



***Housing/Community Development/Social Services
Committee - Board of Representatives***

Elaine Mitchell, Chair

Philip Giordano, Vice Chair

Report of Meeting

Date: Tuesday, July 20, 2010
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: Democratic Caucus Room, 4th Floor, Government Center,
Stamford, CT

The Housing/Community Development/Social Services Committee met as described above. Present were Chair Mitchell, Vice Chair Giordano and Committee Member Reps. McNeil, Wallace and Young. Also present were Mayor Michael A. Pavia; Sybil Richards, Esq., Asst. Corporation Council; Tim Beeble, Community Development; Kathleen Lombardo and Eva Maldonado, Social Services Commission; John Moses, Commission on Aging; Lynn Arnow, Mayor's Executive Assistant; and Anne Fountain, Acting Director of Health.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. HCD28.11	REVIEW; underwriting standards for HOME down payment loans.	REPORT MADE
2. HCD28.13	REVIEW; administration's planning related to staff reductions in the Social Services Department.	REPORT MADE

Mr. Beeble explained that the Mayor received a letter from HUD that this item has been rescinded.

Mayor Pavia explained that he, along with Sybil Richards, Anne Fountain, Tim Beeble and others from the community, have been working hard to establish new regulations regarding Social Services issues in Stamford. A top priority of his is to appoint members to the Social Services Commission and the Commission on Aging. He added that he is reaching out to local senior centers and organizations to help identify candidates for these openings.

Senior Services has offered to help with the needs of the elderly and will assist on a voluntary basis. Mayor Pavia added that Ellen Bromley provided him with a booklet that lists the services previously provided by her department. He is now

working closely with Tim Beeble to put together a very complicated action plan to complete the reorganization of this department.

Mr. Beeble distributed materials that depicted the services provided and the procedures for providing that service (see [attached](#); sheet A corresponds with Sheet B and Sheet C).

To address issues related to the Fair Rent and Human Rights ordinance, residents will be referred to Connecticut Legal Services. Sybil Richards explained that the law department cannot give legal advice. With the new HUD income limits, they can provide help for a larger group of people. Ellen Bromley reported that she received minimal complaints/inquiries in these areas.

Mr. Beeble advised that all of this information will be available in the Lobby of the Government Center, on the city website, in local places of worship, community centers, as well as the Stamford Community Development Office, Town Clerk and Citizens Service Bureau.

Chair Mitchell explained that she is concerned about tenants and follow-up for them. As an example, she posed a hypothetical situation where a Housing Authority tenant experiences a decrease in income – who can they call so that the rent can be adjusted? Mr. Beeble explained that he will be the liaison between the Housing Authority and the City. Mayor Pavia reassured the committee that they are making sure the lines of communication stay open. In the past some calls have fallen between the cracks. He is in favor of having a tracking system where each complaint is recorded and reviewed by the Social Services Commission.

Mayor Pavia stated that citizens call regarding social services issues because of needs, not because they want to. He's making sure that when a person calls, they receive the same accurate answer. Each department involved in the reorganization will be cross-trained.

Chair Mitchell asked that the Board of Representatives be provided with a list of names and numbers for contacts affiliated with each area in the new plan. She would like good lines of communication established early, especially with all the transitions taking place on Merrill Avenue. As with other projects in the past, the tenants need an advocate, independent of the Housing Authority. Sybil Richards agreed, adding that when residents receive packages of documents with legal terms and legal information, they can be intimidated. She has discussed with the Mayor the possibility of the Housing Authority hiring a consultant to report to the City and Housing Authority regarding tenants' issues. Chair Mitchell asked that this advocate be independent of the Housing Authority.

Chair Mitchell asked the Mayor to explain any other issues regarding the Commission on Aging and the Social Services Commission. Mayor Pavia

explained that both the Social Services Commission and the Commission on Aging are important to residents of Stamford. He would like to help redevelop these commissions and would like them to take their powers and duties seriously. He would like them to take the lead and exercise their rights and powers as a commission. He would like them to work closely with residents of Stamford and resolve their issues.

Chair Mitchell would like copies of the fliers and packages that will be available to the public.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Mitchell, Chair