

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on March 5, 2013

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

January 15, 2013
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Bruels, Commissioners Beighle, McEachran, Perelman, Plaskon, Stout, Yantis

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Stephen Miller, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Councilmember Wallace

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Bruels who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Perelman, who arrived at 6:31p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. November 20, 2012

Commissioner Beighle pointed out that the minutes indicate she was present when in fact she was not.

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Plaskon. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stout and it carried unanimously.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A motion to open nominations for Commission Chair was made by Commissioner

Stout. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Beighle and it carried unanimously.

A motion to nominate Commissioner Yantis to serve as Chair was made by Commissioner Stout. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Beighle.

There were no additional nominations.

A motion to close nominations was made by Commissioner Stout. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Beighle and it carried unanimously.

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

A motion to open nominations for Commission Vice Chair was made by Commissioner Stout. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Beighle and it carried unanimously.

A motion to nominate Commissioner Perelman to serve as Vice Chair was made by Commissioner Stout. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Beighle.

There were no additional nominations.

A motion to close nominations was made by Commissioner Stout. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Beighle and it carried unanimously.

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

Chair Bruels passed the gavel to the new chair.

Commissioner Stout took a moment to thank Commissioner Bruels for his leadership over the past year and for the work done on behalf of the Commission. Chair Yantis said Commissioner Bruels's management of the meetings during the funding cycle was particularly impressive and kept things moving along efficiently.

6. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner McEachran reported that he visited the YWCA Family Village with Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano and came away impressed by the collaborative impact that results from their work. He said he was also taken by the reality that there are many capital needs, particularly for upkeep.

Commissioner McEachran said he intended to attend the upcoming events regarding the Bellevue Transit Plan Update and the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Commissioner Stout said she recently had lunch with the person who writes the

United Way public policy piece. She suggested any Commissioner not receiving that document should consider signing up for it.

Commissioner Beighle informed the Commissioners that the homeless One Night Count event is slated for Thursday, January 24. She said she would again be leading the downtown Bellevue team. Three spots are left on the team should anyone want to join in.

Chair Yantis noted that several Commissioners attended the Eastside Human Services Forum event in December. One element included brainstorming around sustainable fundraising for human services. One option raised was asking people to donate the difference between what they paid last year for their energy bills and what they are paying this year.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie said the discussion was focused on the Eastside Social Sustainability Project, which was a project of the Eastside Human Services Forum. The project has been ongoing for a couple of years and is focused on the three areas of sustainability and connecting them in ways that will generate funds for human services. The work is predicated on the understanding that healthy communities need economic, environmental and social sustainability.

Mr. Adriano said he is currently working in a lead position for the project for the Forum. He said the current focus is on taking the feedback received from the charrette held in the early summer of 2012, and the ideas that arose from the Forum event, and in conjunction with an Evans School student work toward developing an actionable plan ready to be launched in late 2013 or early 2014.

Councilmember Wallace reported that the Council is currently working to start up the new year. At the Council's January 14 meeting there was discussion regarding the Downtown Livability Initiative which will be undertaken over the course of the year. He reported that recently he participated with Councilmember Stokes, Ms. Leslie and Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly, Chief of Police Linda Pillo, the Deputy chief of police, Major Mike Johnson and other police officers in a discussion regarding human trafficking, a topic that has been in the news lately. Also involved in the discussion were members of non-profit organizations that are doing what they can to raise awareness of the issue that is affecting Bellevue and the region. Human trafficking involves the victimization of women and girls in prostitution and immigrants being put into work situations that are coercive and unfairly paid. The discussion involved how to help the police identify and fight the issues using available resources, and where things stand with respect to human services programs to help those who have been victimized. The meeting was eye-opening but also very positive.

Councilmember Wallace commented that King County has begun a human trafficking awareness campaign, and the state Attorney General's office is actively addressing the issue as well.

Ms. Leslie indicated her intent to share the presentation with the Commission at a future meeting.

