

HOUSING COMMISSION OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2020, 4:00 PM
VIDEO CONFERENCE

Members Present: Robert Abraham, Member
Pedro Alanis, Member
Jeff Arndt, Member
Dr. Paul Furukawa, Member
Jessica O. Guerrero, Chair
Taneka Nikki Johnson, Member
Richard Milk for David Nisivoccia, Member
Susan Richardson, Member
Sarah Sanchez, Member

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Lori Houston, *City Manager's Office*;
Verónica R. Soto, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Jameene Williams, *City Attorney's Office*;
Sara Wamsley, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Edith Merla, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Irma Duran, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Allison Shea, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Edith Merla, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Kristin Flores, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*;
Sharon Chan, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*

- **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by Chair Jessica O. Guerrero at 4:04 PM.
- **Roll Call** – Irma Duran called the roll. At the time when roll call was conducted, **nine (9)** members were present representing a quorum.
- **Public Comments** – Duran announced there were sixteen (16) residents signed up to speak for public comment. One (1) was a general topic, two (2) were on item two, thirteen (13) were for agenda item four. One of the residents signed up for agenda item four did not respond to several attempts at connecting her.
 1. Maureen Galindo, former Soapworks and Towne Center resident and community organizer, spoke regarding General comment. Galindo stated that the Housing Commission developed from the Mission Trails and Soapworks displacements. She stated that community participation must be included for critical analysis of equity and power dynamics; otherwise, favor will tip to those of more power. One of the Mayor's Housing Policy Task Force's (MHPTF) main goals was to mitigate displacement by creating the Risk Mitigation Policy (RMP)/ Emergency Housing Assistance Program (EHAP). Guidelines for community participation were established on page 42 of the report. Galindo stated as RMP turned to EHAP,

community participation was severed, and leadership denies that it was originally participation based. Galindo wanted the Commission to remember the roots of the RMP and developed solutions to be based around the most impacted.

2. Monica Cruz spoke regarding Item 2. Cruz stated in a report from the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy that 1 in 5 San Antonio households spent 6% of their income struggling to keep the light bill paid. An additional 88,000 households are considered severely burdened; spending 10% of their income on utilities. Low income households (Family of 3 earning under \$41,000/annually) spent on average of 7.4% of their income for energy; more than double of San Antonio's median (3%). Cruz highest concern was the flat rate set by CPS for residential customers at \$0.07 per kilowatt/hour as compared to commercial customers where the rate is cut in half after a certain wattage is used. This structure combined with the report findings are in contrast to the mission of the City's Office of Equity. Cruz expressed that the Housing Commission and CPS Energy work together to address rate structure inequity.
3. Meredith McGuire, retired Trinity University professor, spoke regarding Item 2. Both McGuire and Professor Montoya are studying impact of set rates from SAWS and CPS Energy. She stated affordability must be proportionate to per capita income and not a fix charge. McGuire noted that CPS' dual nature structure for commercial and residential not only encourages overuse from commercial customers but harms low income families who are petrified to use energy due to costs. She encouraged CPS and Council to establish a different rate structure.
4. Jacqueline Caldwell ceded time to Kayla Miranda, Alazán-Apache resident and housing justice advocate, speaking regarding Item 4. Miranda stated that many landlords have found moratorium loopholes, such as not renewing tenant leases. This leads to the displacement and overcrowding in other family member's homes, creating a situation to potentially contract COVID. Miranda asked the Commission to support an extension of the CDC Moratorium as well as extension of the guidelines to include people that are at the end of their leases and non-criminal evictions. She also supported a Renters' Commission of all renters as the commission should be a space to benefit renters and not for landlords to push agendas. This space would place trust back into city government. She stated support for the Council Consideration Request (CCR) on Source of Income Discrimination (SOID) as discrimination of any kind has no place in policy.
5. Mia Loseff, resident of District 1 and renter, spoke regarding Item 4. Loseff echoed Miranda's comments of a massive eviction wave without an extension of the CDC moratorium. Back with the CARES Act moratorium expiration, a flurry of evictions came before the CDC moratorium. She stated that according to a UCLA study, Texas had 148,000 additional COVID cases during the timeframe between the CARES Act and CDC moratoriums. Loseff requested that the City, County, JP courts, and all interested parties come together to stop evictions to save lives.
6. Jeanette Mesa, an Alazán-Apache resident, spoke regarding Item 4. Mesa stated that her community has been abused and lied to so much that they do not trust officials. She stated that full subdivisions have affected by COVID and the only time people were concerned, was for surveys asking about financial planning assistance. Mesa stated that some questions felt insulting as residents' lost income was outside of their own control. She suggested for there to be more open comments sections. Mesa stated that the Renters' Commission should be all renters as landlords would have an alternate agenda. She also supported the eviction moratorium to be extended and for a policy on SOID.

