



City of San Marcos
Human Services Advisory Board (HSAB)

September 1, 2022, at 7:00 PM
Virtual and San Marcos Public Library

Regular Meeting – Minutes

Members Present: JoAnn Parsons, Board Chair
Alfretta Lee, Board Co-Chair
Mary Earls, Voting Member
Gloria Quinn, Voting Member
Monica Gonzales, Voting Member
Alison Duplechich, Voting Member
Mariana Zamora, Non-Voting Advisory Member

Member(s) Absent: Monica Gonzales, Voting Member
Ruben Garza, Voting Member

Staff Liaison: Carol Griffith, Planning & Development Services, Housing and Comm. Dev. Manager

Recording Secretary: Lorena Escobar, Planning & Development Services, Housing Coordinator

Staff Present: Brandon Johnson, Planning & Development Services, Intern

- I. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order by Chair JoAnn Parsons at 7:04 PM.
- II. **Roll Call:** Earls called the roll. At the time that roll was conducted, four voting members were present, forming a quorum.
- III. **30 Minute Citizen Comment Period:** No comments were received.
- IV. **Consideration of Minutes for August 18, 2022, Human Services Advisory Board Meeting.** Mary Earls moved to approve the special meeting minutes from August 18, 2022. Alison Duplechich seconded. Motion carried.

V. Presentations:

1. **Agency: Community Action Inc.; Program: Senior Center**

Agency representative Doug Mudd presented. The agency requested \$22,000 to assist senior services. The amount requested is about 26% of the total cost to run the center annually. The Center provides services such nutrition counseling, education, arts and crafts and games to approximately 125 seniors a year with 97 currently in attendance. Mudd added that the Center partners with the Food Bank on Tuesdays to provide meals to the seniors. They also partner with CARTS for complimentary transportation and with Meals on Wheels who comes to the center three to four days a week. In conclusion an invitation was extended to any board members that would be interested in visiting the senior center.

Duplechin asked if the funding would be used to extend the center hours of operation. Mudd responded that some of the funding and other grant funds would be used. Mariana Zamora asked what percentage of time is dedicated to case management. April Hubbard, center director, responded that 80 to 90 percent is allocated to direct case management. Zamora also asked if they are working with CARTS to offer additional transportation hours. The Center is in the planning stages and has not discussed an extension. Parsons asked how many seniors attend on a daily/weekly basis. Hubbard stated the total enrolled for the year is 97. Parsons asked if CARTS is still providing transportation. The response was yes. Gloria Quinn asked about the geographical area where CARTS transports and if there are any restrictions. Hubbard stated that now due to COVID they only provide transportation within the city limits. Quinn asked about the hours of operation. The Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM but wishes to extend it to 3:00 PM

2. Agency: Hays County Food Bank; Program: Public Food Distribution

Agency representative Eleanor Owen Oshan presented. Their food is provided by reaching out five days a week by going out to local restaurants and grocery retailers, “food rescue”. They partner with Central Texas Food Bank and Feeding America Network. Most of the food is bought from Central Texas Food Bank and they also receive donations from the community. The Food Bank uses volunteers who work five (5) days a week with nine (9) shifts for food rescue and food sorting. There are four (4) to five (5) distributions weekly with 10 to 15 volunteers. Staff and volunteers allocate food to meet the needs of 26 partner agencies that pick up the food. In 2021, a total of 1,638 volunteers assisted the food bank. As of July, clients that are from San Marcos are about 51% of those served. Typically, most of the clients only come once every couple of months and some come twice. The number of households directly served as of July 31, 2022, was 12,819. The food bank serves diverse demographics such as seniors on a fixed income, people with emergency needs or those who are unsheltered and transitionally housed. Duplechin asked if the funding request is distributed among all activities or specific to the food distribution specialist. Owen Oshan replied that the food distribution specialist works part-time and oversees the entire food distribution process; funding is specific to the program. Owen Oshan stated that 67.6% of the funds received were from individual donations. Quinn asked if there has been an increase in the food bag program. Owen Oshan has seen an increase of people looking for assistance due to inflation and an increase in the cost of living. To date they have distributed 16,000 pounds of food. Last year they distributed 1.2 million pounds of food.

3. Agency: Cenikor Foundation; Program: Prevention of Substance Use

Agency representative Carla Merritt presented. The program providing services in schools and outside Hays County. They provide curriculum to students ranging from 1st grade through 12th including activities such as stand-alone presentations or lunch and learn. They speak to parents on such topics such as vaping and health and wellness. In October, they will be at the Senior Citizens Health Fair to educate seniors on how to clean out their medicine cabinets. Cenikor offers after-school programs, working directly with the Housing Authority as well as the Boys and Girls Club. They also partner with the City’s Parks and Recreation and Wonderland School. Duplechin asked if the \$15,000 funding request will be allocated to training or materials or to supplement some of the existing activities. Merritt stated they are funded by Health and Human Services Commission and only receive a certain amount of grant funds with the requirement that they get match dollars from the community. The HHSC will not fund the entire program and they are not allowed to purchase snacks or drinks. The funding will help supplement these items and will assist to meet the State requirement. Zamora asked what tools are used to measure outcomes. Merritt stated the curriculum they use is evidence based and is issued by the state.

