



City of San Marcos
Human Services Advisory Board (HSAB)

September 08, 2022 at 7:00 PM
Virtual and San Marcos Public Library

Regular Meeting – Minutes

Members Present: JoAnn Parsons, Board Chair
Ruben Garza, Voting Member
Mary Earls, Voting Member
Gloria Quinn, Voting Member
Monica Gonzales, Voting Member
Mariana Zamora, Non-Voting Advisory Member

Member(s) Absent: Alison Duplechin, Voting Member

Staff Liaison (substitute): Irma Duran, Planning & Development Services, Community Initiatives Program Administrator

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 Mary Earls at 7:06 PM.
- II. **Roll Call:** Earls called the roll. At the time that roll was conducted five voting members were present, forming a quorum.
- III. **30 Minute Citizen Comment Period:** No comments were received.
- IV. **No minutes were available for this meeting.**
- V. **Presentations:**
 - a. **Agency: Community Organizations Reaching Neighbors (CORN); Program: Health Resource Center**
Agency representative Sabrina Jennings started off by introducing Ashali and Dr. Michelle Cohen. They started presentation by telling the story of an elderly man who came in to request the COVID vaccination and at the next event came with his entire family to get vaccinated. Jennings works with Hays, Caldwell, Guadalupe, and Bastrop Counties. They face a lot of barriers and are currently requesting funding in the amount \$22,000. CORN has helped more than 85 community-based clinics and 8,000 people get vaccinated. They have strong partnerships with schools, churches, and community centers. In terms of funding they have a few pending applications and have sufficient funds to continue work but with this grant they plan to rent out an office space.

Gonzales asked what percentage of those served live in the city of San Marcos. Jennings replied less than 25%. Gonzales asked if they receive an increase in funding would they be able to increase the availability of services. Ruben Garza asked why the agency needs a physical location. Jennings replied that having a physical space would allow for more services to be available on a regular basis. Garza asked if what would happen if they don't receive funding. Jennings stated they would do their best to continue to offer their services. Monica Gonzales asked what the address of their physical location will be. Jennings stated they would look for office space between San Marcos and Kyle. Dr. Cohen stated they don't have any space in San Marcos and will rely on availability. Garza asked what services they provide to people who need baby formula and diapers. Dr. Cohen stated that due to shortage of formula they distribute it at their vaccine events as it becomes available.

b. Agency: PALS; Program: Helping Underserved People for a Healthy Community

Agency representative Kelli Keenan started her presentation by requesting funding for their spay and neuter program that serves Hays County and San Marcos. About 62% of families assisted are from San Marcos and the funds requested represent 12% of the spay and neuter programs' expenditures. They are the only free and low-cost service provider in the community for those who would otherwise have to go to Austin. Eighty seven percent of agency expenditures are spent on operations and 76% are used to spay and neuter owned pets from underserved families in the community. They have active board members who volunteer at spay and neuter clinics and the pet pantry, and participate in fundraising activities. They just started a collaboration with PAWS in Dripping Springs to offer services to fix larger dogs. Large dogs have large litters, are expensive to fix, and puppies are harder to place. The bigger dogs languish in our San Marcos Regional Shelter. They work with many different social service agencies and provide flyers for outreach. They have spayed or neutered pets which have allowed families to remain in their housing by abiding by lease requirements. Keenan stated they are asking for funding to be able to continue their work and fix large dogs.

Mary Earls asked about the partnership with PAWS and whether they will contribute to the funding. Keenan stated they will provide in-kind services such as using their vet techs and their vans to pick up pets and then bring them back to San Marcos. Keenan was not sure how much they have budgeted for the program. Zamora asked what metrics are used to determine who qualifies for the services. Keenan stated they use an income chart based on federal guidelines that is determined by household member size. Quinn asked if they only offer services to large dogs. Keenan stated last year they requested \$20,000 to help pay for their spay and neuter program and now they have partnered with PAWS to be able to service twenty-four large dogs per month and want to increase this to forty-eight. Garza asked if people have to go to Dripping Springs to get services for their dogs. Keenan stated the van from Dripping Springs would come to the facility and pick up and take the dog to take to their facility. Keenan stated they currently get about 300 service applications of which about 42% are San Marcos families.

