

**City of San José Senior Commission
Housing and Human Services Committee
Minutes of February 25, 2009**

1. CALL TO ORDER/APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Present: Chair Michael Davis. Don Blankenship, Connie Langford, Martha O'Connell, Ron Schwartz.

Staff: Diane Lindberg.

Guest speaker: Barbara Jordan, Attorney, Office of the City Attorney

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved. (M/S/C: Blankenship/Langford.)

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Minutes of 1-28-09 approved as amended: the typographical error in the phrase "free of information act" was corrected to read "freedom of information act." (M/S/C: Blankenship/Langford.)

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Freedom of Information

Davis announced that the new Federal Administration has expressed commitment to "more open and transparent" government and that although there is so far no solid policy, there is a trend toward this.

Aging in Place

Schwartz brought to the attention of the sub-committee the concept of 'aging in place' which has as its goal to encourage property owners/landlords to make the necessary modifications to apartments that will allow their tenants to remain living there as they age. This issue has been before the Housing Commission for some time.

Neighbors in the Chambers

O'Connell stated that she has attended the first of three monthly Saturday workshops put on by the City entitled "Neighbors in the Chambers" and asked that staff alert all other Commissioners to this training. Its purpose is to increase the efficacy of advocates before the City Council.

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Elder Economic Dignity Act

Langford advised the Committee that the San Jose Mercury News published a 2-24-09 article on the economic status of seniors in the Country and that 48% fall below the threshold of economic survival. Assemblyperson James Beall has introduced the "Elder Economic Dignity Act of 2009."

5. OLD BUSINESS

TV steering Committee update

Blankenship advised the Committee that the ad-hoc committee has met once and is in the process of finalizing a second recommendation to the Senior Commission in the event that our first recommendation is turned down by the City Council.

Mobilehome Issues

O'Connell reported no change – a quorum still does not exist on the Mobilehome Adviosry Commission due to the failure of the Diveristy Screeing Committee to approve candidates and the reluctance of the Council liaison to disreragrdr their recommendation and appoint anyway.

Inclusionary Housing Issues

Davis reported that more public hearings have been scheduled on the proposed Inclusionary Housing Ordinance. The matter is expected to be before the City Council for a vote on May 7, 2009.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Frequently Called Numbers

To recommend to the Senior Commission that it request the City Council to include the telephone numbers of Community/Senior Centers, PRNS, and the Office on Aging in the City's Frequently Called Numbers booklet. (M/S/C: Blankenship/Langford)

Presentation by Barbara Jordan, Attorney, Office of the City Attorney

Ms Jordan's presentation to the Committee included, but was not necessarily limited to the following:

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- Letters from the Senior Commission to entities outside the City government structure go beyond the scope of its authority.
- On October 21, 2008, a letter to all Commissions was sent covering legal and policy limitations on the activities of all City Commissions. Since the Senior Commissioners never received this important letter, staff will see that it is mailed to all Commissioners right away. Jordan stated this letter will answer many of the questions that have arisen.
- Once the Senior Commission has taken a formal position on an issue, a Commissioner does not need any further authorization to speak as a Commissioner to that particular issue at the Rules Committee or other City meetings.
- Once an issue has been placed on the ballot for a vote, such as Proposition 98, State laws pretty much preclude the Commission and the Council from taking a position on it.
- The issue of failing to provide individual notice to the Commission when its letters are set to be placed in the public record at the Rules Committee is a procedural, not a legal one.

Policy/Legislation Updates

No report.

Current Events/Current Issues

No report.

7. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, March 25, 2009
10:30 – 12:00 Noon
San Jose City Hall – Room T-747
200 East Santa Clara Street, San Jose, CA.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am. (M/S/C Langford/Blankenship.)

Minutes submitted by Commissioner Martha O'Connell.

