

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on April 17, 2012

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

February 23, 2012
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Perelman and Plaskon

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

GUEST SPEAKERS: Harla Tumbleson, Helena Stephens, SOAR

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Chair Bruels who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

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

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 5, 2012

Commissioner Stout referred to the first page of the minutes and noted that the meeting start time of "8:38 p.m." should be changed to "6:38 p.m." She also referred to the first paragraph under discussion item 9-A on page 5 and noted that the sentence "That will usher in a five- to seven-week period during which applicants and file their applications online" should be revised to read "That will usher in a five- to seven-week period during which applicants can file their applications online."

Motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Stout. Second was by Commissioner Yantis and the motion carried unanimously.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Jon Berkedal with Therapeutic Health Services (THS) said the Eastside branch is located in Bellevue at 140th Avenue NE and Bel-Red Road. He said the organization and its predecessor has been located at the site for more than 20 years offering alcohol and drug treatment services on an outpatient basis. King County asked the organization to open an opium treatment program on the Eastside, and it makes economic sense for THS to offer the service at its Eastside branch location. The long regulatory process needed to obtain permission from the state to be able to offer the services have begun. The state also requires a relatively prescribed community relations plan, the development of which triggered the need to meet with more than 40 key community leaders of all types, including Bellevue Councilmembers, law enforcement representatives, hospital representatives, representatives from other agencies and with business community leaders. An attempt was made to meet with the Rock Creek Community Association, the organization that encompasses the geographic location where the branch office is located, but that meeting has not yet occurred. The idea is to gather questions and concerns and to fold them into a mitigation plan. The state held a public hearing in January in Bellevue which was attended by several Bellevue residents. A 30-day period required by the state during which additional comments from citizens can be lodged is in effect. Approval from the state and all the necessary licenses are the hoped-for outcome. The local response has been overwhelmingly positive; those who have shared concerns have focused on traffic, parking and littering. There is truly a need for the service.

Commissioner Stout asked about estimates of the initial caseload. Ms. Joellen Monson, THS Eastside branch manager, said by zip code the downtown Seattle office is currently serving about 160 Eastside residents. She allowed that because the services are individualized, not all of them attend every day. It takes only a few minutes for clients to receive their dose, though the process is very regulated. Group sessions are planned around the schedules of the clients.

Commissioner Yantis asked how long the typical client is in the program. Mr. Berkedal said there really is no clear answer to that question. The hope is always to move clients through in six months, but some people take several years. The plan is to move clients away from needing the service within two years. It is possible to get medications from a physician, but that generally allows a client only to function in society without going through withdrawals; that kind of treatment, however, does not address the behaviors that got the client into their situations in the first place. Counseling has to be an integral part of the program.

Commissioner Stout commented that she participated in the interviews and had also worked for a time in the office park where the branch office is located and said she could not think of a better place for it. Mr. Berkedal said clients will be asked not to use the building entrance that is closest to an adjacent apartment complex. Ms. Monson added that THS has a long-standing partnership with HERO House and will be having someone in their employment program work as a parking attendant; they

will watch the parking lot and will make sure clients honor the code of behavior expected of them.

Chair Bruels commented that folks with opiate addictions have no other alternative in terms of opiate replacement services than going to a licensed program. They cannot get the services they need at a hospital or a neighborhood clinic due to licensing restrictions.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie reported that she had been asked to provide the City Council with an update regarding the THS application. The Council received feedback from at least one citizen. She noted that the Commission's desk packet included copies of the Management Brief prepared for and presented to the Council on February 21. THS staff attended the Council meeting as well and answered questions. The citizen expressed his concerns to the Council and has made his position known to the state as well; he would like the city to oppose the program, but the only area over which the city has control is zoning, and the proposed use is allowed.

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Stout reported that she and Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly had spent a fair amount of time over the last couple of weeks tracking what is going on with Healthy Start. She said the program remains in limbo.

Ms. O'Reilly said she attended the community meeting on youth homelessness on February 16 at Grace Lutheran Church sponsored by Friends of Youth. The focus was on community education about the issue of youth homelessness. An expert panel addressed the group and answered questions from the 50 people who attended.

Ms. O'Reilly also commented that the Safe Ride program in collaboration with King County Metro trains bus drivers to assist any homeless youth in finding shelter. A corollary program called Safe Places works with organizations, including businesses and churches, to place stickers in their windows advertising to homeless youth how they can find help. Dan Lassiter, manager of the Highland Community Center in Bellevue, intends to pursue having staff from Friends of Youth come and talk with the city's community center directors and parks management team to see how the community centers could participate in the program.

Helena Stephens, Teen Services Program Administrator, pointed out that the community centers are already involved in assisting anyone who is homeless, whether they are youth or adult. The staff are trained to take care of immediate needs and to offer referrals. Recently there has been a rise in the homeless population and entire families are seeking help from the community centers staff. The Safe Places piece will be a wonderful addition to the arsenal available to the community centers staff.