7. Isabel Galvan, renter and former Cassiano Homes resident, spoke regarding Item 4. She stated that she learned much from Cassiano Courts. The previous renter showed Galvan how to rig the washer drain to not over fill. When going to property management regarding insect infestations, she felt less than when asking for help and understands why respondents feel the need to keep their privacy from surveys. She suggested that the survey questions and language be redone as some questions would make the respondent embarrassed to answer. She would also like for more areas for open comment. Galvan supported extending the eviction moratorium, policy on SOID, and an all renter appointed Renters' Commission. Galvan, in addition to wanting to be apart of the Commission, nominated Kayla Miranda and Teri Castillo to be apart of the Commission as well.
8. Patricia Ortiz, social worker, spoke regarding Item 4. Ortiz felt that though good work has been accomplished, much more is needed. Many migrants are afraid of losing their legal because of an initial immigration document signed to not request help. Other immigrants live with family members and don't have legal documents and lack supporting documents to apply or qualify for assistance. Ortiz stated that the survey should also be modified to reach more people. She stated support for the Renters' Commission and the policy on SOID. Ortiz hopes that the evictions can be further delayed as many people are suffering and compassion and solidarity should be shown.
9. Amber Gomez, renter and Westside outreach worker, spoke regarding Item 4. Gomez spoke of people's hesitation to do surveys as there is distrust of outsiders. She suggested more areas for open comment and noted that there are several dead zones in the community that the survey can't be taken on smart phones and suggested mailers. Gomez stated people were denied for not having all the documents required, many that don't have a clear deed in their name. Gomez stated that many families with COVID positive individuals, don't have insurance, choose to quarantine, but don't get recorded. Gomez stated her support of a Renters' Commission with all renters as landlords would overlook renters. She also stated support for a policy on SOID and an eviction moratorium extension.
10. Nicole Hammer, Westside outreach helper, spoke regarding Item 4. Hammer stated that the community had pride and are mainly comprised of essential workers. She stated witnessing horrible situations. Many residents didn't want to respond to the survey because of distrust. Hammer supported having an all-renter Renter's Commission as renters need a voice without fear of retaliation. She also stated support for eviction protection and a policy on SOID.
11. Esther Cavillo, renter, spoke regarding Item 4. Cavillo supported a Renters' Commission with all renters as they would be the only ones to understand the daily struggles. She stated during her outreach work she would hear of renters depositing rent payments to landlords and still being worried about harassment when unable to pay. Cavillo stated despite these worries they are willing to help their neighbors and trust more in each other than authority figures.
12. Ruth Cavillo, SAHA resident and Westside outreach member, spoke regarding Item 4. Cavillo stated she had spent 20 years in the neighborhood and sees the sense of community. She stated the EHAP survey was a good start but there were not enough spaces for notes on individual's situations and many respondents didn't fit in the survey's categories. She stated many are unable to access the internet, so sending survey links are ineffective. Cavillo stated there is room for improvement and is providing feedback to help this process. She echoed support of an all-renter appointed Renters' Commission as it would not be a renter's voice if there were

landlords appointed. Cavillo supported a policy on SOID and a CDC moratorium extension.

13. Crystal Meza, SAHA scatter site resident and Westside outreach worker, spoke regarding Item 4. Meza stated that many in the community are afraid to speak up in fear of retaliation and refuse the survey. She echoed the community sentiment as she worried speaking at the Housing Commission. Meza stated that evictions, EHAP survey, Renters' Commission, SOID all tie into each other. A safe place is needed where renters can be heard. Meza expressed her concern on SOID as she is needing to find a new residence and worried if a location will not take vouchers.
14. Teri Castillo, History Westside Association member, spoke regarding Item 4. Castillo stated amendments should be made with a survey such as additional comment boxes. Respondents reasons for refusal should also be noted as some are also not taking surveys due to being under COVID quarantine. She also requested for the following questions to be amended: question regarding understanding of credit and debt and question regarding workforce development. Castillo mentioned an EHAP applicant's case where the applicant didn't know to request a supporting food stamp document and had to reapply without access to internet and personal transportation. In such cases, the Notes section is very important for the case worker to understand that an applicant doesn't have email or a phone number and will need additional time for document requests.

