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Selvin Chambers, Director of the Youth Centers, described the activities of the youth centers. New programs this summer include two sports leadership camps and an arts camp, all with a community service component. The program is changing the centers from a drop-in program to an enrolled program, with a focus on mentors and leadership development. Community service is a big focus. For the first 40 minutes of the after school youth center program, everyone is engaged in a tutorial session.

Councillor Reeves thanked the staff for providing information about an impressive array of services supplied by the Department of Human Services. He then described the past work of this committee and requested that Ms. Herold briefly address the effect of changing demographics upon the work of the department.

Ms. Herold then described the following aspects of the changing demographics:

- Increased stress on families;
- Integration of children with special needs into the mainstream programs (child care, community schools, youth centers and recreation);
- The longer life span which means that staff are encountering 60 year olds with the stress of care of parents, and many grandparents raising children;
- Growing immigrant service needs; and
- Older teens in need of assistance.

The Cambridge School Department
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The committee members then proceeded to a discussion in which they listed specific areas for possible committee focus as follows:

- ◆ Older teens and how they are served. Councillor Decker (MD)
- ◆ Seniors who do not live in Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) units. (MD)
- ◆ More involvement of the educational institutions. (MD)
- ◆ How to reach more citizens with information about what services exist. (MD)

Emma Watkins, Director of Cambridge Senior Center, Council on Aging, described the Senior Center's work to reach out to populations that do not presently utilize the Senior Center. As an example, she cited the monthly breakfast for men. She also described the Senior Center's work with linguistic minorities, for example, its support for the Haitian Seniors program. This year an ESL/citizenship Course was added to the Center's offering. There is also programming for African American seniors and Russian seniors. Ms. Watkins noted with pride that the Cambridge Center is used as a benchmark by other communities, and informed the committee that meals are served there 365 days a year. She said that the Center has added weekend programming including piano classes, photography and from time to time, computer workshops. She also described the work of the Council on Aging.

Sue Walsh, Director of the Office of Workforce Development, described the work of that program. Program staff work with providers of job services, residents and businesses. For adult residents, the Cambridge Employment Program works with Bunker Hill on the Cambridge Satellite through which community college courses are provided in the evening at CRLS. For youth, staff work with the CRLS Office of Career Services, the Cambridge Housing Authority and oversee the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program.

Mary Wong, Director of the Kids' Council, stated that the current focus of the Kids' Council is the Agenda for Children, which has identified two goals: reading and safety, a safe after-school environment for all children.

Mina Reddy, Director of the Community Learning Center (CLC), described the programs of the center, classes, including the Bridge program which is one semester, and the GED program. The CLC is developing computer capacity.

Len Thomas, Director of the MultiService Center, described its activities in stabilizing and finding housing for homeless and those at risk of homelessness. The MultiService Center also runs two transitional programs of six-month supported residence after a shelter residence and before permanent housing. The Center works with a wide variety of other service providers to secure services for the homeless.

Stephanie Ackert, Division Head for Planning and Program Development, described the grant management and program development activities of her division.

Ellen Semonoff, Deputy Director of Human Services, noted the enormous number of services provided by the Human Services Department. She briefly described other program areas: childcare, summer food program, and low-income fuel assistance.

Paul Ryder, Director of Recreation, described the wide variety of recreational programs from swimming lessons and free golf lessons for Cambridge youth to summer playground activities, to management of Danehy Park. He informed the committee that

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The committee members then proceeded with a discussion in which they listed specific areas for possible committee focus.

- ◆ Older teens and how they are served. Councillor Decker (MD)
- ◆ Seniors who do not live in Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) units. (MD)
- ◆ More involvement of the educational institutions. (MD)
- ◆ How to reach more citizens with information about what services exist. (MD)

