

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES

February 4, 2010  
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Room 1E -112

MEMBERS PRESENT: Berta Seltzer, Diana Thompson, Howard Katz, Eileen Rasnack, Jullie Gray, Heidi Ressler, Hannah Kimball, Peg English, Richard Englund, Beverly Heyden, Bob Megargel, Bill Merriman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lynne Robinson, Cindy Sharek

STAFF PRESENT: Cathy VonWald, Alex O'Reilly, Department of Parks and Community Services

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathy Iverson, Kirkland Senior Council

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by Ms. Kimball who presided. All committee members were present with the exception of Chair Robinson, and Ms. Sharek.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 7, 2010

**Motion to approve the agenda was made by Ms. Seltzer. Second was by Ms. Rasnack and the motion carried unanimously.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Housing

Ms. Kimball said the committee met on January 25 and focused on fleshing out the selected goals, developing a work plan, and identifying action items. The chosen goals were better housing solutions, developing a housing list, advocating for aging in place and universal design, participating in the Comprehensive Plan update, and raising awareness of accessory dwelling units. Planner Janet Lewine offered invaluable information regarding housing options and resources. The group was informed that the work to update the Comprehensive Plan has already been completed but there is still time to offer input regarding code changes.

With regard to housing options and solutions in the Bel-Red corridor, Ms. Kimball said Ms. Lewine informed the group that affordable housing will be a given, adding that it is a good place to talk about universal design.

Mr. Katz pointed out that affordable housing is incented in the Bel-Red corridor but is not required; he questioned calling it a given. Ms. Kimball said that was the word used by Ms. Lewine.

Ms. Kimball said the group discussed how to advocate in favor of innovative housing opportunities. It was noted that opportunities are being sought to put additional housing into existing single family neighborhoods, though probably by incorporating different types of housing. Half the families in Bellevue have no children and that is one of the reasons behind thinking through different housing options.

There are a variety of housing resources available, including the Puget Sound Regional Council 2040 Study, Bellevue's 2030 Growth Plan, and a study called Aging in Switzerland.

Development of a comprehensive housing list will be a priority for the housing committee. Currently there are a variety of housing options lists extant, but no list that has everything in one place. Ms. Kimball said the committee probably will simply pull all of the information together and post the links on the Bellevue Network on Aging website.

Ms. Lewine told the committee that if it prepares a presentation that highlights issues of housing choice, affordability and universal design she would help find appropriate venues in which to share the information.

#### B. Outreach

Ms. Ressler said the committee met and focused on thinking outside the box of the standard of community centers where presentations could be made. The suggestion was made to look at Bellevue by zip code area rather than by neighborhood. The city is divided north and south by SR-50 and I-90, and east and west by I-405 and Lake Washington. The Bridle Trails area lies to the north of SR-520, South Bellevue is situated to the south of I-90 and extends to Newcastle, and the city's boundary extends eastward to Issaquah. In discussing the options, the committee did identify some alternatives for exploring additional communications opportunities.

Ms. Ressler said the committee also reviewed its list of commitments to making community presentations. The group concluded that it should continue having articles printed in the *Bellevue Reporter*, decided that consideration should be given to giving another presentation to the hospital and healthcare community, and concluded that the city's Cultural Diversity Program coordinator Kevin Henry should be invited to address the committee. The decision was also made to keep the Network in the minds of the Councilmembers by supporting the proclamation for World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and the proclamation for Older Americans Month.

#### C. Advocacy

Ms. Rasnack said the committee met twice during the month of January to focus on writing letters about advocacy issues before the legislature. The letters were sent out and they have generated a lot of discussion concerning the need for an advocacy policy that would permit the advocacy committee to send out letters based on the legislative agenda agreed to by the full Network. Having such a policy in place would obviate the need for the committee to seek approval via email of every letter prepared for sending to legislators.

Ms. Thompson said the issue is that issues that arise during the legislative session often require very quick responses, which is problematic when full Network approval is required for all letters before they are sent out.

Ms. Rasnack proposed a policy that would allow the advocacy committee to draft letters to legislators concerning issues on the legislative agenda with the approval of the Network chair

and Ms. VonWald rather than the entire Network. Letters concerning any other items would still require full Network approval.

Motion to allow the advocacy committee to take action regarding any issue on the adopted legislative agenda with the approval of the Network chair and/or Ms. VonWald but without approval by the full Network on Aging was made by Ms. Thompson. Second was by Ms. Ressler.

Ms. VonWald said the proposed approach mirrors that way the Eastside Human Services Forum operates. Once they have an adopted legislative agenda, letters can be written in regard to any of the topics without the approval of the full group.

Mr. Englund noted that there is no provision in the Network bylaws for seeking quick approval via email. The bylaws say the purpose of the Network is to advise the city; they say nothing about advising other government entities or lobbying on behalf of any issue.

Mr. Katz said from the start of the Network there was a realization that things would have to be revised over time. Ms. Seltzer suggested it might be time to take another look at the bylaws to see if some additional revisions are needed.

Ms. VonWald pointed out that the adopted legislative agenda was sent out to all of the city's boards and commissions so they could be informed. One purpose of the Network is to look at both local and regional issues in order to support older adults.

