

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

January 18, 2007
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Hoople, Commissioners Beighle, Farsch, Huenefeld-Gese, Seltzer, Stout, Yantis

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Terry Smith,
Department of Parks & Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Helena Stephens, Parks & Community Services;
Patricia Knight, Department of Planning and
Community Development; Doug Whalen, United
Way of King County; Judy Buckmaster, Bellevue
School District; Erin Boone, Wrap-Around Services
Project Coordinator

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Chair Hoople who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. November 21, 2006

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Seltzer. Second was by Commissioner Stout and the motion carried unanimously.

B. December 5, 2006

Motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Stout. Second was by Commissioner Seltzer and the motion carried unanimously.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion to open nominations for Chair was made by Commissioner Seltzer. Second was by Commissioner Beighle and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion to nominate Commissioner Hoople to serve as Chair was made by Commissioner Seltzer. Second was by Commissioner Beighle.

Motion to close nominations was made by Commissioner Seltzer. Second was by Commissioner Beighle and the motion carried unanimously.

The motion to nominate Commissioner Hoople to serve as Chair carried unanimously.

Motion to open nominations for Vice-Chair was made by Commissioner Stout. Second was by Commissioner Beighle and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion to nominate Commissioner Yantis to serve as Vice-Chair was made by Commissioner Stout. Second was by Commissioner Beighle and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion to close nominations was made by Commissioner Stout. Second was by Commissioner Beighle and the motion carried unanimously.

The motion to nominate Commissioner Yantis to serve as Vice-Chair carried unanimously.

6. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Emily Leslie, Human Services Manager, acknowledged and thanked Commissioner Farsch for her services as Vice-Chair of the Commission for the past year. She said Commissioner Farsch has elected not to renew her term when it ends in May.

Ms. Leslie reported that the Eastside Human Services Forum annual meeting was held on January 10. Some 50 people attended and offered some excellent input. The Board met on January 17 to consider the input and to approve the 2007 legislative agenda, work plan and budget.

Alex O'Reilly, Human Services Planner, mentioned that she, Commissioner Seltzer and Doug Whalen with United Way of King County will be making a presentation on the Eastside Easy Rider Plan to the Transportation Commission on January 25. The

Human Services Commission will receive an update regarding the plan in February. The plan is a collaborative effort focused on transportation options to improve access to health and human services. Commissioner Seltzer will be representing the Bellevue Network on Aging.

Terry Smith, Assistant Director, informed the Commission that during the height of the December windstorm about 90 percent of the city was without power. He said a number of shelters were opened within 24 hours, including Bellevue High School and North Bellevue Community Center. The shelters were open for seven days providing a warm refuge and food for hundreds of residents and non-residents. The operation represented a fabulous collaboration between the city, the Red Cross and the Bellevue School District. It was found that there are in the city a number of vulnerable populations; Bellevue Community College was for three days turned into a specialized shelter facility for individuals in need of additional medical support and care. At each of the shelters, what consistently rose to the top was human service needs, including medication needs, mental health needs, and homelessness.

Ms. Leslie said during the power outage staff contacted every Bellevue facility that serves seniors to make sure they were able to handle their caseloads. Mr. Smith said when adult family homes and convalescent centers could not be contacted by phone, the fire department went out to check on them.

Helena Stephens, Parks & Community Services, said a number of adult care centers contacted staff wanting to bring their entire populations to a shelter. Most of them could not be hospitalized, but without power they were unable to support their medical needs. The shelters were constantly being rearranged to meet the needs of the population. The event highlighted the need for every family to be prepared with all necessary supplies to survive at least three days on their own.

Chair Hoople reported that he and Commissioner Beighle attended the January 2 Council meeting to provide them with an update regarding human service needs in the community.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Update on Wraparound Services Pilot Project

Mr. Smith introduced Judy Buckmaster, Lake Hills elementary school principal; Erin Boone, project coordinator; Doug Whalen, United Way of King County; Patricia Knight from Department of Planning and Community Development; and Helena Stephens with Parks & Community Services. He noted that the panel updated the Council regarding the project on January 16 and met with favorable responses.

