàn Lupercio, Morgan Chivers

The meeting was convened at 1:35 p.m.

- a. Youth Commission Strategy Workplan Update (Park, Recreation and Neighborhood Services)

Angel Rios, Recreation Superintendent, Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services, introduced the two Youth Commissioners, Erika Garcia, current Chair, and Adàn Lupercio, representing Council District 3.

Angel gave a brief overview of the strategic workplan since the department last reported to the Committee in February, 2004.

Commissioner Erica Garcia presented the Youth Commission's accomplishments for the period of February through June 2004. Some of the accomplishments highlighted were:

- The Commissioners and the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) members attended the multi-city youth commission YAC ATTACK in March where in they participated in debates, police roundtable discussions, stress and nutrition workshops. Individual Commissioners hosted a training session in their respective districts.

- Some of the Commissioners hosted a training session for the Commission in their respective districts.
- All Council Districts, with the exception of District 6, have developed Youth Advisory Councils.
- District 1 was awarded a grant for a mural at Starbird Youth Center. District 3 was awarded a grant for a community event and a youth summit.
- Although the Youth Commission has not actively been involved in the City's budgetary process, it made a recommendation regarding a skatepark. It was also able to advise the City Council and the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department on youth related issues.
- One Commissioner, Michael Antonopoulos, joined Police Chief Rob Davis' Youth Advisory Group and the Bay Area Youth Advisory Group as the representative of the San José Youth Commission.
- The Commission hosted a resource table and participated at the Districts 3 and 7 Family Summit held very recently.

Commissioner Adàn Lupercio of District 3 presented the next steps the Commission will take:

- Complete and finalize the Youth Commission website by this month.
- The Commission would also like to finalize all District-specific strategic work plans by the end of this month.
- Begin the planning phase for a Citywide Youth Summit that will be held in September. At the Youth Summit, the Commission will provide an orientation to the YAC's so the members will learn how to define their roles in the Youth Commission.
- The Commission is also coordinating with the Neighborhood Development Center (NDC) to develop a youth training component for the Community Training Academy.
- There will be a Youth Commission retreat held this month to draft and develop next year's work plan.

Councilmember Gregory congratulated the Commissioners for their accomplishments. As the Council Liaison to the Youth Commission, he offered the assistance of his Council Office.

He also asked how the YAC members are turning out and if there is a potential for leaders to become Commissioners. Adàn and Erica both responded positively on this note. Adàn stated that it was difficult to recruit younger people, but with training, they are turning out to be more active and excited about participating.

Councilmember Gregory also asked Erica if she saw any improvement in the participation of the Youth Commission. Erica stated that the Commission has mostly focused on the development of YAC's but acknowledged that the Commission has helped in prioritizing PRNS programs. Erica also stated that in terms of the Commissioners working directly in their individual districts, she thought there has been an improvement, but added that in terms of the Youth Commission working with the City Council, she stated did not see any. She stated that this goes both ways with both the Council and the Youth Commission not really working together. She added that she has seen Commissioners really trying but that the importance of the budget cuts and the participation of the Youth Commission have not really been stressed. Councilmember Gregory stated that as the liaison to the Commission, he would like it to be a priority for the Youth Commission to become very involved, especially in issues of budget cuts that will impact young people.

Angel commented that they would ensure this is included in the development of next year's work plan.

Vice Chair Chirco stated that she is very impressed by the accomplishments of the Youth Commissioners. She also stated that she was very impressed with the grants that some districts have received, considering the complicated grant process and encouraged the Commission to continue learning about grants as part of their training.

She also asked the Commission to report out to the ACA Committee on the results of the Youth Summit.

Chair Yeager asked that the Commission report back to the Committee in October.

As a segue way to the next report, which is the BEST Program, Chair Yeager asked if the Youth Commission was ever involved in the BEST grant process. Angel responded that its only participation was at the Family Summit. Chair Yeager suggested that if the Youth Commission has not had a presentation on the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force or the BEST funding, they might be a topic for a future meeting.

Chair Yeager also asked about vacancies. Angel replied that this time of the year gets a little difficult because some of the Commissioners have been accepted at out of state colleges and universities. Angel added that they are now working with the City Clerk's Office to time the recruitment.

Chair Yeager also asked about the Police Chief's youth advisory group. Adàn explained that the Chief had gone to every high school in San José and recruited at least two members from each school. He said that the focus of this group is to foster a youth/Police relationship. Chair Yeager suggested that that might a topic to look at in the next workplan – to have the Chief come and talk about youth and crime/gang prevention.

**Upon motion of Councilmember Gregory, seconded by Vice-Chair Chirco, the Committee accepted the report.**

- b. Report on Blueprint for Bridging the Digital Divide for FY 2003-04 Action Plan (Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services)

**This item has been deferred to the August 12 meeting.**

- c. San José BEST Cycle XIII Mid-Year Evaluation Report and BEST Cycle XIV Report (Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services)

Angel Rios introduced Zulma Maciel, Senior Analyst, and Dr. Peter Ellis of Community Crime Prevention Associates. Angel gave a brief overview of the San José BEST Program, which has two main purposes: to stop gang involvement and to stop violence.

Angel presented that the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force was first established in 1991 to reduce gang involvement, and to stop violence. A group of providers consisting of local government, law enforcement, community-based organizations, and the community as well got together and developed a strategic work plan to guide the direction of the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force. The San José BEST grant program was created to advance the goals of the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force. Angel stated that since 2001, \$3M have been allocated annually. The projected matching funds for 2003-04 is \$3,241,333.

