

**APPROVED**  
**MINUTES**  
**SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE COMMISSION**  
**MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2007**  
**8:00 pm**

1. Roll Call

Present: Carroll, D’Orio, Johns, Maris, Marks, Thomsen, (arrived late)

Absent: Duncan

Staff: Lieberman

Other: boona cheema, BOSS

2. Approval of minutes. Marks moved to approve the minutes of 1/10/2007. D’Orio seconded. Minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Opening Public Forum. There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

4. Old Business

a. Services to Albany Homeless and Persons in Need of Mental Health Services, item referred by Council:

Ms. Boona cheema, the Director of BOSS (Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency) spoke about the history of BOSS and the trends that she has seen in homelessness over the past 30 years. She invited the Commissioners to visit the Ursula Sherman Village on Harrison Street which is the nearest shelter in Albany. She mentioned that they work well with the Albany police. She noted that of the 2000 people served by BOSS over the past year, only 2 self-identified as being from Albany, and that our numbers have historically been low. She discussed the lack of affordable housing and the “Housing First” program. The Commissioners discussed the question of the City’s role with regard to the issue of homelessness as a whole. Commissioners discussed affordable housing issues and requested more staff information at the next meeting. They noted that prevention of homelessness was important, and stressed educating the public and encouraging volunteerism. Transitional housing for young adults was mentioned, as well as the issue of making a contribution in proportion to Albany’s capacity, for an issue that crosses geographical lines. Possible actions items were: 1) Educational opportunities; 2) A city contribution to the BAMHD for outreach; 3) encouraging volunteerism at BOSS or other facilities. The Commission stated its intent to have a recommendation for Council at the March or April meeting.

6. New Business:

a. Discuss Prioritization of Other Issues. The Commissioners reviewed the items that have been on the “to do” list and prioritized how they should be agendized, as follows: 1) Peace Day Event—since the event is slated for September, this should be addressed in April or May; 2) Nepotism—put on March agenda; 3) Motto—put on March

agenda, with intent to have a contest of some sort that related to the City's centennial; 4) Campaign Finance Reform—since no election is pending and no Council member has put this back on the agenda, defer this item; 5) Clean Green Task Force—members encouraged to attend; 6) new item added—withdraw troops from Iraq; 7) How to reach out to marginal seniors and on-the-edge families--this should be part of overall SEJC recommendations to Council regarding homelessness and mental health issues.

7. Closing Public Forum: No member of the public chose to speak.

8. Adjournment: Items for the next agenda are: (a) Information on Affordable Housing; (b) Nepotism Issue; (c) City Motto; (d) Resolution to withdraw troops from Iraq.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m. The next Commission meeting is scheduled for March 14, 2007.