

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES

July 7, 2011
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-112

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peg English, Jullie Gray, Jeanne Grote, Beverly Heyden, Howard Katz, Merle Keeney, Hannah Kimball, Bob Megargel, Bill Merriman, Eileen Rasnack, Lynne Robinson, Berta Seltzer, Diana Thompson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Richard Englund, Cindy Sharek, Blake Werner

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

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathy Iverson, Kirkland Senior Council; Aaron Laing, Bellevue City Council candidate; Grove Anshell, interested senior

RECORDING SECRETARY: Cathy VonWald

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Chair Rasnack who presided. All committee members were present with the exception of Richard Englund, Cindy Sharek, and Blake Werner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. June 2, 2011

Motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded and was approved unanimously.

KING COUNTY AREA PLAN ON AGING OVERVIEW PRESENTATION

Karen Winston, Planner with the Aging and Disability Services (ADS) noted that ADS is part of the Seattle Human Services Division and is the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the Seattle/King County area. The ADS mission is to develop a community that promotes quality of life, independence and choice for older people and adults with disabilities in King County. The AAA is chartered under the Older Americans Act. There are 629 AAA's in the United States and 13 AAA's in Washington State. ADS is sponsored by the City of Seattle, King County, and United Way of King County. They are required to have an Advisory Committee, so there is a 27-member Advisory Council in which Cathy VonWald and Berta Seltzer are members.

ADS is currently updating their Area Plan and are collecting data that will guide them from 2012-2015. It is based on a community input process and highlights goals for older adults and people with disabilities. This information is updated every two years and there is an annual budget of \$61 million in federal, state and local resources.

For input on the Area Plan the Planning & Allocations Committee members have conducted Community Conversations at ethnic meal sites throughout King County from March to May. Input also came from the on-line questionnaires which were launched through Seniors Digest; 330 questionnaires were completed. For those without computers, 100 completed questionnaires were mailed in, for a total of over 400 responses. Other input has come from ADS Staff input, Home Care Directors, Healthy Aging Partnership and articles about the Area Plan in Seniors Digest and Seattle Gay News. Response has been more than ever before.

The Community Conversations included over 173 seniors at the various ethnic meal sites: Chinese Meal Site, Ukrainian Meal Site, Latino Meal Sites, Somali Meal Site, Eritrean/Ethiopian Meal Site and United Indians of All Tribes. Berta Seltzer attended a couple of the community conversations and stated that the needs of all seniors seem to be very universal.

Some of the themes that came up at the Ethnic Meal Sites was: English is a major barrier; concerns regarding health care (coverage and expense); housing; opportunity for socialization; transportation for field trips/outings and food & nutrition. Most said they purchase food from grocery stores, 90% of Ukrainians use the food banks, and East Africans say that the food banks lack cultural foods.

Of those that completed the questionnaires: 77% Women & 23% Men; 25% identified as caregivers; 35% SW Seattle; 30% North Seattle; 21% Central Seattle; 8% East King County, 5% SE King County; 41% <60, 47% age 60 to 74, and 12% >75+. In regard to housing: 49% live with spouse/partner, 38% live alone, 8% living with adult children or family, and 8% are in other (assisted living facilities or continuing care retirement communities).

The top three needs for older adults is affordable health care, income & finances, and housing. For adults with disabilities the three top needs listed were transportation/mobility, affordable health care and housing.

When asked how people get information about aging programs/services, they stated: they use the internet (48%); senior centers/Seattle Mayor's Office for Senior Citizens (42%); television (39%); and church and/or community bulletins (36%).

When asked what their activities of interest are, they stated: volunteerism (54%), exercise programs (52%), educational programs (47%), and arts programs (39%). Their concerns for walking in their neighborhood were listed as poor sidewalks, personal safety, physical safety, and other (distance, too many hills, traffic, and construction). They also stated that a neighborhood center or gathering place, improved bus routes and better lighting would make this better.

The next step for the Area Plan is that the Advisory Committee will do a final review before forwarding it to the Sponsors in July. The Sponsors will then approve them for public review. The public review will happen July 25 – August 12 and there will be three public hearings in King County. The public hearing at Bellevue City Hall will be on August 9th at 10am. In August, the public comment will be reviewed and the Area Plan will be adjusted as necessary. At that time, it will be forwarded to the Sponsors for final review and approval. In September, the Sponsors final review and approval will be complete. The final area plan is due October 3, 2011 to the State Unit on Aging.

The Area Plan goal areas are: addressing basic needs, improving health and well-being, promoting aging readiness, and increasing independence for frail older adults and people with disabilities.

At this time Ms. Winston handed out the objectives in draft form and encouraged everyone to go through them and ask any questions or make any suggestions on what is missing or should be modified or added. She also passed her business card around for anyone to contact her.

