

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on November 20, 2012

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

October 2, 2012
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, Joseph Adriano, Jennette Folta, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

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 6:40 p.m., and Commissioner Plaskon, who arrived at 6:45 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 6, 2012

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Doug Hoople, 10637 SE 22nd Street, spoke as chair of the King County Veterans Levy Oversight Committee. He said for the last several months he along with the Chair of the Human Service Levy Oversight Committee have been attending the meetings of the King County Council where the levy fund balance allocation ordinance, and the ordinance to approve the 2011 Annual Plan Report from the first levy, were discussed. Both ordinances were ultimately approved. On the veterans

side, the focus is on the aerospace employment training, and refurbishing rental housing for use by veterans. The mobile medical van, which under the first levy was a pilot program focused on south King County, has been enhanced through the second levy. A new medical van is needed and will cost \$375,000, and the hope is the program will be expanded beyond just south King County. The medical van program is most successful when combined with a feeding program. The Veterans Levy funds are flowing to the areas where the biggest populations of veterans are.

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Stout said she and Commissioner Perelman participated in the Day of Caring project along with the staff.

Commissioner McEachran said he participated in the third annual Congregations for the Homeless fundraising lunch. The event netted about \$61,000. He said he also attended the first annual celebration dinner at Andrew's Glen.

Commissioner Perelman said she attended the Cultural Navigator Program put on at mini City Hall at Crossroads Shopping Center. She said she witnessed two navigators meeting with individuals. The program has seen an uptick in the number of persons looking for jobs and the number of persons looking to start businesses.

Councilmember Wallace thanked the Commission for the work done to develop a funding proposal for the Council. He asked for comments from the Commission regarding the process.

Commissioner Stout said there was not enough CDBG or General Fund dollars to address the needs that are evident in the community. Chair Bruels agreed and noted that accordingly it was necessary to make some difficult decisions.

Commissioner McEachran said he was very impressed with the background work done by staff that enabled the Commission to make the hard decisions. In the end the Commission offered up a recommendation that if approved will make a difference in the community. Chair Bruels said the work of the Commission absolutely could not be done without the staff.

Commissioner Yantis agreed that the available funding was not sufficient to meet the demand, but said the Commission is very grateful the city has committed funds for human services.

Commissioner Plaskon said the entire application and review process is very thorough. The information from the staff is informative and helpful, the application forms are specific, and the Commission's discussions are free and open. The available dollars will be spent in the right places, but of course having more money would mean more could be done to address human service needs in the community.

Councilmember Wallace commented that the Seattle Foundation sponsors what they call Give BIG. He said a similar approach, which involves letting the business community know which human service agencies are being funded, might work in Bellevue to help leverage private sector funding.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie said the King County Alliance is still working to make up a human services gap in funding on a regional basis. They are looking at various strategies, including a potential ballot measure for 2014.

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano introduced intern Jennette Folta. Ms. Folta said she is excited to see what the year will bring. She said one area of focus for her will be the Needs Update.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Presentation on Crisis Solution Center

Susan Schoeld, Crisis Diversion Program Manager for King County, said she oversees all of the crisis diversion pre-booking and pre-hospitalization services related to the mental illness and drug dependency (MIDD) plan. Graden Andres, Clinical Director for the Downtown Emergency Services Center (DESC), said the Crisis Solution Center is one of several programs he oversees.

Ms. Schoeld said the Crisis Solution Center is funded by the one-tenth of one percent sales tax through the MIDD plan. A couple of years ago an RFP was put out for services, and the DESC submitted two proposals, both of which were approved and awarded funding.

The Crisis Solution Center opened on August 6 and offers three programs that have a very limited referral base, which was set up intentionally to help the first responders in the community to focus on getting those in need into appropriate services. Hospital emergencies and social workers are considered to be first responders.

Each mobile crisis team consists of two persons. The teams work 24 hours per day, seven days per week and 365 days per year serving the needs of King County. The job of the mobile crisis teams is to respond to first responder calls from law enforcement, emergency room personnel and fire department medics and to offer crisis intervention services in the moment aimed at helping to stabilize the person in need. Services are provided through the program for adults only; the Children's Crisis Outreach Response System is a separate program in King County that works with children under the age of 18.

Ms. Schoeld said a phone call is all it takes to get in touch with the crisis team. First responders can make contact directly via cell phone or by using the dispatch service. Basic information about the client is collected by the crisis team, including the nature

of the crisis situation. The teams are also available to provide consultations, and they can provide transportation.

