

**BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING
MINUTES**

February 7, 2012
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-120

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dick Englund, Jullie Gray, Jeanne Grote, Beverly Heyden, Peg Jones, Hannah Kimball, Bob Megargel, Susan Posten, Lynne Robinson, Berta Seltzer, Diana Thompson, Terri Wilson, Janet Zielasko

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tomas Corsini, Howard Katz, Bill Merriman, Eileen Rasnack

STAFF PRESENT: Cathy VonWald, Department of Parks & Community Services

OTHERS PRESENT: Nancy Amidei, Retired University of Washington School of Social Work Civic Engagement Project; Cheri Perazzoli, Hearing Loss Association of Washington

RECORDING SECRETARY: Teri Ekstrom

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chair Grote who presided. All committee members were present with the exception of Tomas Corsini, Eileen Rasnack, Howard Katz and Bill Merriman. Ms. Cheri Perazzoli, Hearing Loss Association of Washington introduced herself and said she is working with the city to have hearing assist devices available for those attending meetings. Ms. VonWald stated that she would be speaking at the next BNOA meeting.

APPROVAL OF RETREAT MINUTES – January 17, 2013

Mr. Englund said he would like to make a couple of changes: 1) p. 3 in the last paragraph and the 2nd sentence it should read “A lot could be done for those “less needy” adults to preclude them from being more needy”, and 2) p. 4 in the 2nd to last paragraph it should read “Mr. Englund stated that tasks are distributed among three committees and if we have more committees in which to distribute the tasks, we might have great efficiencies”. Ms. Wilson asked if on p. 3 in the last paragraph and in the last sentence it could read “Ms. Wilson stated that it is a good resource but it is paid for and not inclusive of all services available”.

There was a motion to accept the minutes as changed and the motion was seconded. The motion was voted on unanimously to approve the minutes as changed.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT [Presentation]

Chair Grote introduced Nancy Amidei, Retired University of Washington School of Social Work Civic Engagement Project.

Ms. Amidei stated that she would be covering three different issues: 1) reminder about Olympia and the basics, 2) Olympia budget – priority issues, and 3) easy ways to be involved. You don't want to wait until the day of the vote to discuss the issue with legislators. You need to create a relationship and talk to them about the issues earlier rather than later. There are 49 Senators, 98 in the House and 1 Governor. It takes 25 (Senators) + 50 (House) + 1 (Governor) for a win.

When sending e-mail, cc the Governor because the Governor's office will channel it to the appropriate staff. The Governor will call in appropriate staff to fill him in on an issue.

There is a "coalition majority" in the Senate of 25 and a minority of 24. The legislature is working in different ways with the new arrangement in place. There are legislators from Bellevue's districts who are serving in key roles at this time. Check out committees and their chairs at www.leg.wa.gov

The average age of callers to Olympia is 58 years old and only 7% are under 35 years old. This is a 105 day session with a 2-year budget that needs to be approved. The session is supposed to end on April 28th.

The State budget has a general fund of 31 billion dollars. We are facing a deficit of 1 billion. We have to fill a 1 billion dollar hole and have to find 1.4 billion for K-12 (McCleary decision). Only health, human services and higher education budgets are big enough to fill these deficits. Some say that they could cover the deficit by cutting funding to higher education. Ms. Amidei put in a plea . . . ask them to consider revenues (tax me). We can't grow the economy fast enough to cover the deficits. This is what they are dealing with right now in Olympia. Ms. Amidei also indicated that she has heard from legislators and staff that they have not been receiving a lot of e-mails. People typically will send e-mails and call in regard to specifics but don't know how to respond to the large budget cuts needed. They need 2/3rds majority to raise any revenues.

Ms. Robinson said she talked with Representative Hunter about the current bill and issue in regard to family caregivers being paid to take care of family members. This is currently where the money is going instead of prevention. How do you decide whether this money should go to services needed now or prevention? This dilemma comes up in many areas.

In regard to Medicare expansion, if more people are covered who aren't currently covered then they can get help early on and it will be more of a savings. But this will have to be proven down the line. There is a lot at stake.

Ms. Amidei said there are five ways to be involved:

- 1) Be sure you are signed up with a good advocacy group that has the same values as you do, i.e. AARP, W4A, Aging & Disability Services, budgetandpolicy.org, LEAP (non-partisan analysis), etc. They all have materials and information available.
- 2) Contact your elected officials now. Do it via telephone, e-mail, or even by mail.
- 3) She handed out her cell-phone flyer with the basic contact information for the legislative hotline. One toll free call can send a short message to all of your senators, legislators and the governor. Make up a supply of these “telephones” and give them to everyone you encounter. Pledge to make one toll-free call or email every week the legislature is in Session.
- 4) Advertise your issue: wear or carry something (a bright badge, a briefcase, or bag) that identifies you with your issue or your agency.
- 5) Talk to people you know about the issues. It is more comfortable talking to people you know. You can talk to people you know in public places (grocery store, bus, subway, etc.) and voice the issue so that everyone around can hear and find out about the issues also. Ms. Kimball said that she occasionally will get requests by certain groups to print a stock letter and send it in regarding an issue. Does this help to flood the office with these? Ms. Amidei said they are being bombarded with an issue, which is good because silence is deadly. So, if they get nothing in regard to an issue there won't be a push to do something by the legislators.