c. Agency: Combined Community Action; Program: Meals on Wheels Rural Capital Area

Agency representative Kelly Franke stated they have three centers in San Marcos. They are located at the Allen Wood Housing Authority, the Community Action Senior Center, and at La Vista Apartments. Five days a week they provide hot meals that are staged and packaged at each of those sites and delivered by volunteers to homebound seniors. In 2021 they served over 54,000 meals and that is double the number of meals served prior to COVID. During COVID they were serving seven frozen meals a week plus shelf stable meals. There are no income guidelines for the program, but clients have to be over the age of 60 to receive the meals. Most of the

clients are on a fixed income. All of their menus are approved by a licensed dietician and Meals on Wheels is a direct client service program. The funds requested will be used to purchase meals. They have trained volunteers who deliver the meals to clients and offer welfare checks. If they see anything unusual in medical or mental state, they report back to site manager. Site manager then reaches out to next of kin or emergency contact. They currently have no waiting list, and anyone is put on the program. Local site managers track the number of meals and clients served and reports are sent to central office which are reported monthly to Capital Area Planning Council and Area Agency on Aging. In the last few years they have had no findings and concerns. They are starting an animal meal program to provide food for pets.

Garza asked if they rent the senior center. Franke stated it is a city building they are allowed to use. Zamora asked if meals are only provided to seniors. They provide meals to seniors, primary caretakers and may serve some people under 60 if they are disabled. Zamora asked for any updates regarding additional funding from the County or United Way. Franke stated they received \$13,000 from Hays County. Quinn asked about the million-dollar funding from Area Agency on Aging and if they requested any funding last year. Franke stated they might receive some funding after the states and council of governments receive their cut. Earls asked about volunteer visit follow ups. Franke stated they do keep in touch with the family so they can continue delivering the meals once the senior is home.

d. **Agency: Greater San Marcos Youth Council; Program: Children's Shelter**

Agency representative Julia Ramsay New stated the program has operated since 1986. They serve traumatized children who need to feel safe and loved. They take children ranging in ages from two to seventeen to keep sibling groups from being separated. At any given time, they have a minimum of two sibling groups in their care, with most of them coming in as a referral. Today they have thirteen ranging in age from three to seventeen. They had a sibling group of 3 that stayed at the shelter for almost 11 months. When they arrived the 16-year-old sat in one chair for 8 hours not interacting with anyone but soon they started seeing genuine emotion from the teen. With recovery, the teen completed their sophomore year and is now a junior. Many children may not be able to return home and the agency offers kind consideration, genuine respect, and an opportunity to maintain their dignity.

Parsons asked how many kids are in the shelter. New stated they have 13 in the shelter. Earls asked about the length of stay and what services they receive. New stated average stay is 26 days and longest stay was almost 2 years. Upon arrival agency starts working on service plan that includes services such as medical and dental care. Quinn asked how children get selected to come of the shelter. New responded that in the state of Texas if a child needs to be removed from a home, the state needs to find a family member, or a foster home and if this isn't an option then they go to the shelter. So, when they leave shelter, they are stronger and more successful in the event they get to go back home or to a foster home. Quinn asked what happens if no foster homes are available. New answered that they could go to a facility in New Braunfels, Austin, or Round Rock. Zamora asked about any new funding requests. New stated they have requested funding from United Way and Hays County but have not heard back if they will receive funding.

e. **Agency: Greater San Marcos Youth Council; Program: Family and Youth Success Program**

Julia Ramsay New started her presentation by stating that supporting families with children is critical so they can stay together. An effective way to do this is through prevention and early intervention services designed to prevent incidences of child abuse and neglect, truancy, or

delinquency. This reduces trauma, improves coping skills, and reduces stress and other risk factors, and is proven to be much less expensive than incarceration or foster care. The non-residential program operates out of their counseling and resource center, on school campus, in client's homes, and sometimes in public places when preferred by the client. A 13-year-old client who was recently served was not able to read or write and unable to manage behavior. After several months of weekly counselor meetings, the client was able to gain control of emotions and behaviors and was able to recognize triggers. Prevention and intervention services help individuals become productive members of the community.