- ◆ Ability of the City to tap other resources in providing human services, for example, the businesses. Vice Mayor Maher (DM)
- ◆ Education about what possibilities exist for municipalities to raise additional funds for human services. (DM)
- ◆ The quality of Cambridge's childcare for young children, including a look at family daycare and other private daycare. Councillor Reeves (KR)
- ◆ The issue of isolated seniors and how to help those who do not live in CHA housing. (KR)
- ◆ Older teens who are now in college but will be facing financial problems that put them at risk of dropping out. (KR)
- ◆ Is there a way for Cambridge to guarantee that money will not keep any Cambridge kid accepted to college from going to college. (KR, MD)
- ◆ Youth sports, in that kids are interested in participating and there is an impact on their health. (KR)
- ◆ A new look at who lives in Cambridge and what that means for our social services, for example the Boston Globe just published an article about the number of young Muslim couples who are home-schooling their children. (KR)
- ◆ Mentoring. Mentoring can make a big difference to at-risk kids; how to fill the big need for mentors. Could city employees volunteer to be mentors as a community service part of their jobs. (DM)
- ◆ Seniors who wouldn't dream of coming to the Senior Center but spend many days sitting alone. (KR)
- ◆ Connecting with seniors who are taking care of their grandchildren while the parents work. (Mary Wong)

Councillor Decker stressed that the City Council is a policymaking body. The more information the Council gets, the better the policymaking. She encouraged staff to use the committee as a sounding board. She also noted that affordable housing is the City Council's number one priority. To her that means that all of the City's programs should be viewed through an affordable housing lens.

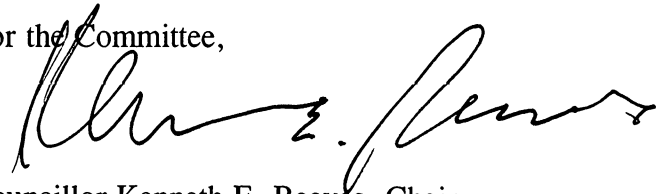
Councillor Reeves requested that Ms. Herald arrange for the committee to receive the following information before the next meeting:

- ◆ The survey of senior needs and wants that was done before the new senior center was built.
- ◆ A copy of the City's Childcare Policy.

The committee agreed that the next meeting would consist of a presentation to be arranged by Ms. Herold on who lives in the City of Cambridge, what "hard" information is available on the present demographics, how they have changed and are continuing to change.

Councillor Reeves thanked all those present for their participation. The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth E. Reeves', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair

City of Cambridge

In City Council September 11, 2000

The Human Services Committee held a public meeting on August 2, 2000, beginning at 12:20 p.m. in the Ackermann Room for the purpose of discussing the committee's agenda for the remainder of the Council term.

Present at the meeting were Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair of the Committee, Vice Mayor David P. Maher, Councillor Marjorie C. Decker, City Clerk D. Margaret Drury and Terry Smith, Mayor's Chief of Staff. Also present were Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services; Ellen Semonoff, Deputy Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS); and the following DHS division heads and management staff: Stephanie Ackert, Planning and Development; Eileen Keegan, Community Schools; Selvin Chambers, Youth Programs, and Maria Barajaz-Roman, Youth Program Planner; Emma Watkins, Senior Center and Elderly Services; Mina Reddy, Community Learning Center; Michael Muehe, Commission on Disabilities; Mary Wong, Kids' Council; Jack Vondras, Substance Abuse prevention, Len Thomas, MultiService Center; Paul Ryder, Recreation; and Sue Walsh, Workforce Development.

Councillor Reeves welcomed all in attendance and requested that Ms. Herold introduce the Human Services staff present to describe briefly their work.

Jack Vondras, Director of the Cambridge Prevention Program, stated that its goal is to look at and impact substance abuse among youth. The program is expanding the ages served from the sixth grade to include the seventh and eighth grades as well. It is also doing training with establishments that serve alcohol in partnership with the License Commission to address the problem of serving alcohol to persons under the age of 21.

Michael Muehe, Director of the Commission for Persons with Disabilities, described the commission's major focus in three areas:

- Working with people in Cambridge with disabilities;
- Work within the city government to ensure accessible services; and
- Work with the private sector to promote accessibility, for example, the taxicab industry.

A report was received from Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair of the Human Services Committee relative to a meeting held on August 2, 2000 for the purpose of discussing the committee's agenda for the remainder of the Council term.

In City Council.. September 11, 2000

Report Accepted

Placed on file