Ms. Thompson gave Ms. Amidei a copy of the BNOA Legislative Agenda.

BREAK

COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) **Outreach Committee** –

Ms. VonWald reported that they would have their first 2013 meeting next Monday at 9:00 am in Conference Room 1E-110.

The Active Senior Fair is coming up on March 9th and Ms. VonWald will send out an e-mail with the volunteers schedule.

b) **Transportation/Housing Committee** –

The first meeting will be February 25th at 9:00 am in Conference Room 1E-110. Ms. VonWald will send out a reminder.

c) **Ad Hoc (Hospital Observation Status) Committee** – (reported by Ms. Robinson)

The committee met last night. The committee is going to go into research mode to find out more

about observation status. Mr. Megargel will be getting a copy of the Federal guidelines regarding this issue and Ms. Robinson is going to talk to people at Overlake Hospital to get a copy of their guidelines. Federal guidelines are in place regarding medical observation and then they are evaluated and assessed by each hospital and each hospital then has their own guidelines.

The next meeting of the group is March 5th at 4:00 at North Bellevue Community Center. Ms. Thompson asked if they were going to invite Kirkland to these meetings. It was stated that right now we are in the research mode and after researching we will then decide a plan of action and invite others in at that time.

d) **Advocacy Committee** – (reported by Diana Thompson)

The committee met on February 4th. A number of BNOA members will be attending Senior Lobby Day on February 21. Bellevue has appointments with their legislators. We are also coordinating with Aging & Disability Services with appointments. They have an appointment set up with Representative Maxwell at 11:00 and they might be attending our appointments also.

The bill for Long-Term Planning is a very interesting one and it addresses many issues.

The group talked about having a Legislative Forum but it depends on whether Aging & Disability Services will have the Silver Tsunami.

Ms. Thompson said that it looks like an increase in taxes is needed to sustain services. BNOA has always stayed away from this topic. Ms. VonWald said that we have tried to get legislators to maintain a balanced approach and do no harm to senior care agencies or services. It was a consensus of the group that we should stay away from the tax issue.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP REPORTS

a) **Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative** (reported by Ms. VonWald)

Ms. VonWald stated at the meeting they discussed the EERC projects and had a presentation by Snoqualmie Valley transportation. It was a good discussion because they don't have easy access in the Valley to fixed route service so they shuttle people to get them to service. They talked about the bus passes that you can get when you renew your license tabs. You can donate them to a human services agency (listed on the form) or you can receive them and donate them yourself. The next meeting is at the end of the month.

On Saturday is the Overlake Village & Walking Tour from 10:00-12:00. They will be looking at where light rail will be and possibly affordable housing. This would be a great place to weigh in on age-friendly design.

b) **Eastside Human Services Forum (EHSF)**

Ms. VonWald stated that EHSF has developed their Legislative Advocacy Agenda, which is in line with ours.

c) **Eastside Time Bank** – (reported by Jeanne Grote)

The Eastside Time Bank has formed a new board called TALK (Time Banks of Puget Sound) to help get new Time Bank started. There is also a new membership committee to help reach out to seniors.

Ms. Robinson said that it might be good to do a presentation on the TimeBank for the new BNOA members.

The next TimeBank meeting will be February 14th at Redmond Library. There will also be a Brown Bag in Kirkland on March 29th at the Kirkland Library and another meeting on April 11th at North Bellevue Community Services. For more information, you can look at eastsidetimebank.org.

Mr. Megargel asked if many of the TimeBank members are older adults? Ms. Grote said that there are not many senior members and that is why they started the new membership committee to get seniors involved.

There will be a Shiba Workshop (with Office of Insurance Commissioner and AARP) at Mercer Island Community Center on March 21st from 9:30-2:30 and they will be discussing new things happening with Medicare and Medicaid and the new health laws. Ms. Grote said she has some new websites regarding these issues and will send them out to the group.

d) **Aging & Disability Services Advisory Council**

Their meeting in January was the retreat and the next meeting will be tomorrow.

e) **Parks & Community Services Board** (reported by Lynne Robinson)

Ms. Robinson said for members to let her know how she can be a conduit between BNOA and the Parks & Community Services Board.

The last Parks & Community Services Board was a joint meeting with the Human Services Commission. The group had training on board and commission protocol for the City Clerk's office.

We received a letter back from the Botanical Gardens regarding the transportation at the park. Which committee will be taking on this issue? This will be discussed at the next meeting. Ms. VonWald will redistribute the letter from the Botanical Gardens to members.

STAFF REPORT/UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

Everyone should have received their invitation to the Volunteer Luncheon on February 13th. It is for all that volunteered in 2012. Please RSVP if you haven't already.

Ms. VonWald talked about having Shiba come to talk to the group at the next meeting. It is a really great service that is very under-utilized and we should get information out. Shiba helps older adults and low income people of all ages. We should also have ARCH staff come back to give the group an update.

NEW BUSINESS – none.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS – none.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am.