Staff notes the survey Ms. Castillo was referencing was conducted by the Department of Human Services (DHS). Ms. Castillo shared her requested changes with staff via email. Staff sent the requests to DHS.

15. Benjamin Vergil, resident and People Over Profit Campaign supporter, spoke regarding Item 4. Vergil stated that renters can receive retaliation after 6 months in Texas, but no property owners are held accountable. He suggested that more renters should be appointed to the Housing Commission and other boards. As half of San Antonio are renters creating a renter only appointed Renters' Commission makes sense in having a voice for public housing and giving a voice to oppose slumlords. Vergil stated that as renters feel empowered, they will feel more a part of the community. He stated that renters should not serve as an afterthought on boards but should be the nucleus for discussion and expressed San Antonio move forward with an all renter appointed Renters' Commission.

Staff note: The Housing Commission deadline for comment is 12 pm the day of the meeting. The deadline for written comments is 4 pm the day before the meeting.

Speakers who call past the deadline are given the opportunity to submit a written comment to be included in the minutes but not read during the meeting, and to sign up in advance for the following meeting.

1. Item #1: Approval of Minutes for October 28, 2020 Regular Housing Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Jeff Arndt motioned to approve the October 28, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes. Commissioner Robert Abraham seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Item #2: Briefing by City Public Service (CPS) on Impact of Utilities on Housing Affordability.

Chair Guerrero requested John Leal, Director of Local Government Relations, and Jesse Hernandez, Director of Community Engagement (Customer Response Unit/Energy 2

Business), to present.

Leal thanked Commissioners, greeting colleagues, and praised Edward Gonzales, Assistant Director, and team for their work during the pandemic. Leal overviewed the following speaking points: value to customers, rate advisory committee, FlexSTEP updates, and CPS' FlexPower Bundle. Leal stated that the top priority of CPS customers is risk avoidance, reliability of service, and affordability. Leal stated though new technology is promising, it is unproven and costly to implement too early.

Leal stated that CPS is driven to get more value to for its customers, having a good blend of conservation programs, and renewable energy generation. He mentioned that CPS is ranked 5th nationally in solar energy generation. The velocity of change matters regarding ensuring a customer's bill remains affordable while investing in new programs. Having a good balance of conservation and slowly shifting to new energy sources stabilizes customer's bill and affordability. He transitioned for Hernandez to present.

Hernandez spoke about CPS' affordability discount and stated there are over 52,000 customers currently enrolled. CPS actively searches for customers to enroll for this discount. The Casa Verde program started in 2009 and offers up to \$5,000 for energy-saving weatherization measures. Customers can save up to \$40.00 on their monthly bill. Hernandez noted that Casa Verde is not a home repair program and the house would need to be structurally sound before weatherization. Casa Verde has assisted nearly 30,000 homes. Hernandez continued that CPS offers eleven different assistance programs that can be accessed through the following methods:

- www.cpsenergy.com/assistance
- www.cpsenergy.com/savenow
- Phone: (210) 353-2222

Hernandez shifted to the proposed Rate Advisory Committee (RAC). RAC would have 21 governance appointees (appointed by CPS Energy Board members, Mayor, and City Council) and a Technical Advisory Committee (CPS Energy staff, consultant firms, City staff member designees, and other experts). Qualifications of members include the following:

- Being a current CPS Energy customer & residing in service area
- Representative of all customer segments
- Valuable Experience
- College degree
- Effective communication skills

Hernandez stated that committee diversity and member's time commitment will ensure that the RAC thoroughness. Request for Proposal (RFP) had been sent nationally for Consultants garnering eleven proposals. Respondents were evaluated and oral presentations were given by the Top 5 respondents. Final recommendations are being made to the Board of Trustees (BOT). The proposed RAC would be a complimentary stakeholder group advising BOT, President & CEO, and Senior Chiefs on rate issues. Per Bond covenants, the ultimate accountability for rates reside with the BOT and City Council, but RAC will function as an advisory role to offer management input on rate changes and creation.