As San José BEST funding increased and as the success becomes visible with the impacts, there is a decrease in violence and a shift from intervention to prevention. Over the course of the shift, there has been some intervention capacity that has been lost and there has been a series of recent events that have initiated a re-examination of the functions of the MGPTF and the allocation of BEST funding. More recently, there has been an increase in gang activity. Increase in other prevention-focused resources; reorganization of PRNS, and the City's budget reductions. These have required staff to take a closer look at what they are doing with the MGPTF.

Some of the shifts included linking and coordinating intervention services that meet the needs of high-risk youth; allocating 70% of BEST funding towards services that reach target population; re-establishing the MGPTF to lead the effort in keeping youth safe and out of gangs; and implementing Citywide safety strategy.

Dr. Peter Ellis of Community Crime Prevention Associates presented to the Committee the Cycle XIII mid-year evaluation report.

The leveraging of funds continues to grow this year. Midway through the year, BEST served over 10,000 customers and were at 103% of planned service hours. Cost of hour is still efficient.

Major effects include customer satisfaction of 87%, parents, and 82%, youth – way over the goal of 70%. Met the goal of 60% service productivity except for the youth score for Asset Development of 57%. Service quality scores met goal and showed an increase from last year, and overall, BEST service providers continue to show promise of effectiveness.

Dr. Ellis also discussed the results of the BEST evaluation of the health and wellness of San José youth. Indicators that have turned in a good direction are:

- San José schools have improved their academic performance index by 8% since 1999.
- They have reduced dropouts from school by 67% in 2002 since 1996.
- The rate of juvenile crime has declined by 53% in 2002 since 1994.
- Juvenile Hall admits have decreased by 53% in 2003 since 1995.
- Referrals to CYA have decreased by 77% in 2003 since 1996.

Indicators that have turned in a bad direction are:

- The number of alternative school enrollment slots available to high-risk youth have declined by 27% since 1996.
- The number of citations has increased between 2002 and 2003 with an overall increase of 9% from 1995. Citations have increased by 41% from 2002 to 2003.
- Ranch escapes and failures have increased by 20% between 2002 and 2003.
- The number of self-declared gang-involved youth in the juvenile probation has increased by 35% from 2002 to 2003 and increased 88% since 2000.

Angel concluded the presentation with a discussion of the next steps. He stated that the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force Policy Team would be holding a retreat on June 18. Staff will release Requests for Qualifications by the beginning of July. They will identify eligible service providers that have the capacity to serve gang involved and high-risk youth in August, and agreement negotiations will be in August and September.

Angel also added that staff would return to the ACA Committee in August to present an allocation plan.

Angel also added that the National League of Cities would showcase San José BEST as a case study in terms of a best practice model for impacting youth and minimizing violence.

Councilmember Gregory asked what happened to hard to reach youth when the BEST Program focused on the prevention component of the Program. Zulma replied that the intervention component was never lost. What happened over the last three years as violence and juvenile crime began to diminish, the MGPTF called out for a need to provide more after school type services and mentoring programs. Because the money is allocated based

on the needs assessment, people thought services should be geared to at-risk youth. Some of the money was then shifted to prevention-type services, i.e. those that provide reach out to at-risk youth.

Angel added that part of the problem also leading to a spike in violence is that kids who have been put in institutions come out more seasoned and there is also a peak in poverty. Dr. Ellis also added that San José youth is caught in the middle of the war between the two big gangs, the Nortenos and Surenos. He stated that crime is not an isolated phenomenon that can be attacked directly – that it is a whole series of forces. He expressed his concerns with budget cutbacks, which may possibly lead to kids getting thrown out of school and back to gang life. He referred to a national research study that deals with changing the anti-social mindset. Another observation found nationwide is when you mix at-risk and high-risk kids, you do more danger to the at-risk kids.

Councilmember Gregory expressed his concerns that the shifting of funds from intervention to prevention services, and the reality that there are not enough funds to go around would leave us to choose between the two components and its impact on youth. Dr. Ellis stated that he was also concerned that there is not a lot of money being spent on intervention services for hardcore kids, and that if we do not reach out to them and make an effort, the hardcore kids would be out of the mainstream and that would create a real problem. Councilmember Gregory stated that he hopes we will continue to look at the balance between prevention and intervention, in spite of the cutbacks.

Vice-Chair Chirco asked what kind of commitment CBO's make to have satellite programs so they can target mobile gang activities. Angel replied that staff is now developing one community safety strategy which involves schools, neighborhoods and community centers that would create a more coordinated delivery of service. Vice Chair Chirco also asked that staff report back on the mechanisms that would trigger the contract negotiations.

Vice-Chair Chirco asked staff to define and differentiate prevention from intervention. Angel stated that a prevention program is one where if a person comes from an environment with less risk factors, that child can receive services that will prevent them from getting into at-risk behavior. An intervention participant is someone who has already crossed the line and lacks support mechanisms and is in need of services that require actual intervention.

Vice Chair asked that staff submit low level intervention models for some of the areas where gang activities are not as visible.

Chair Yeager stated that it is always difficult when you've been supporting certain projects and CBO's and when there's a shift to fund new programs and there is resistance from those that you no longer want to fund, will all this be clear in the RFQ. Zulma replied that staff have been preparing the agencies and BEST has made a deliberate effort to increase the dollars that went into intervention services, so the agencies knew about the shift in funding.

Chair Yeager also asked about how the performance of service providers impact the allocation process. Zulma responded that performance indicators and the capacity to serve high-risk youth are criteria to determine selection for grant allocation. She also added that those providers who did not perform well in the past have been made aware.

**Upon motion of Councilmember Gregory, seconded by Vice-Chair Chirco, the Committee accepted the report.**

d. Oral Petitions

e. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

Ken Yeager, Chair  
All Children Achieve Committee