

Human Relations Commission Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Present: David O'Connor, Leslie Ohta, Isabel Rolfe, Sridhar Kadaba, Sherri Tanguay, Lori LaCapra, and Neil Griffin.

1. Approval of Minutes March 7, 2023

The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Committee Reports:

a. Affirmative Action/Recruitment Report - Sherri Tanguay, Director of Human Resources

Ms. Tanguay presented the latest recruitment and applicant statistics reports. She noted that a detailed affirmative action plan will be discussed at the September meeting. Ms. Tanguay noted that 5/20 new hires are minorities. There was a brief discussion on the application numbers and recruitment process. Ms. Tanguay noted that minority applicants are applying for police officer positions and added that more men than women apply. There was a discussion on promoting employees to supervisory positions.

b. Human Services Report – Lori LaCapra, Director of Youth and Family Services

Ms. LaCapra noted that there are 29 students on the waitlist. She explained that one of their clinicians of two years left to private practice. Ms. LaCapra explained that it is difficult to compete with private practice because many clinicians prefer to have flexible and remote schedules. She noted that they routinely call people on the waitlist to offer referrals and inquire about the insurance to match students with the right referral. Ms. LaCapra noted that most people choose to stay on the waitlist. She explained that in urgent situations people on the waitlist are moved up. Ms. LaCapra noted that things have been so busy that she has had to take on 10 clients, which is not typical. She noted that they will post a clinical coordinator position in July and will advertise the job posting at colleges and various wellness consortiums.

Mr. Kadaba asked if they employed interns. Ms. LaCapra explained that they have their first intern, a student from Sacred Heart, and explained that the intern cannot see long term clients yet. Ms. LaCapra noted that the addition of interns is great and explained that it does add 3-4 hours of supervision and paperwork. Mr. Kadaba remarked that interns are something to consider down the line to fill in positions once they graduate. Ms. LaCapra explained that the clinicians in the elementary schools will be available to take on more clients during the summer.

Ms. LaCapra noted that they are launching the initiative, *4 Whats's Next*. She explained that it is a program designed to help rising juniors and seniors transition into college, employment or vocational training. Ms. LaCapra explained that the program was funded by an anonymous

donor and is designed to promote mental health and build psychological resiliency in students by giving them the tools to handle stress. She explained that the 4 *What's Next* program was founded by the Jordan Porco Foundation, which is committed to preventing suicide. Ms. LaCapra noted that two cohorts of students signed up for the program. Ms. LaCapra noted that they continue to organize events on mental health awareness and continue to provide support groups for parents. Ms. LaCapra provided an update on the summer theatrical production program, featuring a Sponge Bob play. She noted that over 80 children and their families will participate in the play and behind the scenes stage work.

c. Martin Luther King Report - David O'Connor

Mr. O'Connor briefed the Commission on the wonderful April poetry and social justice event. He noted that Mr. Kadaba will be putting together an education event in September. Mr. O'Connor noted that the event in November will feature a presentation on reviving Native American language from a tribe located in Massachusetts. Mr. O'Connor noted that in January they will organize events to celebrate MLK day.

3. Housing Authority Report – Neil Griffin, Director, Housing Authority

Mr. Griffin presented the Housing Authority update. He noted that GHA is partnering with the Town of Glastonbury to pursue an affordable housing development on Nye Road: GHA envisions a non-age restricted property that would have 60-70 units. Mr. Griffin noted that the closing date is August 8th and added that they are working with a design team.

Mr. Griffin updated the Commission on the repositioning of Welles Village. He noted that a draft report on repositioning Welles Village using a blend of the Rental Assistance Demonstration (“RAD”) program and Section 18 for small housing authorities has been identified as the best approach (known as the “RAD/Section 18 Small PHA Blend”). Mr. Griffin noted that a call to discuss options has been scheduled with HUD. After the call, a RAD information notice will be issued to residents to inform them of the concept and schedule tenant meetings. During the tenant meetings GHA will provide an overview of the concept and discuss the tenant protections included, as well as solicit input from residents. Mr. Griffin noted that converting the Welles Village into a RAD program will create a sizeable revenue increase.

Mr. O'Connor asked about the timeline for the Nye Road affordable housing development. Mr. Griffin noted that the move-in date might be 2027 and added that construction takes about 18 months, as well as factoring in the regulatory barriers. Mr. Kadaba asked if the tenants at Welles Village are guaranteed to stay while the conversion takes place. Mr. Griffin replied yes and explained that the goal is to renovate and move residents into brand new units. There was a brief discussion on the approval process to TPZ. Mr. O'Connor asked if the Nye Road development and Welles Village are both in the Naubuc school district. Mr. Griffin replied yes and noted that the units will consist of 1, 2, and 3 bedroom units and added that not every household will have students. Mr. O'Connor remarked that it would be nice for the students to go to a school other than Naubuc. Ms. Ohta noted that Naubuc has resources. Mr. Griffin explained that the

affordable housing is tethered to water and sewer and added that they can work around gas. He noted that they looked into other locations and added that the regulations are constantly changing.

4. Old business - None

5. New business - None

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nadya Yuskaev
Recording Secretary