Commissioner Stout acknowledged that Commissioner Habib had put his hat in the ring to run for the State Legislature, and she congratulated him.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Presentation on SOAR Activities

Harla Tumbleson, director of the SOAR program, said he was honored to be invited to address the Commission. He said SOAR is a King County-wide coalition whose primary mission is to build partnerships that will promote the healthy development of children, youth and family. The program is in its tenth year of operations.

Mr. Tumbleson shared with the Commission the results of a survey aimed at the value SOAR has in the community. He noted that the list of words and phrase used most frequently includes collaborative, community, good resource, informative, good opportunity for networking.

The organization has a good presence throughout King County and in Bellevue specifically. Over the years a lot of work has been done in conjunction with Youth Link in terms of leadership training and the like. SOAR has been actively involved in the latest collective impact initiative called Eastside Pathways, primarily through providing technical assistance and facilitating workgroups aimed at bringing the plans together. The program has also done a lot of outreach countywide with bilingual and bicultural communities with an eye on trying to connect with parents of young children around healthy child development practices. SOAR has a good connection with the early learning folks in the Bellevue School District and plays a role in the wraparound services program at Lake Hills elementary.

Mr. Tumbleson noted that Ms. O'Reilly has been very involved with a lot of the early learning work in addition to serving as co-chair of the partnership Council, and Ms. Stephens has been very involved with some of the school-aged children and working with youth.

Mr. Tumbleson said the early childhood and school readiness action agendas, as well as the action agenda for school-aged children and families, were put together in union with inclusive community processes aimed at determining the sort of services SOAR could provide and what support SOAR could offer. The action agendas served as the root of what SOAR was founded to do, and the original plans are often referred back to.

Funding for the program comes from United Way, Thrive by Five Washington, a number of small grants, and individual donors.

The partnership council serves as an accountability group and acts as a quasi board. There are two high-level groups consisting of 25 to 30 partners who oversee the work

done in the early learning and school-age categories. Each group has action teams that work on specific issues or goals.

Mr. Tumbleson informed the Commission that SOAR has been designated as the early learning coalition for King County by the Department of Early Learning and Thrive by Five Washington. The state is divided into ten regions, each of which has an early learning coalition. SOAR is working very closely with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the other organizations to create a source where policy and funding decisions can be made at the community level with strong community input.

One of SOAR's nine action teams is Getting School Ready. The team focuses on outreach to parents and early care providers to bolster communications between them and the schools so they can learn what the expectations of the schools are for being ready for kindergarten. Several years ago the state surveyed kindergarten teachers and learned that about half of the kids coming in every year were not really prepared. The statistics were even worse in communities with high numbers of low-income and residents of color.

Other action team work on parent/child bonding, specifically kids birth to three years of age; early identification of children with developmental delays; connecting kids with quality early learning; strengthening school/community relationships; resilience and valued identities; and advocacy and professional training for development workers.

A massive needs assessment of young Latino families in King County was carried out under the direction of the King County Children and Family Commission. The process included engaging over 400 parents. The needs assessment included outreach. One outcome has been the development of networks of parents who continue to meet together to support each other around early learning issues. One driving force behind the needs assessment was to identify people who are known and respected in their communities and then train them for conducting outreach in their communities.

The Getting School Ready action team is making grants to nine different King County school districts, including 26 different elementary schools. In all more than 1500 early care providers and 3500 parents will be engaged countywide during the school year.

Ms. Stephens said one of the key elements SOAR offers is its ability to facilitate bringing together people from different backgrounds and getting them to work together toward solutions. The city values the partnership and uses it in ways it has not been able to utilize other partnerships.

The Eastside Human Services Coalition exists to collectively address human services issues. A similar body used to exist to address youth development issues, but due to a lack of resources that element has been lost. SOAR has helped to fill the gap by

facilitating the bringing together of youth development workers to communicate and share information about models and methodologies. One key program utilized to date is the multicultural youth leadership program. The program was developed some time ago primarily for youth professionals, but Bellevue has used it as a cornerstone for training the youth members of the Bellevue Youth Council.

Ms. Stephens said the Pathways to Partnership action team is focused on working with community leaders on how to build school and community based organizational collaboration. Their work dates back to the Little Red Schoolhouse, wraparound services and Eastside Pathways. The team has surveyed and interviewed a series of key members of various school districts, including Tukwila, which has a successful community collaboration program. The themes around which the action team works are communication, relationship building, common goals, benefits and process. The action team has been conducting outreach aimed at walking people through the process of building collaboration.