Ms. Thompson asked about the transportation issue. What is happening with the Bus Buddy Program? She was told that the Bus Buddy Program's funding ended in June and the Easy Rider Connector funding ended also. Ms. VonWald stated that Hopelink is working on an Easy Rider Website with all of the transportation options. It is a great website. Also, the Travel Ambassador program in which someone sits down with you one-on-one with all of the transportation options available is great. Ms. Seltzer stated that the transportation problem wasn't how to take the bus but that they couldn't read the signs to take the bus since the signs are all in English.

Ms. Robinson stated mental health needs should be addressed for those who can't get out to be treated. She would like to focus on ways to address these issues and reach out to people with their mental health needs.

Mr. Katz stated that Sound Transit is going to put the station a half mile from where the hospitals and appointments are. Ms. Robinson stated that she was told that the station has mainly been created for workers and it is not designed for people to get to appointments. Ms. VonWald said the Eastside Easy Rider program has this on their radar to hopefully provide some sort of shuttle when the time comes if is necessary.

Ms. Winston indicated that page 4 of the Area Plan draft outlines the shuttle issue. Shuttles are mentioned and the Hyde Shuttle which currently runs in the Des Moines area and has recently expanded further north all over Seattle is highlighted. Hope is to expand it even further. It also states in the draft plan that they will advocate to increase the language capacity of neighborhood transportation drivers. She said she hopes to see everyone at the public hearing at Bellevue City Hall on August 9th.

Mr. Katz asked what was going to be done about the issue of the bus signs not being able to be read. Ms. VonWald stated that the Cultural Navigator program is intended to help people with this.

BREAK

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Housing (Jeanne Grote)

Ms. VonWald said that the senior options housing website is live and that the Bellevue Network on Aging group (specifically Lynn Robinson) should be proud that they were the initiators of this project. It is a non-commercial site that not only covers Bellevue, but the other ten cities involved in ARCH. It is a job well done. Ms. Robinson said that Ms. VonWald is the one who connected the group with ARCH, so it was certainly a group effort and that she was a great facilitator. Ms. VonWald stated that it was a pretty great accomplishment by this group. The brochures are going out far and wide. Ms. Gray said she has passed the website on to others such as the MS group and it is a great site. The link to the website can be found on the City of Bellevue Network on Aging webpage and the website of the North Bellevue Community Center. Ms. Robinson will be presenting information to the Park Board in regard to this at an upcoming meeting and if you receive any quotes in regard to the website please forward them on to her. Hard copies are available for those that do not have internet access. Ms. Thompson stated that someone should speak at a Senior Net meeting in regard to it. Ms. Robinson said she would be willing to do it with help.

At this time, it was reported that Peg English will be moving to San Francisco. It is with great disappointment that she is leaving the group. She will miss the group and her contact numbers will stay the same.

Ms. Grote reminded everyone about Coordinator of Patient Services (COPS) which will be discussing a virtual village (aging in place) at the Phinney Neighborhood Association on July 20th.

B. Outreach (Jeanne Grote)

She said the committee reviewed the Strawberry Festival. The event went well and the strawberries were wonderful. Mr. Merriman stated it was very interesting to see how hard it is to convince people how important it is to have the Vial of Life. Mr. Keeney felt a lot of people knew all about the Vial of Life and were picking them up for neighbors or friends. He thought we should add a sign regarding the Network on Aging connection to the Vials of Life. Mr. Merriman also stated he thought it would be a good idea to have all of the contents of the Vial on a sheet to display. Ms. VonWald said she thought it would be good idea and could laminate it for display.

Ms. Grote said the committee discussed the August 2, Crossroads Farmer's Market and the August 20, Bellevue Farmers Market schedules. The committee reviewed the World Elder Abuse Awareness Proclamation on July 6th, and the presentation that Ms. Rasnack gave at the Newport Hills Community Association. They talked about the City Facebook page and Ms. VonWald will be updating this for us.

The Committee is working on setting up a meeting with Group Health, Overlake Hospital, and Evergreen Hospital.

The next meeting of the Eastside TimeBank in July 14. Ms. Grote is a new member of the Board for the Eastside Timebank. At future meetings she plans to give regular updates to the BNOA about Timebank activities.

C. Advocacy (Ms. Thompson)

The committee decided that the Network should once again convene the Legislative Forum in November with the understanding and assurance that the Kirkland Senior Council and Bellevue Network on Aging members will indeed attend. It will be on a Wednesday or a Thursday in October or November from 5:00-7:00pm. When dates are decided it will be passed on so everyone can put it on their calendars.

The BNOA has voted to support the Veterans & Human Services Levy. This past week the Bellevue City Council agreed to support it also. Eastside Human Services Forum wants to get an OpEd in the Bellevue Reporter. Ms. Thompson said she will be writing an article also for the Seattle Times. It might be a good thing to add to our website.

