

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on November 19, 2013

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

November 19, 2013
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner McEachran and Plaskon

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

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Chair Yantis who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners McEachran and Plaskon, both of whom were excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. October 15, 2013

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Alex Zimmerman, president of Stand Up America, said his organization has been taking the time to talk to all groups, including every Monday before the Council. He said his family experienced Nazi Germany and living under the power of the KGB in the Soviet Union and added that he has been fighting for human rights all of his life. Bellevue is the top intellectual city in the United States, but the Council has gone too far and is not acting intellectually. At the last Council meeting he said he was denied the right to speak and Councilmember Wallace asked the police to escort him out.

That was an abuse of freedom of speech and was uncivilized. Where there is freedom of speech, it does not matter what someone wants to talk about, but when denied the right to speak, that is a different matter. Stand Up America has been very active in Seattle and intends to continue making a big noise in the coming months. He said he should be allowed to speak at every Council meeting every week on different topics. He said he came to America because he believes in freedom. The Commission should ask the Council how it is even possible that they would deny someone the right to speak.

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Stout reported that former Bellevue Mayor Nan Campbell, the mother of the Human Services Commission, passed away earlier in the day. She lived in the apartment building on 148th Avenue NE where there was a fire recently. In escaping the fire she fell and broke her pelvis. She never recovered and passed away in her sleep.

Commissioner Stout said Planning Commissioner Hal Ferris is continuing to stress the importance of having affordable housing in the downtown during the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC meetings. The group will meet again on November 20. Everyone wanting to see affordable housing in the downtown accepts that it will be a hard sell.

Chair Yantis reported that he attended a meeting called Square Feet 2013 on November 18. The meeting was sponsored by the city of Seattle and was focused on coordinating culture and arts efforts. Seattle is committed to making sure the arts are central to its Comprehensive Plan. Various studies have shown the direct correlation between the arts and the economy, yet as rents go up artists and arts groups find themselves priced out. Arts activities are very important and should not be driven to the outlying areas.

Commissioner Perelman reported that NPR recently ran a story on how the area's Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness is progressing. The story included the fact that the number of homeless persons has remained relatively constant as a percentage of the overall population. The report indicated that solutions are still being sought.

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly shared with the Commissioners the flyers that have been distributed showing the opening of the winter shelters. She noted that the men's shelter opened on November 18, though one of the heating units needs to be repaired.

Ms. O'Reilly also reminded the Commissioners about the annual holiday pot luck with the Parks and Community Services Board.

Commissioner Stout reported that she is set to meet on November 22 with several people at Hopelink to look at possible solutions for the Sophia Way financial issue.

Ms. O'Reilly said she would be attending the meeting as well.

Commissioner Beighle said planning is under way to organize the annual One Night Count. She said the winter shelter is in her count area and may affect the count.

6. DISCUSSION

Ms. O'Reilly said the most significant change to the Needs Update draft was in relation to the Bellevue Community Profile which she said was updated using the 2012 American Community Survey data. The five-year American Community Survey data is set to be released the first week of December, so that information will be reflected in the next draft. The Bellevue misdemeanor probation section is still to be added; the chapter is being written by the new probation manager Gregory Bach.

Ms. O'Reilly said the draft will continue to be tweaked with information received through the end of December. The Council will be given an update regarding the document in early January though a date has not yet been determined. Following that presentation the document will no longer be a draft and it will be posted to the website and widely advertised; a few hard copies will be printed as well.

A motion to accept the second draft was made by Commissioner Stout. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bruels and it carried unanimously.

7. OLD BUSINESS – None

8. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Yantis suggested it would be helpful to present Mr. Zimmerman with information concerning the mission and responsibilities of the Human Services Commission. He added that Mr. Zimmerman may choose to ignore it and continue to address the Commission anyway even though his information does not pertain to the work of the Commission.

Ms. O'Reilly said Human Services Manager Emily Leslie has been in communication with the City Manager's Office and has information regarding the protocol used by other boards and commissions.

9. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Yantis adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.