Hernandez stated the importance of public input for the proposed RAC and people can comment in English and Spanish at (210) 353-6788.

Leal transitioned to the Save for Tomorrow Energy Plan (STEP) bill impact updates. Started in 2009, STEP's goal was to reduce customer usage by 771 megawatts (mw) through customer programs, such as Casa Verde and energy efficiency. As this was accomplished under budget, a STEP Bridge program (FlexSTEP) was proposed to further reduce usage by 75mw translating to a customer impact of \$3.43/month savings. Currently, there is still a 25mw reduction to accomplish, Leal stated that weatherization is key alongside other CPS Energy programs. CPS will go to Council in January 2021 to propose and extension of STEP Bridge to accomplish the 25mw reduction and an additional 75mw reduction and hopes to gather more public input of how else CPS can help the community with FlexSTEP.

Leal stated FlexPower Bundle will seek to replace half the aging gas steam capacity while continuing the cleaner energy transition as they are becoming unreliable and take more to maintain. A RFP was launched November 30, 2020. Leal concluded that FlexSTEP attempts to balance reliability with innovation for their customers.

Guerrero thanked Leal and Hernandez and paused for public comment.

3. Item #3: Briefing by VIA Metropolitan Transit (VIA) on Impact of Public Transportation on Housing Affordability.

Guerrero requested Leroy Alloway, Director of Government & Community Relations, to present. Commissioner Arndt opened stating that nothing impacts affordability more than access to public transportation. The costs of owning/leasing a personal vehicle to access opportunities are far greater than an individual's utility costs. To have housing that is not near public transportation forces people to incur higher expenses. Arndt stated that VIA only raises 8% of service fees through fares charged to customers.

Alloway presented that before the pandemic over 36 million passenger trips were taken. VIA has also been strategically replacing their older fleet with compressed natural gas vehicles saving on fuel and maintenance costs to keep fares lower. VIA is mainly sales tax funded and was approved by voters in 1977 to levy ½ cent of local sales tax. Allocation was increased in 2004 to create the Advance Transportation District (ATD). VIA's other income sources are rider fares, federal reimbursements, and grants; no funding is received through the State.

Alloway stated that along with the several methods of service VIA offers (Fix-Route, VIA Link, VIAtrans, VIA Works), fares start at \$1.30 for 2.5 hour pass (no transfer fee) to a \$2.75 day pass (most popular). Longer term passes are also offered and discounts are provided for patrons, such as the university pass program. The VIA goMobile app is an easy way for customers to pay for rides and provides a touchless way of boarding. A smart card is also being developed to pre-fill fare funds. Arndt stated around four years ago, the San Antonio Express News did fare research across the nation. Results showed that only Albuquerque, NM had a lower monthly pass cost than San Antonio among the major cities and the result is still current.

Alloway presented the VIA Keep SA Moving plan. Approved on the November 2020 ballot, this plan is designed to improve transit and mobility networks. He stated after housing, transportation is the second highest cost. As VIA creates a better network for

households to not rely on personal vehicles, more funds can shift to being discretionary. Alloway stated that the typical VIA customer utilizes services 5-7 days a week as the majority had limited to no motor vehicle access in their households. 72% of riders are employed and deemed essential to the economy and can't work from home. Alloway stated that ridership has decreased 50% since the pandemic, but VIA is still maintaining 50-60,000 trips daily as VIA is essential to the community. Arndt detailed a story, published by the Rivard Report in March 2020, of Anthony Longoria, a VIA rider, and his two-hour nightly journey by bus and foot to get home after work.

Alloway addressed the population growth of San Antonio and commented that it has always exceeded projections; meaning with more people will come more traffic. VIA currently covers 1,200 square miles of service; however, due to the varying nature of San Antonio's street and pedestrian connectivity, one square mile can hold a range from thirteen to twenty-four street miles that VIA services. Having small block and dead-end streets also contribute to what types of fleet vehicles can service the area and thus may increase costs. Alloway stated that frequency was the leading factor driving individuals to public transit. After a 21-30 mins wait for service, interest to use public transportation decreases to single digit percentages. Based on VIA's funding, approximately 60% of VIA system operates in the 21-60 plus minute range. With the new Keep SA Moving plan and funding, 56% of current services could operate in the 20 minutes or less range. A portion of the plan is to expand the Mobility on Demand (MoD) service where riders use VIA Link, similar to Uber or Lyft, to take them from point to point or a transit hub, creating access to areas of difficult street connectivity.

