

Fairfax County Human Services Council
Meeting Minutes
May 15, 2023, 7 p.m.

Location: (primary) Fairfax County Government Center, Conference Room 11, Fairfax, VA. Three members participated remotely via Zoom.

A quorum of the Human Services Council members were physically assembled at the physical meeting location with 11 members present. Thomas Goodwin, Paul Thomas, and Adwoa Rey were unable to physically attend the meeting and participated virtually.

HSC Members Present: Kevin Bell (At-Large), Robert Faherty (Franconia), Christopher Falcon (Mason), Steven Lam (Springfield), Martin Machowsky (At-Large), Michele Menapace (Chair/Franconia), Dr. Gerald V. Poje (Hunter Mill), Maria Posey (Braddock), Alis Wang (Vice Chair/Mason), Dr. Patrice Winter (Braddock), and Edward Yost (Sully). Thomas Goodwin (Providence), Adwoa Rey (Mt. Vernon), Paul Thomas (Hunter Mill), participated via remote participation.

HSC Members Excused: William Kogler (Springfield).

HSC Members Absent: Steven Bloom (Dranesville) and Jerrold Foltz (Sully).

Staff Present: Chris Leonard (Deputy County Executive for HHS), Michael Becketts (Department of Family Services), Karla Bruce (Chief Equity Officer), Sarah Allen (Department of Neighborhood and Community Services [NCS]), Patricia Arriaza (NCS), Norma Lopez (NCS), Jill Clark (NCS), and Viola Coleman (NCS).

Call to Order: Human Services Council Chair Menapace called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes: The April 17, 2023 meeting minutes were presented for review and approval. Bell moved to approve the minutes and was seconded. The motion carried.

Economic Mobility Pilot Project Update: Michael Becketts, director of the Department of Family Services, and Karla Bruce, Chief Equity Officer, provided an update on the Economic Mobility Pilot Project. Becketts reported that the County is currently soliciting proposals for an implementation partner. After the RFP closes on May 17 and an implementation partner is selected, the project team will start releasing funds in October 2023 for a 15-month period. An estimated 180 families will participate in the pilot. There will also be optional financial coaching offered to participants. A research partner will conduct an evaluation of the program.

Bruce reported they are working with philanthropic partners to invest in some portions of the effort to support sustainability. Bruce shared that the research portion of the project is being done by George Mason University to evaluate how this project advances economic mobility in Fairfax County. The second aspect is looking at the participating families' connectivity to the community and evaluating existing barriers.

Health and Human Services Monthly Update: Chris Leonard reported that the FY 2024 budget was adopted. Some highlights include a one and a half cent tax rate reduction, fully funding employee compensation, Opportunity Neighborhoods expansion to Centreville, and additional funding for affordable housing. In addition, \$500,000 was committed to enhancements to the domestic and sexual violence hotline. Leonard also shared that \$350,000 for a home repair program for low and moderate-income homeowners will now be funded in Department of Housing and Community Development's baseline budget instead of through the [Consolidated Community Funding Pool \(CCFP\)](#).

Leonard reported that the [2023 Point-in-Time Count](#) was recently released showing an increase of 10 percent of people experiencing homelessness. He noted that increases were seen in all localities in the DC metro area. He also reminded the Council of the recent Board memo on Medicaid unwinding and noted that the County has a plan to help families who are no longer eligible for Medicaid access other health care resources. Leonard

encouraged members to watch the upcoming BOS Housing Committee on May 16 and the BOS HHS Committee meeting on June 13.

Establishment of a Nominations Committee for 2023-2025 Officers: Chair Menapace reported that elections for the Council's chair and vice chair will take place in July 2023. The Council will need to establish a Nominations Committee of at least three members to present a slate of officers at the June HSC meeting. She asked those who are interested in volunteering to please contact her.

HHS Innovation Fund: Norma Lopez, division director at NCS and Patricia Arriaza, program manager at NCS, presented an update on the HHS Innovation Fund. Arriaza reported that starting in FY 2024, one-time funding will be available through a competitive RFP process for projects designed to impact economic and social well-being. She shared the goals and timeline for the program and noted that progress reports will be provided to the Council on a quarterly basis.

Lopez answered questions about how the program will be communicated to nonprofits partners and businesses prior to releasing the RFP and extended the offer to Council members to provide any contact lists to send information. In addition, pre-proposal sessions will be offered. Chris Leonard and HSC members offered suggestions on reaching a broader audience.

Chair's Items: Menapace reported that the Consolidated Community Funding Advisory Committee held a public hearing on the CCFP funding categories for FY 2025-2026. Home sharing has been added to the housing category as a new service example for the Board to consider.

She also noted that at the June or July meeting, they will discuss whether to hold the August meeting virtually or cancel the meeting.

Member Sharing: Poje reported that the [Affordable Housing Advisory Council](#) met in April and discussed the budget and carryover. The next full meeting will be held on June 23.

Adjournment: Chair Menapace adjourned the meeting at 8:53 p.m.

Minutes captured by Coleman.