The Crisis Solution Center can receive individuals for up to 72 hours. The center is staffed with case managers, mental health professionals, chemical dependency professionals, peer counselors, nurses, and others to address the individual needs of those brought to the center. The goal is to make sure that as clients leave the center they have actual linkages to services in the community. Clients are accepted by referral only, and the clients must have some ability to participate in the services and be in some control of their behavior. Clients are in the center voluntarily and are not locked in.

Ms. Schoeld said jail diversions are offered through the Crisis Solution Center for some minor misdemeanor charges and some minor felony drug offenses. The clients are offered the choice between going to jail for their offense or receiving services. Those who choose to receive services but try to leave the facility before their completion date are referred to the local prosecuting attorney who makes a determination as to how to move forward. When a client comes to the center, a referral tracking sheet and notice of diversion must be filled out by the staff. The tracking sheet has information about the client, an incident number, the crime, and the jurisdiction information from the prosecuting attorney. The notice of diversion is a formalized statement signed by the client acknowledging that should they fail to complete the program the prosecuting attorney will be notified.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Perelman regarding the center's success criteria, Ms. Schoeld explained that the MIDD evaluation looks for a reduction in jail and in-patient hospital stays, as well as linkages to ongoing services. Success of the program will translate into real cost savings.

Commissioner Perelman asked if the model is built on successful programs in place in other cities. Ms. Schoeld said a lot of research went into the development of the program. There are similar programs in Texas and in other parts of Washington State. Mr. Andres said there are other programs around the County, but the King County program is the most service-enriched and comprehensive version in the Northwest.

Ms. Schoeld said her staff have been meeting with Bellevue patrol officers. She said during November there are some eight in-services scheduled during which Bellevue police officers will be provided with training. Mr. Andres said training has also been provided to the Seattle police department, King County Metro transit police, and other metropolitan police forces.

Ms. Schoeld noted that a law enforcement officer can bring someone to the facility even if they have not committed a crime. They can offer the service to individuals with whom they have some concerns.

Commissioner Stout asked if repeat clients are being seen at the facility. Mr. Andres said the program has not been functional long enough to show any patterns. Some clients coming through an emergency room have been seen more than once, however.

Commissioner Plaskon asked how the client records are stored and who has access to them. Mr. Andres said the records are stored on a county system and anyone wanting access must go through an authorization process.

Commissioner Perelman asked if the facility will become a crisis shelter during the winter months. Mr. Andres said it will not. There will continue to be limits on who is allowed in.

Ms. Schoeld said historically half the clients at crisis centers are enrolled in a mental health service and half are not. There is an even chance of working with clients who have never been involved in the public mental health system. The facility conducts eligibility determinations, works with DSHS to get people on benefits, filling out housing applications, and similar case management work that is hard to do even for healthy persons.

Chair Bruels asked about the issue of transportation, noting that nearly every jurisdiction in King County refuses to transport people in the back of squad cars. Ms. Schoeld said the King County sheriff's office is currently in the process of redrafting their protocol to allow for that to occur. Some jurisdictions do allow for transfers in squad cars, but other jurisdictions likely never will. The mobile crisis team van can be used for transport, but it is not appropriate for persons about whose behavior there are concerns. The mobile van will not be available for use just as a taxi service.

Ms. Schoeld said military status is one piece of the demographic information that is collected from the clients.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Debrief on the Human Services Funding Process

Ms. Leslie asked the Commissioners to comment on the funding process, noting that the information shared will be used during the next funding cycle.

Mr. Adriano asked first for comments on the review form. Commissioner Stout said the form is an outstanding tool and is immensely helpful. The other Commissioners concurred and said they referred to it often. They noted especially that the data in the form meshed with the questions asked in the application.

Mr. Adriano called attention next to the format and layout of the pdf files that constituted the bulk of the applications. Commissioner Stout said that when used in conjunction with the review form it was very easy to find the information needed.

Commissioner Beighle suggested the first page should note what the previous year's request and allocation was. Mr. Adriano said with the way the system is set up, the applicant would need to fill in that information.

Commissioner Beighle said she found it necessary to keep turning pages back and forth to make sure the checks and balances were aligned; on the budget sheet the debits and credits are located in two different places. It would be useful to have the expenses and revenue data on a single page.

Commissioner Plaskon said he recalled having to make determinations as to what actual units the applicant would be providing, and calculations regarding the cost per unit. The data in the various applications were fairly uniform but not entirely uniform. If the units could be shown uniformly it would be helpful.

Commissioner Beighle said one thing she did for every application was calculate what percentage of total funding each application was requesting from the funding jurisdictions. She noted that most agencies sought more from Bellevue than from other cities and there is a fairness issue involved.

Commissioner Stout noted that there had been some confusion on the part of some applicants relative to the difference between a program budget and a full agency budget.