Alloway stated that along with service improvements, VIA is investing in capital projects, such as the Scobey Complex Redevelopment, adjacent to VIA's Central Plaza. This area is one of San Antonio's most transit-rich spots serving over one million passenger trips per year. Arndt expressed that VIA pursued the Scobey opportunity because of the viability of affordable housing so close to a transit rich area for the community and could be a definitive example of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD).

Alloway compared local tax investments for the top Texas cities, stating that VIA's funding is still far behind other cities as all receive the full penny sales tax allocation. Capital Metro in Austin also had voter approved bond funding this past November, increasing their funding \$7.5 billion for transit usage, including \$300 million to address gentrification issues along the transit improvements. Houston Metro was also approved to issue \$3.5 billion in sales tax backed bonds. Alloway stated though VIA has the capability to request a vote for sales tax backed bonds, it would be extremely difficult to maintain the amount of debt and level of service on the streets. Therefore, VIA has opted to carefully stretch the funding they receive.

Arndt closed, stating his gratefulness to the passage by voters to increase funds, but VIA still has the least amount of investment of the top Texas transit systems. As such, people who need public transit the most are the ones who suffer. Arndt commented that the MoD reduced costs by 30% and increased availability for customers. VIA will continue to innovate and provide riders with more options for opportunities of growth.

Commissioner Alanis asked CPS Energy if the \$141.00 average energy cost included multifamily data or was single-family residences only. Leal stated the average included all residential customers, multi-family and single. Alanis asked for clarification of the

differences between the utility usage of a family living in multi-family complex versus a single-family unit. Hernandez stated that in a multifamily complex, there are certain complexes that have a master meter where all utilities are folded into the lease fees, single family units are always individually metered. If a single-family unit is in an older house, there may be more energy usage due to inadequate weatherization, this could be solved through Casa Verde. Weatherization becomes a harder issue to solve in a multifamily unit as upgrades would have to be done through the complex. Alanis asked how much is allocated per year to the Casa Verde program and if CPS coordinates with the NHSD's Owner Occupied Rehab program or similar. Hernandez stated that CPS has spent \$150 million to date on Casa Verde, averaging about \$5,000 per home and that they partner with not only the City but the County for home improvements for the customer.

Alanis thanked VIA for their continuing efforts and improvements. He hoped to continue the conversation of affordable housing and transportation collaboration and looked forward to being neighbors to the Scobey development with the San Antonio Housing Trust's (SAHT) Cattleman Square development.

Arndt praised CPS's method to not leap forward with the leading technology as customers would pay more in fees and possible reliability; keeping an eye on innovation adoption when it's most effective for the customer. Arndt digressed and asked who would be participating in the RAC consultant selection process. Leal stated that though there was an internal review of candidates and virtual interviews, ultimately, the BOT would make the decision. Leal delineated that there were two positions, a technical consultant and facilitator, that were being considered. Arndt asked what other sources of income CPS gets apart from the residential and commercial customers and the proportions of revenue from the total. Leal stated that as a generator source, CPS typically trades energy through the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) market. This year, commercial usage was very low while residential usage was only slightly higher than usual so not much revenue was generated from the wholesale market. Most of the income is from the customer's bill; residential customers take the bulk of CPS's account numbers, but commercial customers are the largest users and generate the bulk of CPS's revenue.

Commissioner Johnson asked CPS Energy who is the designated community partner(s) on the RAC. Hernandez stated that ten members will be Council appointees alongside the BOT's eleven appointees. Johnson asked if the appointment extended to community members that are not business related for a more balanced committee. Hernandez welcomed all willing and able in the community to apply and hoped they will also be able to share their thoughts and experiences to help guide the RAC processes. Johnson asked for the timeline of the RAC selection process. Hernandez stated there is not a finalized timeline, but updates are given every BOT meeting and the selection process will be highly publicized when it begins.