They are also in constant contact with their partners and request feedback via surveys. Parsons asked how many youths have been served to date. Merritt stated that in 2022, they served over 7,000 children in the San Marcos area.

4. **Agency: Cenikor Foundation; Program: Youth Recovery Community**

Agency representative Carla Merritt presented. The program serves 13-to-21-year-olds and their families, providing support for those recovering from substance abuse by using a three-fold program. The first component is peer recovery leaders who offer mentoring by going on-site or going to the schools directly. The second component is group sessions. The third step is organizing social events such as bowling or game night. Cenikor partnered with Texas State Health Center ongoing for over six (6) years to provide group sessions for students in recovery, individual mentoring, work with juvenile probation and have an office location. Parsons asked if the funding request was to match funds as required by the HHSC. Merritt stated that they will use this funding to meet the requirement and to purchase food and drinks. Zamora asked if they received funding from Lockhart, United Way and Hays County. Merritt stated all funding is pending. Zamora asked what percentage of youth served are in secondary education versus higher education. That information was not readily available. Zamora asked what qualifications peer mentors need to have. Peer mentors are Cenikor employees who must pass a background check and must have experience working with youth treatment programs. They go through rigorous training before mentoring.

5. **Agency: St. Vincent de Paul; Program: Emergency Services to the Poor and Needy**

Agency representative Warner Davis presented. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an international organization that helps the poor and needy since 1833. The Society engages in several services covering the needs, trials, and tribulations of human life, both corporal and spiritual. The San Marcos conference has aided since 1985. St. John Catholic Church and Our Lady of Wisdom University Parish (Catholic Student Center) provides facilities, while parish donations are half of annual income. The Conference, as they are called organizationally, is functionally and financially independent of the parishes. The Conference reports to the Diocesan Council in Austin. There are 26 highly trained volunteers organized in teams that aid and advice, making home, office, and phone visits. During 2021, St. Vincent provided \$103,654 in financial assistance to 989 families. St Vincent provided \$42,679 to the City of San Marcos for assistance with utilities and utility deposits. In 2021, they provided \$12,043 in rental assistance and \$4,991 for emergency housing. In addition, they aided with gas, auto parts and repairs, medical co-pays, predatory loan conversions, and food. Bus tickets were provided for those wanting to relocate. St Vincent works with HOME Center to provide motel accommodations for those waiting for more permanent housing. They also take donations of clothing, furniture, appliances, household items and electronics which are either shared with needy neighbors or are taken to the St. Vincent de Paul thrift store in Austin.

Parsons asked if they applied for the grant last year. The response was no, but St Vincent raised \$10,000. Zamora asked what other grants they have applied for. St Vincent received a \$5,000 Friends of the Poor grant last November. They also applied for the PEC general grant.

- VI. **Discussion Items:** Parsons opened the floor for discussion. Griffith stated there are 36 agencies which applied and only have \$500,000 in funding. Alfretta Lee stated that the Food Bank asked for less funding this year which means they are using their money wisely and funding them in full would be a good idea. Quinn asked about the Predatory Loan Program and if possibly other banks could help. Zamora asked if St. Vincent de Paul works directly with financial institutions and how much is spent on this program. Duplechin stated they are more of a partner rather

than a trained facilitator. Griffith will follow up with more information based on their questions. The board next discussed their thoughts on the impact of the programs on the community. Parsons stated Cenikor impacts youth who will otherwise turn into an adult problem if no funding is provided. She also felt the Food Bank should be funded and St. Vincent de Paul who offers an array of services. Griffith asked the board what their thoughts were regarding the Senior Center. Parsons felt seniors are a lost community and that the Senior Center keeps them occupied. She thinks this is a viable organization that San Marcos needs. Earls stated she was pleased to hear they are trying to expand their program which would be beneficial to the senior community. Parsons stated most seniors do not have family to assist. Zamora asked what percentage of the clients depend on CARTS transportation. She also asked what percentage of youth is assisted by Cenikor. Griffith will email these questions to each agency.

VII. Reports: No reports were provided.

VIII. Future Agenda Items: No future agenda items were requested.

IX. Question and Answer Session with Press and Public
No questions were received.

X. Adjournment:
Parsons moved to adjourn meeting. Quinn seconded. Motion carried.
There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

The minutes for the September 1, 2022, meeting of City of San Marcos, Texas Human Services Advisory Board are respectfully submitted on September 15, 2022, by:

Carol Griffith, Staff Liaison

Approved By:

JoAnn Parsons, Chair