Commissioner Perelman asked if there were some way staff could weed out the applications that sought less than \$5000, which the Commission had previously agreed not to fund. Mr. Adriano said the problem there is that the other funding cities do not have a \$5000 limit established. He said he would investigate whether or not Bellevue could set its field to require a minimum of \$5000.

Commissioner Stout suggested that while the requests should be reasonable, applicants should be encouraged to ask for what they really need, not just an amount tied to what they have previously received. Chair Bruels agreed but said where an agency is seeking a substantial increase, they should be asked to explain specifically what the funds will be used for. He said an agency wanting to expand a program in Bellevue is one thing, but it is quite another for an agency to seek Bellevue dollars and use them to expand their program to some other city.

Commissioner Plaskon urged continued collaboration and coordination with other jurisdictions. Chair Bruels agreed that those discussions should be continued. Mr. Adriano said staff from Kirkland and Redmond have already asked when the various commissions can all meet again jointly. Commissioner Stout pointed out that while there are legal boundaries, the lines drawn between the cities are mostly invisible; the winter shelter is a perfect example of that. Commissioner McEachran said Andrew's Glen is another good example of collaboration.

Commissioner Beighle asked if site visits could be scheduled before funding recommendations are developed. Ms. Leslie said site visits are generally scheduled for the year between the funding cycles.

Before leaving the meeting early, Commissioner McEachran said the funding process was an amazing experience. He said he would welcome having staff bring to the Commission's table persons who are engaged in projects that have a significant collaborative impact, particularly those agencies that are taking the dollars provided by the city and leveraging them with the faith community and other funding sources.

Mr. Adriano asked for comments regarding having hard copies of the applications versus having them available electronically. Commissioner Yantis said he used the hard copies exclusively and did not even bother to try accessing the electronic files. Chair Bruels said he liked having the electronic option. Commissioner Stout pointed out that most Commissioners find it helpful to make notes and highlights on the hard copies and refer to them during the deliberation phase.

Commissioner Beighle said she preferred working in teams to review the applications. She said it is always helpful to hear the comments of someone else. Commissioner Stout concurred, adding that she and Chair Bruels worked as a team over the phone, which had its pluses and minuses. Commissioners Perelman and Yantis agreed that the shared review approach is helpful.

Ms. Leslie said from the perspective of staff there is value in the team approach in that more than one Commissioner delves into the specifics of the applications assigned to them. The practice leads to a far greater depth of understanding.

With regard to the compressed timeline, the Commissioners concurred that it was a workable solution. Chair Bruels said he liked it because it made it easier to keep the issues in mind; with two weeks between meetings it is often more difficult to pick up where things left off at the previous meeting.

Commissioner Yantis suggested that it would be helpful to have ahead of time an agreement regarding process before wading into the process of reviewing the applications. He noted that the Commission started one meeting with the plus/minus approach, then at the next meeting reverted to a preliminary assignment of dollars. Commissioner Stout pointed out that the Commission began its deliberations with the understanding that there would not be much money to allocate, but well into the process it was discovered there was far more funding available than first expected. Commissioner Yantis argued that the plus/minus system, while not perfect, is easily adapted to any funding level.

There was agreement that if the compressed format is retained, the best approach is to assign preliminary dollar amounts during the review phase rather than to utilize the plus/minus approach.

Ms. Leslie commented that the Commission's deliberations felt a bit rushed given the compressed timeline. Commissioner Stout added that during one critical meeting the Commission did not have the advantage of having the minutes of the previous meeting; after the Commission had made a final decision, it was found that the missing minutes included conclusions that had been forgotten. Commissioner Yantis proposed keeping a parking lot of notes separate from meeting minutes that could be referred to if the full minutes are not available.

Chair Bruels brought to the table the Commission's decision to de-fund the Salvation Army and Jubilee Reach, then going back and reconsidering. He allowed that the stop-start approach is simply part of the process. He said he did not think the Commission could have done it any better. Commissioner Stout indicated she was not comfortable with the end result regarding those two agencies, but agreed that the process undertaken had been fair and appropriate.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Beighle commented positively on the September 18 Transportation Forum. She said it was wonderful to have all the boards and commissions together focused on a single issue. It was a great venue to talk about human service needs, particularly bus routes to food banks and the like.

Ms. Leslie said the Transportation Commission has the lead on the Transit Master Plan update, but they want all of the participating boards and commissions to be involved and to provide input. Chair Bruels agreed to reach out to Commissioner McEachran to determine his level of interest in representing the Commission as liaison to the update process.

9. NEW BUSINESS – None

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bruels adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date