Johnson asked if there is a process to request a bus route or schedule of an existing route to be extended. Alloway stated that VIA makes services changes three times a year (January, May, and August). During this timeframe, public input is sought, and requests submitted through the year are also reviewed. For the upcoming increase of funding, a rebalancing of fleet and service lines will be conducted for maximum optimization of service for the community. Alloway stated though it may seem easy to change one service route, a ripple effect cascades to other routes and times, making it a complex change. Arndt added that new route creation also leads to either removal of another route or VIA may be able to find

a creatively cost-effective solution. Johnson asked how a person would to suggest a change. Alloway stated the following ways for input:

- Customer Services Line: (210) 362-2020
- Online: www.viainfo.net
- Public Input Meetings: posted at www.viainfo.net/public-meetings/
- Email: GRC@viainfo.net

Johnson asked if the VIA Link services can be used in areas with no coverage or for route extension and if vehicles are ADA compliant. Alloway stated that on VIA Link does have ADA compliant vehicles and can be selected through the app. VIA Link can't be used at this time for route extension as it would be an additional cost burden; however, with the new funding allocation arriving in 5 years, the majority will be used to create the new coverage.

Commissioner Furukawa stated that boards are imperative in ensuring residents are represented; however, it is a challenge to request low income and underrepresented residents on the boards. He wondered what other strategies CPS intended to use to seek out individuals beyond publicizing open positions. Leal understood and agreed that not all boards are fully staffed. He requested the Commission to share the information with their networks and people that would be interested in joining the RAC. Leal also stated that CPS Energy's Citizen Advisory Committee has current vacancies for District 1 and 2 with no interest inquiries. He requested if Commissioners or individuals in the meeting knew of interested parties for either committee, to direct their interest to the public input phone line mentioned the presentation.

Furukawa posed a similar question to VIA regarding resident representation. Alloway stated that VIA currently has the VIA Transit Community Council that interested residents can apply to at <https://www.viainfo.net/via-transit-community-council/>. The City of San Antonio and Bexar County also appoints members to the BOT which currently has 5 vacancies.

Commissioner Abraham inquired if CPS, like SAWS, had a payment program to assist people facing disconnection. Hernandez stated as of March 14, 2020, CPS has paused disconnecting customers. He states that over 40,000 customers are being proactively contacted and offered payment plans, late fees waivers, and other resources.

Abraham asked VIA if going electric would save more money versus having a compressed gas fuel fleet. Arndt stated the VIA replaced their diesel fleet with compressed natural gas (CNG) fleet in 2013 and was actively looking into electric. Due to technology limitations (i.e. intermittent charging, range limitation, ect.), electric wasn't chosen. As the life cycle of buses are about 15 years, in 2030, VIA will go into a replacement cycle and electric buses would become the standard.

Commissioner Sanchez commended CPS and VIA for their actions during the pandemic. She praised VIA for offering free rides during the onset of COVID-19 and 31-day free passes for unemployed individuals. She praised CPS for keeping the lights on when families are struggling and providing assistance and discount programs for their customers. Sanchez remarked that the CPS RAC process has been well thought out and coordinated with the community.

Commissioner Richardson inquired about the Casa Verde program and if there would be a way for renters of single-family homes to also apply for the program as many reside in older housing that would benefit from weatherization. She also asked what were CPS' cleaner energy sources. Hernandez agreed that renters and landlords could take advantage of the Casa Verde program and would just need a Landlord Permission Form and can be submitted by either party with landlord signature. Leal stated that CPS' current portfolio consists of solar, wind, nuclear, coal, and natural gas with the overall goal to have net carbon neutral emissions by 2050. CPS is leading the state for solar usage and is 5th in the nation. Though nuclear power is expensive to construct, the South Texas Nuclear Project's Units 1 and 2 have been one of the best recorded cost-efficient energy producers. The last two coal plants CPS has are running clean coal; finally, natural gas has a volatile commodity price and is used but not heavily relied upon.

Richardson asked VIA what the Innovation Hubs are and what they are used for. Alloway stated the Innovation Hubs will be developed in the Medical Center, Port San Antonio, and Brooks. They will be used to test innovative last mile connection methods and/or autonomous shuttles. Richardson inquired about VIA Link expansion and third-party partnerships. Alloway stated that a good example is the Northeast VIA Link zone where an algorithm has been created for requesting services by a third-party developer. Yellow Cab Taxis or VIA could use the requesting services and operate the dispatch service themselves.