Mr. Smith explained that the project is intended to evaluate whether or not the city

and the Bellevue School District has a shared mission for the wellbeing of individuals and the vitality of neighborhoods; the specific interface between education, human service, recreation and neighborhood building; and the operational model that most effectively leverages the interface. The project objectives are better utilization of resources; school readiness; academic achievement; family involvement; and neighborhood vitality. The key elements for success will be a shared mission and accountability; shared resources; the role of the coordinator; research-based program development focusing on best practices and locally relevant applications; and evaluation based on outcomes.

Mr. Whalen said the East Council of United Way of King County is always seeking opportunities to solve community problems. The wraparound project aligns very nicely with priorities established by United Way in the areas of helping to improve the cognitive, emotional and social skills of preschoolers, and contributing to the success of school-aged children. The research shows that kids who come to school ready to learn more often succeed both in school and later in life.

The real impact of the wraparound project will be heightened if it can be sustained over time. The sustainability plan being worked on involves three phases: 1) brainstorming options and reaching consensus on plausible alternatives; 2) zeroing in on the option that is most achievable; and 3) developing and implementing an action plan.

Ms. Boone said the project is aimed at achieving high-quality, locally relevant services by realigning resources. A series of RFPs have been issued for the recreation and evaluation services. A high-quality recreation program has been brought in through the YMCA; the structured after-school program extends the school day and allows for academic enrichment as well as social and recreational opportunities.

There are a number of collaborations under way, some of which have been in place before the wraparound project was even started. Big Brothers and Big Sisters is collaborating by offering after-school programs. Jubilee REACH Center is a project of the First Presbyterian Church of Bellevue; they work very closely with the wraparound program by offering before- and after-school programs, adult ESL classes, and social groups for seniors. A group of Lake Hills-area dentists have gotten involved with the project by offering free dental screenings. New partnerships have been formed with Consejo Counseling Services and with Asian Counseling and Referral. The downtown Barnes & Noble is also a partner; they conducted a successful holiday book drive, have made financial contributions, and have sought other ways to be involved.

Ms. Buckmaster said the wraparound project is focused on supporting families and has as its end goal seeing children be successful in school. More than half of the

children who enroll at Lake Hills have not been in any kind of academic setting prior to kindergarten, and that puts them behind from the start. The school district has started finding those children in the community before they come to kindergarten. The Getting School Ready team consists of interested partners, school personnel, school counselors, kindergarten teachers, a Head Start family support worker, and people from the community, including city staff, a pediatrician from Eastgate Public Health, a local children's librarian, a handful of parents from different ethnic communities, and area daycare providers. Family nights at Lake Hills has been extended to include three- and four-year-olds with age-appropriate activities and materials to take home.

At the first literacy night 40 preschool families attended. Activities focused helping parents understand what to do with their three- and four-year-olds at home were offered in each of the kindergarten rooms; the same approach has been taken with math activities. Preschool parents have been invited to attend the parent education night events, and education has been provided to daycare providers in the attendance area. Lake Hills hosted the summer school program for all of the Bellevue School District; 20 preschool-aged, non English-speaking children were served by the program, which was very beneficial. In 2007 a pre-kindergarten program will be added to the summer school program; it will be aimed at children who have not been in any kind of preschool program.

Ms. Buckmaster said Lake Hills is a perfect setting for testing the wraparound project. Sixty percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch; there are 40 languages represented at the school; and 60 percent of the children speak a first language other than English. Diversity is celebrated by highlighting a different language every week, and children are taught how to greet each other in that language.

The school used to offer an after-school math club for students who were not succeeding in math. Things are being taken in a different direction now, with the relationships children have at school being emphasized in an effort to have them be more engaged at school, which fosters academic success. Students who do not get a concept or who just need more time to understand it are staying after school with their teachers and working with them individually. Kids finish their homework, they feel better about themselves, and are more prepared for the next day. The approach is being supported by the Bellevue Schools Foundation.

Ms. Boone said growth in family involvement is being seen in a variety of ethnic communities. The PTSA is seeing record levels of participation. Family night is scheduled at least once a month and people literally bring their whole families. There has been an increase in the number of family volunteers willing to help out during the school day, and increased interaction and strengthened relationships with Asian communities.

