

**FALLS CHURCH HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COUNCIL (HSAC)
2012 ANNUAL REPORT
PRESENTED TO CITY COUNCIL JANUARY 2013**

It is a pleasure for the members of the Human Services Advisory Council (HSAC) to provide the Mayor and City Council with an update and report on HSAC activities. We will also describe the issues HSAC will address in the coming months and our efforts to improve human services and target resources to the most important community needs for City of Falls Church residents.

Community Services Fund Grants

Last year, HSAC recommended award of Community Services Fund (CSF) grants to seven organizations serving City residents. Throughout the year, we have received updates on the organizations' progress in meeting grant objectives. We are proud to report on the grantees' good work.

For instance, through the second quarter of FY13, the Falls Church Community Services Council provided 36 families in the City with emergency food assistance. The Falls Church Housing Corporation improved safety for 60 residents by installing toilet area grab bars and improved lighting. In addition, Metropolitan Washington Ear is currently providing 17 City residents with radio reading and dial-in audio services. The CSF also supports free legal assistance for low-income residents, shelter for the homeless during winter months, and comprehensive services for homeless families to return to self sufficiency. Finally, the CSF serves all City residents through support of health care services and facilities planning.

These accomplishments are all possible because of the annual appropriation of the City Council. We appreciate the funding currently made available. Like many others who seek City funds, our grantees could do more if more were available.

In summary, the CSF continues to be a success. City residents and the Council should be proud of how their current funds are being spent.

Affordable Housing Policy Workgroup

Throughout the past year, Craig Cheney has represented HSAC in and co-chaired the Affordable Housing Policy Workgroup. We are grateful for Craig's and the Workgroup's effort, and excited to support the resulting Draft Policy.

At the Council's request, HSAC recently reviewed the Draft and three particular issues under discussion. To summarize, HSAC recommends the following:

- No stated preference for scattered versus standalone affordable housing units
- Inclusion of a dedicated Affordable Housing Fund revenue source of one cent of real estate taxes

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- A requirement for developers to concede six percent of new units as Affordable Dwelling Units (ADUs), with the expectation that special exceptions will require concession of additional ADUs

We believe these positions give the City the best chance for success at meeting the Policy's stated priorities and performance measure targets.

Child Care Ordinance Review and Home Day Care Provider Survey

Earlier this year, HSAC reviewed proposed changes to the City's Child Care Ordinance, impacting the City's six in-home day care providers and numerous Little City families. Generally, we identified no major concerns with the changes, but concurred with City staff's assessment of several requirements that could be reconsidered. As these changes are implemented this year, we have full confidence that City staff will work with our providers to ensure a seamless transition.

To dovetail with the Ordinance review, HSAC also considered the effectiveness of the City's current home day care policies and practices. At our request, Sue Richter surveyed each in-home provider within the City. Overwhelmingly, our providers are satisfied with the current system and support they receive from the City and the Fairfax County Office for Children.

Domestic Violence Resources

In November, Housing and Human Services (HHS) staff solicited HSAC's input on publicizing information on domestic violence. The goal was to help bring domestic violence awareness not only to those in need, but to the public in general. Leslyn Barrow put HSAC's comments to work right away. Leslyn and HHS staff created a City of Falls Church Domestic Violence Resource list (enclosed for reference), updated the City's webpage information on domestic violence, and updated the City's News and Announcements section during the holidays to bring awareness and information to the public.

Special Needs Housing

Throughout the year, HSAC provided comments and feedback to Nancy Vincent on several issues concerning special needs housing in the City. With the closing of all Virginia Training Centers and cuts to the Community Service Board's budget, we expect that the need for special needs housing in the City will continue to grow. We look forward to assisting Nancy and her staff as they work to address these issues.

Rent Relief Program

Another responsibility of HSAC is to approve the final grant amount for the Rent Relief Program, which serves income-eligible disabled and senior residents. The City offers this program in conjunction with the Real Estate and Personal Property/Auto Tax Relief Program. With HSAC's support, the program currently provides rent relief to three residents.

HSAC Appointees and City Human Services Staff

In the past year, we are happy to report the addition of a new member, Christina Crockett. Christina joins returning members Craig Cheney, Anna Dworken, David Rogers, and Kristin

Simonsen. This group represents great diversity of experiences and an eagerness to promote human services needs in our community.

Most HSAC accomplishments are due to the excellent support we receive from Nancy Vincent and her staff. Nancy, Sue Richter, and Leslyn Barrow provide excellent insight and quick follow-up to any of our requests for additional information. We congratulate Nancy and the Health and Safety Inspection Task Force for the group's VML Achievement Award, as well as Sue Richter for her well deserved recognition as 2011 Employee of the Year. We thank all the City's Human Services staff for supporting our efforts and commend them for their competence and professionalism.

We also thank the City Manager and Council, particularly our Council liaison Ron Peppe, for supporting our work. Should the Council have any questions or require additional information, please let us know.

Submitted

Kristin M. Simonsen
Chair

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