Alanis if CPS had any rebates and/or additional discounts for developers, particularly for affordable housing construction. Hernandez responded that the bulk of development savings is through rebates for using energy efficient items during development. Alanis asked for clarification of upfront costs, such as connection fees, that would be rebated over time. Leal explained the costs can be customized but would be site and developer dependent. If there isn't enough adequate infrastructure already in place, a line extension credit could be offered. For example, a small warehouse being developed into a multi-level complex would be a large shift in energy usage.

Guerrero asked regarding Slide 16 for assistance offered to rate payers, what the average CPS bill is for the lowest income bracket. Hernandez stated that taking the average monthly bill, the affordability discount would cover 8-10% of the total cost. Guerrero inquired apart from the \$5,000 assisted, what was the total cost of weatherization. Hernandez stated that 100% of weatherization costs are covered by CPS, but the average of the cost is \$5,000. Leal asked from the Commission to dispel rumors that a lien would be placed on the home after weatherization and that Casa Verde is a free program that CPS provides. Guerrero asked regarding disconnections, if CPS is exploring the possibility to stop disconnections and cancelling late fees. Leal stated that no disconnections would happen sooner than Q1 2021 and that there would be a broad discussion with the BOT and others before anything happens. To date, any customer that has called requesting a payment arrangement has had their late fees waived, but there are still 57,000 customers in need. Leal stated if the Commission could champion for more federal funding or EHAP funding, CPS would help support. Hernandez added that CPS actively looks to find creative ways to help their community and added the RFP to help reduce energy consumption to also keep costs down. Guerrero stated that with the RAC selection, it is important to look at the member composition and to create a space or criteria to ensure that people that have used CPS assistance and different programs to help facilitate discussion.

Guerrero asked VIA the timeline for expansion of service area. Alloway stated it would be after January 2026 as that is when the new funds would be available to VIA. Modifications are being made to the current system, but expansion of service areas would be after January 2026.

Guerrero invited both CPS and VIA for the discussion of affordability in the SHIP process.

4. Item #4: Director's Report.

Chair Guerrero requested Verónica R. Soto, Director, to present.

Soto presented an update regarding evictions. The Texas Eviction Diversion Program (TEDP) is a pilot program monitored by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA). TEDP helps individuals going through an eviction process by a court-referred assistance program. The City has received \$600,000 through September 2021 for this pilot program. 10% of funds can be allocated to administrative costs and TEDP is for county-wide.. From the potential 10% administrative allocation, two additional staff members were hired and the EHAP application was upgraded to include additional information and document requests for the TEDP process. A Know Your Rights Training regarding Eviction & the CDC order is on December 8, 2020 (6:00 PM in English; 7:00 PM in Spanish). The Courts Team has had 485 resets and 364 dismissals to date.

Soto stated that the EHAP survey would be open until December 4, 2020 and Commissioners could extend the timeframe until the end of the year if requested. As of November 30, 2020, the survey has had 3,451 responses; 87% of which has come from applicants, approved or denied. Survey has been distributed by the web-based application system, SA Speak Up, Council & NHSD communications, flyers, and phone calls. Full data analysis has not been completed; however, emerging themes of the survey were 62% found the application easy or somewhat easy and 84% received the assistance needed. 78% of Spanish-speaking residents found the application was easy or somewhat easy. 64% of respondents are still struggling. Staff will return in January 2021 to report on responses when survey ends.

Soto updated for the Renters' Commission, staff briefed the Culture & Neighborhood Services Committee (CNSC) on the survey and focus group findings in the November 2, 2020 meeting.

Planning & Land Development Committee (PLDC) was briefed on the Strategic Housing Implementation Plan (SHIP) including a proposed Source of Income Discrimination (SOID) ordinance. A SOID policy would prohibit SOID in City-supported properties for voucher holders. It could also prohibit SOID for veterans in all properties. Soto noted that Dallas has a requirement for some City-supported properties to set aside units for voucher holders. The upcoming briefing will focus on the next steps for engagement.

Soto stated that though a large amount of NHSD dedication is toward EHAP, NHSD is still administering their original basic operations to clients, including being the point department for the MLK Jr. Commission. Lastly, the next Housing Commission meeting is slated on January 27, 2021.

Guerrero paused for public comment.