Mr. Katz suggested forming an ad hoc committee to review the bylaws and make suggestions for revising them.

Ms. Thompson pointed out that the Network as a whole has voted to participate with the Kirkland Senior Council on advocacy issues and has in the past written letters to both state and federal legislators as a part of its mission.

Ms. O'Reilly explained that all advocacy letters sent out by the Eastside Human Services Forum are reviewed by the individual sponsoring cities as part of the check and balance system. For Bellevue, the documents are reviewed by Intergovernmental Affairs Director Diane Carlson. Ms. VonWald said Ms. Carlson has been reviewing the letters sent by the Network. She added that the local elected officials are plugged into the Eastside Human Services Forum and participate in approving the annual legislative agenda; the legislative agenda adopted by the Network is the same except it focuses only on the issues related to seniors.

Ms. VonWald proposed putting together an ad hoc committee to review the mission, purpose and by-laws and develop suggestions for making revisions.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Rasnack shared with the Network copies of the letter being worked on which will be sent out to the legislators in the 41<sup>st</sup> and 48<sup>th</sup> Districts regarding the McKenna legislation, and a revised edition of a letter of introduction to Senator Gordon.

Ms. Rasnack reminded the Network that Senior Lobby Day is scheduled for February 18. She handed out copies of the legislation session calendar and appointment times for the two districts, and said she plans to go to attend along with Ms. Thompson, Ms. Kendall, Mr. Katz and Ms. Sharek. She said anyone wanting to go will be welcome.

Ms. Rasnack reported that there are two additional issues around which the advocacy committee would like to work. First, the articles run by the *Seattle Times* regarding elder abuse in adult family homes were powerful and brought forward a lot of very good information. The committee believes the Network should draft a thank-you letter to the reporter who wrote the articles and to the *Seattle Times* for running in the articles.

Motion to direct the advocacy committee to write a thank-you letter to the reporter and the *Seattle Times* was made by Ms. English. Second was by Ms. Seltzer and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Rasnack said the committee also wanted to write a letter regarding the Sound Transit light rail options that pass through Bellevue.

Mr. Katz explained that Sound Transit originally proposed a route that would stop at Overlake Hospital. The alternative route that has been proposed would have an elevated station at NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street, quite a ways from the hospital. That would not be convenient for anyone, and especially not for older adults. Elevated stations also rely on elevators, and when they are out of order seniors and the disabled are particularly inconvenienced.

Ms. Gray said the advocacy committee fully realizes that making comments on the alignment of light rail through the city falls outside the role of the committee. However, the committee believes it would be appropriate to draft a letter in which design issues of interest to older adults are highlighted. The committee has suggested including the following points: 1) a station should be located on or about NE 10<sup>th</sup> Street so that people with limited mobility can more easily access healthcare facilities such as Group Health, Overlake Hospital, and Children's Hospital; 2) stations should be at grade level making them accessible for people with limited mobility, such as those who use wheelchairs, walkers and canes, and those with limited physical stamina; 3) elevated platforms are more difficult for people with limited mobility to negotiate, therefore elevated stations should be avoided whenever possible; 4) Sound Transit should be mindful that stations located on hills present a significant obstacle for people with limited mobility, therefore planners should avoid stations on hills whenever possible in order to improve accessibility for those with limited mobility; 5) stations should be located in a way that promotes ease of connection from other mass transit options, such as bus stops and transit centers; 6) since Bellevue has the highest percentage of people aged 65 and older in King County, the needs of older people should be a transit priority within the city of Bellevue; 7) statistics show that Bellevue's population of citizens aged 65 and older is rising steadily and rapidly; and 8) original plans for Sound Transit acknowledged the needs of older adults and those with limited mobility, and Sound Transit should continue to maintain that focus.

Mr. Katz pointed out that the proposed station near NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street is behind Whole Foods, near a number of auto dealerships but not near any doctor's offices. That is one more issue that should be highlighted in the letter. Ms. Seltzer suggested the issue could be folded into the first point.

Ms. VonWald said in April 2009 the City Council took a position relative to their preferred light rail route through the city. Lately they have discussed changing their stand but they have not done so yet. The Council will be meeting with the Sound Transit board on February 11 at Meydenbauer Center at 1:30 p.m. The meeting will be open to the public and might be an interesting discussion. Sound Transit has scheduled a public open house at the Bellevue City Hall on February 18. She commented that the final decisions regarding routing and design will be made by the Sound Transit board.

Motion to accept the recommendation of the advocacy committee with regard to the talking points and to give the advocacy committee the authority to write letters and/or speak on behalf of the Network was made by Ms. Gray. Second was by Ms. Thompson and the motion carried unanimously.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS REPORT

### A. Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative

Ms. Seltzer said Ms. Ressler, Ms. Heyden and she are members of the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative. She said having a staff person on board has made a big difference in getting things moving along. The community conversation that was set up has been put on hold temporarily; when rescheduled, the focus will be on state and federal grants that might be available, the grant writing process, and what the procedures are.