Ms. O'Reilly said she has been in contact with her counterparts in Kirkland and Redmond and has suggested that a training session on human trafficking be sponsored for non-profit providers, probably in the spring. Redmond has responded positively. There are providers already directly involved in the human trafficking issue, but other providers, particularly those that work with older adults, could benefit from becoming better informed.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Plaskon, Ms. Leslie said much of the awareness training will be focused on helping people know how they can get away from their enslavers. King County Sexual Assault Resource Center is a major resource for connecting victims with various agencies and programs. Youth Care and Friends of Youth are involved as well, as is Life Wire. The police can shut down the massage parlors where much of the abuse is taking place, but once they do so the women who were working there need assistance in getting away from their abusers.

Councilmember Wallace said hotel owners have no desire to see human trafficking taking place at their establishments. Giving them training could go a long way toward helping to stop the practice. The same goes for landlords. The police department is actively working to thwart all forms of human trafficking. One thing they have been doing is working with code enforcement in going after the illegal massage parlors that are operating without the proper business licenses. Much is being done, but more needs to be done.

Commissioner Beighle suggested information should be shared with the schools where teens attend as well.

Councilmember Wallace informed the Commissioners that he and Ms. Leslie recently had a conversation about having human services portrayed a bit more prominently on the city's website.

Councilmember Wallace raised the issue of one big day of giving for The Seattle Foundation called GiveBig. He suggested that if the crossover between organizations supported by Bellevue and those supported by The Seattle Foundation, it might be possible to increase the donations to those organizations. For one thing local organizations could be informed that The Seattle Foundation fundraiser could benefit Bellevue agencies and programs.

Mr. Adriano introduced new intern Stephen Miller, a first-year student in the MSW program at the University of Washington. Mr. Miller said he did his undergraduate work at the University of Washington as well. A native of Portland, Oregon, he said he has lived in Seattle for the past nine years. He said his honors thesis was on barriers to higher education for low-income and underrepresented students, a topic

that continues to be his focus.

Commissioner Beighle asked Mr. Miller if his research on barriers to higher education included a focus on immigrants. He responded by saying he has done some periphery work on that topic. The data are clear in showing that there are huge barriers for immigrants when it comes to higher education.

7. DISCUSSION

A. 2013 Human Services Commission Work Plan

Ms. Leslie said the Commission typically takes time at its first meeting of the year to discuss the work plan and to highlight issues that should be added to agendas for the year. She noted that because the Needs Update document would be updated during the year several meetings will be dedicated to briefings on a variety of issues and relevant trends. Ms. O'Reilly has the lead on the update and throughout the year she will involve the Commission in providing input, participating in community conversations, and reviewing draft reports.

Because CDBG funding is annual rather than biannual, time will need to be spent going through that process. The 2013 CDBG allocation amount may not be known for several months yet. HUD requires two public hearings to be conducted annually, one in the spring and one in the fall. The one in the spring will provide the opportunity for the provider community and the public to offer input on needs in the community.

There will need to be a review of the contracts funded for 2013 and 2014; the second year of funding is predicated on meeting the contracted goals and outcomes during the first year.

Ms. Leslie said the Council is typically updated regarding the Needs Update in April. At that briefing staff shares with the Councilmembers the plan for collecting information for the update, and seeks from them ideas about information that should be included.

The work to update the Comprehensive Plan will also involve the Commission's time during the year, beginning on January 24 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. On that date the city's board and commission members have been asked to attend a joint orientation session. A public Comprehensive Plan scoping event is planned for the evening of January 29 at Crossroads Community Center. The primary role for the Human Services Commission will be to review the Human Services Element, but the Commission will also be looking at the Housing Element, which is under the purview of the Planning Commission. Planning staff has suggested scheduling a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Human Services Commission to look at the Housing Element issues.

The Commission will also during the year work collaboratively with other Eastside human services commissions and committees.

Ms. Leslie said the city periodically receives updates from the American Community Survey. Staff demographer Gwen Rousseau will share that information as it is available.

The Commission will be kept updated relative to legislative issues over the course of the year, particularly those related to the legislative agendas established by Eastside Human Services Forum and the city. The Commission will also be kept informed with regard to various regional human services funding mechanisms, like the veterans and human services levies and the MIDD sales tax. Agencies are currently meeting with city councilmembers to talk about the possibility of enacting a 3/10ths of one percent sales tax increase for regional human services. The taxing mechanism is something the legislature allows counties to do, provided at least one third of the money raised is used across the broad category of criminal justice and public safety. The funds actually get split 60/40 between the counties and the cities, so the cities benefit directly.