Garza asked how many kids participate in program and how are they referred. They currently have 235 families and they can be referred by anyone in the community such as the justice of the peace or the school counselor. Garza asked how many counselors they have. New responded they have four. Zamora asked if the intervention services are offered on-site, in school or via home visits. New stated counselors go to the schools or wherever the client asks. Gonzales asked what would happen if they don't receive funding. New stated that the funding they receive from the city is less than 10% of the budget but it says they have support from the community. This is used as leverage to get other grants. Garza asked how many agencies actually work with youth. New responded that the YISB, Women's Center, Cenikor, and Community Action council kids serve youth.

6. Agency: Treasured Protégé; Program: Protégé Program

Lora Williams started her presentation by stating the mission of the program is to provide free in demand career training, job skills, and educational scholarships for students who do not have the financial resources to achieve educational goals. This includes childcare and transportation. They serve at-risk youth, low-income individuals, single mother and fathers, and women and men who have survived abuse. The metrics they use to measure impact are completion rate, employability, and passing rate.

Parsons asked if there is any other program of this kind in San Marcos. Williams stated there is not a program that provides this kind of support and offers 25 scholarships. Zamora asked how they avoid duplication of benefits since Capital Idea in Austin offers similar assistance. Williams stated they partner with organizations such as Hays Caldwell Women's Shelter who refer students so the program can target and focus on those in need of scholarships. Gonzales asked if graduates stay in San Marcos area. Response was that some stay in the area, and that this year they had about 22 people interested in the healthcare program. Parsons asked what the term of the program is. Minimum is 4 weeks and maximum is 6 weeks. This keeps students engaged and makes scholarships affordable. Parsons asked about the cost of a scholarship. As examples, CNA is \$1250, HVAC is \$800, and phlebotomy is \$975 which covers test, uniforms and supplies. Earls asked if they offer job placement. They offer assistance with local job placement city wide. Quinn asked how many mentors they have. Williams responded they have 1 mentor. Mentors help with career advancement and interview preparation.

- VI. Discussion Items:** Earls reminded everyone that this time is for board members to speak freely regarding the presentations heard and opened the floor for discussion. Garza stated he supports PALS but doesn't like idea of going to Dripping Springs for service. Earls stated that Dripping Springs will contribute by providing transportation of taking dogs back and forth from each facility. Earls asked for clarification of the services that will be offered by PAWS in Dripping Springs. Earls stated they are all great programs, and it will be a hard decision to make. Parsons

stated that Protégé is a diverse and affordable program that will assist with job placement. Gonzales stated Protégé is well developed and gives students tools they need to succeed while also providing transportation and childcare. Gonzales stated that CORN is trying to meet the need of rural communities who do not have medical care access. Earls agreed and believes CORN is much needed and she is really excited and supportive of their work. Garza stated he supports the Protégé program. He stated he does not understand why CORN is requesting funding for office space since a lot of elderly do not want to leave their home. Gonzales asked for clarification from CORN if they can provide virtual or phone visits. Zamora asked if CORN would drop off supplies such as diapers and baby formula at resident's homes. Quinn stated she can see value in having an office space.

VII. Reports: No reports were provided.

VIII. Future Agenda Items: Earls requested the board elect a new Co-Chair due to Alfretta Lee's resignation from the board. Earls wants board members to keep in mind that when a new Co-Chair is elected, this new member must be available periodically to be present at the library during regular board meetings.

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

X. Adjournment:
Earls moved to adjourn meeting. Garza seconded. Motion carried.
There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Irma Duran, Staff Liaison (substitute)

Approved By:

Mary Earls, Chair (substitute)