Ms. O'Reilly said there is state and federal money available for coordinated mobility projects. Currently the state and the federal governments are working to align their proposals, so it was concluded the community conversation should be held off until more information is available. When the event is rescheduled, human service providers and non-profit agencies will be invited to attend.

### B. Eastside Human Services Forum

Ms. Seltzer said the workgroup met and agreed to act as a convener in expanding the network of senior groups on the Eastside. The Forum has agreed to convene a meeting in the second or third quarter of the year and specifically invite representatives from all of the area cities to attend. The Network will make the presentation.

Ms. VonWald reminded the Network that at its retreat part of the discussion centered on getting helping other communities organize and get set up to address issues of concern to the growing number of older citizens. While it will not be the job of the Network to walk other cities through every step, in the same way the Kirkland Senior Council provided the spark that got the Network going, the Network can reach out to area jurisdictions and encourage them.

Ms. Seltzer said the Forum has the ability to contact the necessary staff persons from the various cities and to bring them together. Once city staff see the benefit of having a senior board, they can get the necessary people involved to make it happen.

## OTHER BOARDS/COMMISSIONS REPORTS

Mr. Katz said he made comments before the Park Board regarding the park plan update; he clarified that he was speaking on behalf of the Senior Advisory Board and not the Network. Ms. Seltzer said Mr. Katz did a very good job of getting the points across. She said the Park Board has had the Ashwood site in mind for many years as the place to have a recreation and socialization facility in the downtown.

Mr. Katz said a very large group representing the swimming community were at the meeting in force. They highlighted the need for the city to have more and improved swimming facilities. He said he voiced the notion of constructing facilities that would serve the needs of everyone, including the senior community.

Ms. Thompson reported that new Medicaid cards are being issued, but people are calling seniors saying they are from the state and they are asking for bank account and credit information as a condition of sending out the new cards. She said she would like to have

posted at the senior center, at City Hall and the Crossroads City Hall a notice about what is happening and directing seniors not to fall for the ploy. Ms. VonWald said she would do that.

## STAFF REPORT

Ms. VonWald said the planning department will soon kick off a land use update focused on the Eastgate/I-90 corridor. The study will center on the current land uses and what tweaks might be desired. Consideration is being given to forming a citizen advisory committee with representatives from city boards and commissions. She offered to submit the name of a Network member if anyone was willing to participate.

Ms. Gray and Ms. Ressler said they were interested.

Ms. VonWald explained that the city operates on a two-year budget cycle and the process is just beginning to develop the 2011-2012 budget. An entirely new approach will be implemented. The process is focused on budgeting for outcomes and has been named Budget One. Using input from resident surveys and input from city boards and commissions, a set of five outcomes have been developed against which the city will measure all of its programs and services. A results team has been formed around each of the five outcomes; the team members are city employees from all different levels of the organization. Every city department will be asked to submit requests for proposals for their operating and capital program areas to the appropriate results team; those proposals will be measured against the strategy maps each team will develop based on what the citizens have said they want to see the city provide. Each team will have a budget dollar amount to work with and will consider each proposal on its face before developing a recommendation as to what should be funded.

Ms. VonWald said the proposals will all need to be submitted and scored by mid-August. The recommendations from the results teams will be forwarded to the City Manager, and then on to the City Council. The City Council will, of course, have the final say.

## NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Katz said he received a letter from the city saying he might be called on to participate in a survey. He said he was in fact contacted and was allowed a certain leeway in adding comments, so took the opportunity to highlight the need for beat police in the downtown as the area continues to grow.

Ms. O'Reilly said the Needs Update has been printed and is being distributed. She said the document is available online, and added that she would bring copies to the next Network meeting.

Ms. O'Reilly reminded the Network that the city participates in the annual One Night Count of homeless persons. She distributed copies of a summary of the count information and highlighted the Eastside numbers. A total of 104 homeless persons were counted in the Eastside jurisdictions. The gender and age of the persons counted could not always be determined given the rules under which the count is administered, which include not waking anyone found sleeping and keeping a respectful distance away. The tally included residents of Tent City. The results of the count conducted on the same night of people in transitional housing and homeless shelters will be released soon. Countywide, the numbers were down about five percent over the 2009 count; that percent reduction was mirrored by the numbers on the Eastside.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Kathy Iverson said a couple of years ago the Kirkland Senior Council put together a DVD on the issue of universal design. The video covers the basics of what universal design is all about. She suggested the Network might benefit from watching the video.

Ms. Iverson said the St. Andrew's Housing Group is currently working through the permitting process in Kirkland for a large HUD low-income housing project. Residents will pay 30 percent of the income for the units. St. Andrew's has 81 senior housing units about to come online.

Ms. Ressler asked how the annexation of Juanita and Kingsgate will change the senior demographics picture for the city of Kirkland. Ms. Iverson said she anticipates it will make the senior population more spread out. Certainly adding 44,000 new residents to the city will put a strain on the city's budget and service delivery. The Kirkland Senior Council has resolved to market representation from the new areas.

#### UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

Ms. VonWald reviewed with the Network the agenda items for upcoming meetings.

#### ADJOURN

Ms. Kimball adjourned the meeting at 10:28 a.m.