Ms. Stephens encouraged the Commissioners to check out the website for the King County Youth Development Network. She said the information there appeals to all youth development workers at all levels from policy makers and executive directors to managers and program coordinators; the information is even helpful to those who are new to youth development. The website has information on training and employment opportunities and also highlights the various models in use throughout the county.

The Youth Engagement Cadre is bringing the best of the youth development workers together to share mechanisms and models for how to improve the work done in the youth development field.

Mr. Tumbleson said the annual training and networking program called “Putting the Pieces Together” started eight years ago with about 40 people. It has since grown significantly to an average attendance of 450. The 2012 version of the program will be held on June 22 at South Seattle Community College. The quality training is offered for only \$40, including breakfast and lunch. The workshops are put on by those associated with programs that work with kids aged zero to 18 in King County. In one of the first events it was determined there should be caucuses by different areas of the county; the practice has been continued since and has proved to be a very good way for people to pool their resources.

Mr. Tumbleson said SOAR has an active advocacy and mobilizing unit. Every year Nancy Amidei from the University of Washington is brought in to talk to all of the partners about what can be done to advocate on behalf of kids and families. The role of SOAR is to keep its partners informed about what is going on and how they can weigh in with their representatives as voters on issues pertinent to children, youth and families. SOAR has also worked with youth teaching them advocacy and mobilization skills; during the 2011 legislative session SOAR along with the League of Education Voters sponsored more than 100 students to visit Olympia to talk with their legislative representatives.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Habib, Mr. Tumbleson said SOAR is sponsored by the YWCA of King and Snohomish counties and as such operates under their 501(c)(3). That is one of the reasons why SOAR avoids direct advocacy of candidates for public office. SOAR is not a direct services provider, rather it serves as a convener, a facilitator and a catalyst.

Ms. Leslie asked if all of the major youth development organizations, including Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, are part of the youth development network. Mr. Tumbleson said the network enjoys representation from the biggest organizations to the smallest grassroots organizations. Ms. Stephens said SOAR has been able to take things to a higher level with regard to who is coming to the table.

Commissioner Stout voiced her support for the organization's new tagline, "Building Executive Partnerships for Children, Youth and Families." She said that simply says it all. Ms. Stephens said the partnership council labored long and hard over the tagline and suggested they would be very happy to hear that it is getting a positive response.

Chair Bruels asked how SOAR is faring financially. Mr. Tumbleson said the organization is solvent for 2012 but unless new resources can be generated it will face some tough decisions in 2013. As individual agencies see declining revenues, they often look first at cutting memberships to coalitions.

Mr. Tumbleson said people can get involved by becoming funding partners, by receiving advocacy alerts and updates, joining an action team, joining the partnership council, helping raise awareness of action items from the action agenda, and by partnering.

7. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie informed the Commission that the city's Budget One process has been internally kicked off. There is a lot of training going on, and Ms. O'Reilly was selected to serve on one of the results teams that will rate proposals. She also noted that the decision was made to impose staff furlough days; most full-time staff will be required to take three furlough days during the year.

Ms. O'Reilly informed the Commissioners that hard copies of the Needs Update were available upon request. The document is available online and in electronic format; over 200 emails have been sent out informing agencies and the faith communities of that fact. A short article was printed in the *Bellevue Reporter* about the update, and the document has been shared with Eastside Pathways. Ms. O'Reilly said she would be providing an update to the East Bellevue Community Council on March 6.

Ms. O'Reilly mentioned that a legislative update will be developed soon and presented to the Commission. She said HB-2048 is a legislative priority for the Eastside Human Services Forum and a number of housing coalitions. The bill would

continue the recording fee on documents, the funds from which have been used for affordable housing and various housing services. The Senate Financial Institutions committee has unanimously passed it out of committee and it is on its way to the House Ways and Means committee.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie noted that the Commission desk packet included a post card with information about the Bellevue Transit Master Plan. She said the survey has received a good response, but the results have been skewed in terms of income levels. Transportation staff are working with human services staff to get the survey out to agencies and from them to low-income clients to help balance out the responses.

Ms. Leslie noted that staff would provide the Commission with an update regarding the city's Home Repair Program on March 6. At that same meeting the Commission will be asked to review the rating tool to be used during the application process. The March 20 meeting will be held jointly with the human service commissions from Redmond, Kirkland and Issaquah. The agenda items for the meeting will be the State of Human Services report, and an opportunity for each commission to share information about their individual application processes.

The public hearing focused on needs in the community will be conducted in April. The public hearing is mandated by HUD but also serves as the kickoff to the funding process. A briefing on the budget process will be given as part of that meeting. Two funding workshops have been scheduled, one on the Eastside on March 7, and one in South King County on March 15.

Ms. Leslie acknowledged Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano for wrapping up his graduate course work at the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington.

9. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bruels adjourned the meeting at 8:08 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date