The Advocacy Committee wrote thank you letter to the state legislators. In the letter, the state legislators were invited to attend some meetings and they did get a response saying that Larry Springer will attend in the Fall. It was mentioned that invitations should be sent to legislators to attend next month's BNOA meeting in regard to Human Traffickers that is on the agenda.

Ms. Thompson briefly went over the legislative items. Senior Citizen's Services Act Funding was sustained. We supported actions in regard to vulnerable adults as recommended by the vulnerable adults study group. None of the actions were enacted or proposed, however, other legislation protecting older adults was passed. The support for adult day health funding was decreased and 60% of adults won't be served. The legislation regarding prosecution of vulnerable adult crimes the definition of exploitation was changed and seems to be widened and more inclusive. In regard to affordable health care, oral health care, hospice, preventative care, etc. Medicaid will not include hearing aids, glasses, and there will be fewer hours of home care. The one good thing is that the programs are still operating and they weren't completely cut.

We continue to be involved with Evergreen Court. Ms. Robinson was thinking it might be a better fit under housing, especially since they were looking for a project. Ms. Rasnack said she has worked on a draft e-mail to send out and will continue doing this. The Housing Committee might possibly be able to take on the next phase of it. We are waiting to see what will happen next before more action is needed.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP REPORTS

A. Transportation Update

Ms. VonWald stated that Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative will soon launch their website and noted that the BNOA is prominently listed on it as a partner. She will let us know when it does live..... another huge accomplishment that has come out of the work of the BNOA.

B. City of Bellevue Initiatives

Ms. VonWald said she has not heard anything in regard to the planning for the Sound Transit hospital station. She will continue to keep the group posted.

C. Eastside Human Services Forum

D. Eastside Time Bank . . . discussed earlier in the meeting.

OTHER BOARDS/COMMISSION REPORTS

Ms. Robinson said that there was nothing currently to report from the Park Board.

STAFF REPORTS

Ms. VonWald thanked Ms. Sharek and Ms. Kimball for being at the City Council meeting for the World Elder Abuse Awareness Proclamation on June 6th and also to everyone who worked at the Strawberry Festival.

She said she will be asking for 2-3 volunteers to be on the nominating committee for new members at the August meeting. The nominating committee will meet 1-2 times and conduct interviews of new members over a two day period.

It was asked by Mr. Englund why the Bellevue Network on Aging wasn't listed in "It's Your City"? Ms. VonWald said that we will be added in the next edition and aging services will be listed separately.

There is a City ordinance regarding shopping carts which includes a \$50 fine if a cart is taken away from a store. Carts are found all over the City. Police say that in general many of the offenders are older adults bringing them to the bus stops. Ms. VonWald has a project proposal to find a sponsor to get foldable rolling shopping carts that we can provide for them or try to figure out another solution to the problem. The Outreach Committee said they would take on the project.

Mr. Merriman facilitated an article about the Bellevue Network on Aging to be published in the July issue of the Points neighborhood magazine. A copy was distributed.

On August 2nd there will be a vote on the Older Americans Act. We have it on our legislative agenda to support. We should advocate for no cuts. Ms. Thompson made a motion to support funding of Older Americans Act at current levels. Ms. Robinson seconded the motion. Ms. Katz asked who we are reaching out to? Ms. VonWald stated we are reaching out to all legislators. She will check and see who to contact. Ms. Thompson stated she would like to amend the original motion to say support of “at least” current levels. This motion was seconded by Ms. Grote. The amendment was passed unanimously. A vote was taken on the amended motion. The motion passed with one “nay” vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Katz stated that the biggest current crime is car break-ins. People are leaving items in cars. Mr. Katz suggested putting an article in the Bellevue Reporter to alert people of the danger of leaving valuable in sight in your car. He also suggested that the Police be invited to report on crimes involving seniors at an upcoming BNOA meeting.

On November 3rd, Attorney General Rob McKenna will be presenting his older adult initiatives to the BNOA. It was suggested that the BNOA provide him with information about what the Network is interested in hearing about...prior to the meeting. Ms. VonWald will contact his staff to confirm his attendance and to give a head's up on topics of interest. Members are also encouraged to look at Rob McKenna's website to see what he has listed as senior issues/initiatives.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

Aaron Laing, Bellevue City Council candidate, thanked the network for having him at the meeting today. He is really interested in the shopping cart issue and would like to work on it whether or not elected.

Cathy Iverson, Kirkland Senior Council said they had a successful 3rd Annual Senior Art Show. It was very big and everyone had a great time.

UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

In August, a Seattle Police Department detective will talk about Human Trafficking. In September Ms. VonWald said she will look into getting the police to talk about crimes against older adults. In October, Gwen Rousseau from the Planning & Community Development Department will be back with demographic updates. In November the Attorney General will be here. In December we will have our end-of-the-year event.

We will be advertising the BNOA vacancies in September. Application will be due early October. Interviews will take place in October. The new members will be welcome to come to the end-of-the-year event.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30am.