Richardson asked for clarification regarding the inclusion of people assisting in EHAP in survey outreach and open-ended comment areas on the survey. Guerrero commented that the EHAP survey referenced in many of the public comments may have referred to a survey administered by DHS and to please share notes for a more thorough EHAP evaluation discussion. Sara Wamsley, Interim Affordable Housing Administrator, responded to Richardson's questions that applicants and people assisting with the implementation of EHAP were heard for improvements and suggestions. She also stated per Commissioner Johnson's request, more spaces for open comment were placed on the survey including one at the end of the survey. Richardson asked how Commissioners will receive the survey responses. Soto responded that the survey was launched on November 9, 2020 and is slated to close on December 4, 2020 but can be open longer with Commissioners' consensus. Staff analysis will be done after survey is closed and would also share the open-ended comments. A presentation and report can be created with the data. Richardson suggested to close the survey before the holidays.

Guerrero stated that the second phase of the EHAP evaluation is being developed by the RMP Stakeholders Group and should be including survey results.

Johnson asked regarding the survey outreach by phone, if the phone was disconnected, what alternate method was used to contact the applicant. Soto stated that survey calls were done in a randomize method as it would be difficult to contact all applicants. Wamsley stated that voicemails were left to applicants, additional emails were also sent for reminders. Johnson asked for clarification of the random selection and follow up of respondents. Wamsley stated all applications have an email associated with it, whether an applicant's personal email or a social or outreach worker's email and the first point of survey outreach was through this method. From the pool of applicants, a sampling was taken for phone outreach. Johnson asked if reasons were noted from a respondent declining a survey request. Wamsley stated that she would check with staff how request declining was recorded. Johnson asked if there would be a second survey with improved questions. Wamsley responded that the current survey could be improved but would need to be done quickly and that overall ordering of questions could not shift greatly as it would skew analysis and reporting.

Furukawa asked for clarification of the proportion of survey requests to responses. Wamsley stated NHSD received roughly a 10% response rate not accounting for the number of landlords that were sent survey requests. Soto stated the survey was also included in her stakeholder newsletter and is typically forwarded to other stakeholders. As everyone in the community is invited to respond, the proportion becomes increasingly difficult to calculate.

Alanis agreed that there are issues regarding tenants' rights and protections and better education is needed on these rights. Alanis commented that he would like more clarification about the comments stating there can be retaliation after six months and hoped the policy development on SOID would tie into the protections. SAHT is also looking into identifying more tenant protections. Alanis also acknowledged the issue of non-renewal of leases for tenants. He stated that more bridges must be built for people to feel safe to express their views without retaliation and thanked the outreach workers efforts to communicate with the community. He expressed that community organizations like the Historic Westside Association, could help in spreading the word for communities to influence policies.

Guerrero asked for ending date for TEDP referrals. Soto stated the last date September 2021; but funding would most likely be depleted much quicker than the allotted time. Guerrero asked for the Council committee dates. Soto stated that the CNSC meeting is on December 7, 2020 and the PLDC is on December 14, 2020. But will also check for January meeting dates as Committee meeting agendas are not finalized yet and topics may be in the January meeting. Guerrero stated feedback from the Housing Commission to the Committees would be important and suggested to consolidate comments of the Renters' Commission and SOID to present to the Committees. Soto stated that the Commission body had given input of the Renters' Commission to the Committee and the input can be forwarded to the Committees as a refresher to the Committee members. Guerrero suggested that if the two topics were postponed to the January meetings, a potential work session may be good to have updated input comments and to have a space for more discussion on the definition of affordability. Guerrero ask staff on how to collaborate with DHS' survey efforts to help with the EHAP evaluation efforts. Guerrero thanked the staff for the EHAP survey outreach and the Courts Team. Guerrero stated her support for the EHAP survey to be open until the end of the year.

Soto commented that the National Low Income Housing Coalition has a letter campaign to extend the CDC eviction moratorium and will send the link for Commissioners to forward to their networks. Guerrero asked Jameene Williams, Assistant City Attorney, about the City's ability to enact its own moratorium. Williams stated that neither the City nor State has authority regarding a CDC eviction moratorium extension as it is a federal order and the Governor has removed the authority from local governance to place their own moratoriums.

Guerrero asked Commissioners for any end of year remarks. Johnson stated her couple of months on the Commission have been amazing. Alanis remarked that he looked forward to a great new year. Guerrero stated her appreciation to all participants throughout the year's meetings and that she is honored to be a part of meaningful housing discussions.

Closing-

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned without contest at 8:12 PM.