Ms. Knight explained that her focus is on neighborhood vitality, which stems from relationships, connections and commitments to common goals. She said there is a much more positive attitude toward Lake Hills elementary on the part of local businesses and neighbors, and the school is rapidly becoming a community gathering place, which is strengthening the connection the community has with the school. The result is an increase in the level of multicultural and multigenerational involvement at the school.

Ms. Knight said in her role as Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator for the city she hosts a number of open house and community events. Many of them are scheduled at Lake Hills elementary, and they are very well attended.

Ms. Boone said there are eleven outcomes being focused on as part of the process of evaluation. An external evaluator has been hired to provide an objective analysis. The various elements of the project will be tweaked as necessary in order to achieve the goals and objectives of academic achievement, service delivery and community impact.

Mr. Smith said clearly some elements of the project are working very well. As the project transitions to a program, a sustainability plan will need to be developed. As the plan is pulled together, the focus will be on organizational development, the alignment of resources, and funding issues.

With regard to the family night materials, Chair Hoople asked how many languages they are available in. Ms. Buckmaster said the math materials do not need any translation, and because preschool materials use very little language, no translation is needed. In addition to preparing children for school, the program is aimed at making sure students continue meeting with success as they transition to middle school. Ms. Stephens added that in the original planning for the project there was a middle school track. The hope is that as the model is proved to be successful and something that can be replicated in other schools, the program will be expanded to include middle school students.

Commissioner Stout asked if any Readiness to Learn money is flowing into Bellevue. Ms. Buckmaster said she is not aware of any. However, the project and preschool work has been submitted to the K-12 education committee in Olympia, so they are aware of what is being done. Commissioner Stout said Readiness to Learn likely would not allocate funding for a single-school project, but when the model increases its footprint it may generate more interest for funding.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Seltzer, Ms. Boone said the library system is an active participant in the project.

Commissioner Huenefeld-Gese pointed out that the Washington State Department of

Health participates in programs focused on helping kids learn to read and think and does quite a lot of tracking. If accessible, those records could be of benefit to the project. Ms. Stephens said she will check into what demographic information applicable to Lake Hills is available.

Ms. Buckmaster said there are other elementary schools in the Bellevue School District that have diversity and poverty levels similar to those found at Lake Hills. They include Stevenson, Ardmore, Sherwood Forest, Phantom Lake, and Spiritridge. Ms. Stephens pointed out, however that the project is focused on families in general regardless of how diverse or affluent they are; families on all socio-economic levels need help in assisting children to be at the academic and social ability best.

Commissioner Seltzer asked if more affluent families are expressing a willingness to seek and accept help. Ms. Buckmaster said the power of the project is in the relationships it fosters. The attitude is the doors are open and everyone is welcome, and learning goes both ways; things grow from there.

Mr. Smith said the model being developed at Lake Hills may not be successful at another school because needs vary by school and community. The principles, however, can be duplicated independently.

8. DISCUSSION

A. Overview/Timeline for 2007-2008 Human Services Needs Update Collection

Ms. O'Reilly asked the Commissioners to email her with comments regarding what worked and what did not work with the previous Needs Update, especially as it relates to allocation decisions. She also shared with the Commission and briefly reviewed the draft Needs Update timeline for collecting, analyzing and collating the data, and writing the document. The report will be presented to the Council in January of 2008, after which it will be printed and released.

The contract for the telephone survey has been completed and the vendor will work with staff to schedule the survey.

With regard to the qualitative information collection wish list, Ms. O'Reilly said the information received from the Commissioners prior to the meeting was very helpful. She said refugee and immigrant issues arose as a general category, under which were the need for vision services, citizenship classes, and English language learners. Other categories included birth to age six: school readiness and quality childcare; veterans: the agencies serving veterans and the veterans levy; health: mental health and the uninsured; youth: after-school services, sexuality education and safety; older adults: general needs, vision services; family support: prevention and early

intervention, access to programs and services; and awareness: homelessness and the ten-year plan.

- 9. OLD BUSINESS – None
- 10. NEW BUSINESS – None
- 11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None
- 12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hoople adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date