Ms. Leslie said the Commission will be kept in the loop regarding various regional collaborations and initiatives, including the Eastside Social Sustainability Partnership.

Another issue the Commission will want to be involved with is the siting of shelters. The Eastside Human Services Forum has taken on the issue as part of its work plan, and ARCH is involved as well. The men's winter shelter in Bellevue will have to be relocated because the neighborhood in which it is currently located has said it will not allow it next winter.

The King County Committee to End Homelessness continues to do its work. One element of their work, the task force on single adult shelters, will be coming forward with specific recommendations for expanding shelter capacity outside the city of Seattle.

Ms. Leslie said there are always transportation issues that need to be discussed by the Commission. Transportation is a major issue when it comes to siting shelters.

Eastside Pathways continues to chug along. Parks staff recently attended a meeting in which an update on the work was provided, and the Commission will be kept up to date periodically as well regarding the collective impact project. The Commission will also be kept in the loop relative to the work of the Network on Aging, wraparound services, and transportation issues. The Community Diversity Plan is in process; staff is slated to participate in intensive cultural competence training sessions.

Several agency tours will be scheduled throughout the year, and the Commissioners will be asked to participate. ARCH and the home repair programs will provide updates to the Commission, and panels will be put together to discuss a variety of

topics ranging from childcare to senior issues.

Commissioner Stout suggested the Commission could benefit from having a lobbyist or two come and talk about what happened during the legislative session after it wraps up.

Commissioner Bruels said he would like to be updated with regard to immigration issues. Commissioner Beighle concurred.

Commissioner McEachran said during the funding cycle some grants were made with compliance conditions and it would be good to know how they are playing out. It would also be good for the Commission to hear about unique and collaborative efforts being carried out by agencies.

Commissioner Perelman suggested the Commission could benefit from having an update regarding healthcare reform and what the changes will mean. Ms. O'Reilly said enrollment will begin in the fall of 2013 so more information should be in hand in the summer.

The Commissioners concluded that an additional update on human trafficking would be in order.

Commissioner Stout said she would like an update regarding domestic violence statistics relative to continued economic difficulties, veterans coming home, and other reasons.

Commissioner Perelman said it would be interesting to have a presentation about human services initiatives that are happening around the nation that may be different from what is happening regionally.

Ms. Leslie said she would leave some spaces open to allow for special issues as they arise.

8. DISCUSSION

A. Collaboration with Other Eastside Human Services Commissions/Committees

Mr. Adriano said the notion of having all Eastside human services commissions and committees meet together to discuss issues and trends has been floating around for about a year. A tentative joint meeting has been set for March 28.

Mr. Adriano reminded the Commissioners that the joint commissions and committees met in 2012 to discuss emerging issues. David Okimoto from United Way made the presentation, and concerns about funding were voiced. The meeting did, however, engender a general sense that the bodies should increase their level of collaboration

because of the understanding that the needs transcend municipal borders.

The human services staff from Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland, Issaquah and Sammamish met on January 11 to lay the foundation for further inter-commission cooperation. The themes that emerged from the staff meeting were: the current funding processes the individual cities go through and their evolutions; uniform information presentations; regional issues; and the need to share and coordinate commission work plans and processes.

With regard to funding processes, Mr. Adriano said there was a sense that the regional nature of human services needs to be reinforced, which of course will impact funding decisions. To start with each of the cities needs to sit down and talk about how they each make their funding decisions. The discussion should be broad enough to incorporate ideas for how the commissions can work together on decision making going forward. If changes are going to be made to the way funding decisions are made, the groundwork will need to begin fairly soon well in advance of the next funding cycle.

Mr. Adriano said there could be great value in the various commissions meeting jointly to receive information and reports from panels and organizations. The joint format would make it possible for the commissions to gain a collective understanding of the issues presented. There could also be presentations by staff from the jurisdictions to the joint commissions regarding programs that are commonly funded.

Regional issues fall under a very broad umbrella. There may be opportunities for the joint commissions to work together on advocacy opportunities. While city staff are often precluded from engaging in advocacy activities, individual commission members in their capacity as private citizens certainly can. In Bellevue the Commission cannot advocate on its own; advocacy by the Commission is carried out through the City Council.

Mr. Adriano said the idea behind sharing work plans includes the notion of possibly including other cities in developing the Needs Update, particularly around the community conversations. It would also be good for the commission chairs to communicate with each other regularly, not just at joint meetings.

Chair Yantis asked how the process of the chairs communicating with each other more regularly would play out. Mr. Adriano suggested what that will look like remains wide open. The topic could be broached at the joint meeting in March.

Commissioner Bruels suggested the sharing of meeting agendas should be done at a bare minimum.

Commissioner McEachran suggested two illustrations of how important working jointly with commissions from other jurisdictions could be. The first was mutual requests for funding from Andrews Glen and others and the collaborative impact that

may result for veterans. The second was the South Kirkland park and ride where significant steps are being taken to address transportation, affordable housing and other issues regardless of jurisdictional lines.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Perelman, Mr. Adriano said Bellevue's funding contribution totals \$1.3 million, whereas the other nine cities together totals only \$1.2 million.

Commissioner Bruels said working cooperatively with the other Eastside cities could yield a more coordinated voice with King County and the state. Seattle has a big voice, and by working together the Eastside cities could have an equally big voice.

Commissioner Beighle said she could not see how joint funding decisions would be beneficial to anyone. The Commission already has a difficult enough time getting to a final recommendation, and bringing more people into the process would only complicate matters. Additionally, Bellevue residents may not be comfortable allowing people from other jurisdictions to help decide how Bellevue dollars are to be allocated. She said she liked the idea of sharing agendas and meeting jointly to hear and share information.

Commissioner Stout said it is likely that the coming five to ten years will see the pool of dollars available to allocate shrink. Part of the joint focus should be on identifying the critical human service issues that need to be addressed. Bellevue always receives a number of peripheral applications for amounts of money that not enough to make a significant big picture impact. Strong consideration should be given to making sure the funds each city has are used most efficiently in addressing the most significant issues that span the jurisdictional lines.

Ms. Leslie said one possible approach would be to share with the joint commissions the policies each jurisdiction has relative to human services. Bellevue has a human services element in its Comprehensive Plan; not every city has that. Bellevue's overarching policy has always been to fund the continuum of safety net programs in order to preserve their stability. Understanding how aligned or unaligned the policies of the Eastside cities are would be helpful.

Commissioner Plaskon agreed it would be useful to know what the other cities can and cannot do by reason of their charter, policies, or population base. If there are service gaps that result, it will be necessary to get the Councilmembers of the Eastside cities to work together. Ms. Leslie noted that each city has a different method for determining how much money will be earmarked for human services. Bellevue has an established formula. Kirkland has sort of a per-capita formula, but it is necessary to seek additional money from the Council every time.

Commissioner Bruels suggested some cities may want to pick an area to focus their limited funds on instead of giving only very small amounts to a number of applicants. By working together, the cities could fund the continuum of services more efficiently.

Chair Yantis said he judged a high level of interest on the part of the Commission and suggested a meeting or two should be put on the agenda to discuss topics and strategy ahead of the joint commissions meeting. Concentrating allocations to a fewer number of agencies might be one option.

Commissioner Perelman suggested that if the minimum amount of fund organizations can ask for were to be raised, the available dollars would as a result go to fewer agencies. That could force the Commission to look very differently at each application.

Commissioner Stout agreed that limiting the number of funded agencies could have merit, but at the same time the Commission will need to make sure it allows for some degree of flexibility to address the unknown next big issue.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly reported that the contract for the online and telephone survey work for the Needs Update has been completed. The work is anticipated to begin in early March.

Ms. O'Reilly said several months ago she and Commissioner McEachran had a discussion about how to improve access to information from the faith communities. She said Mr. Miller will be taking on that challenge.

Ms. O'Reilly said she is coordinating with Parks Planner Camron Parker with regard to tapping into the community interactions planned as part of developing the Community Diversity Plan. Information that flows from that process will be used in updating the Needs Update.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie invited the Commissioners to attend the city's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. event on Monday, January 21 at the Crossroads Shopping Center from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. In addition to entertainment, there will be a health fair.

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Yantis adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date