

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on May 21, 2013

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

April 25, 2013
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Bruels

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Sam Ezadean, 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 Commissioner Bruels who was excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 19, 2013

Commissioner Perelman called attention to the second sentence of the fourth paragraph on page 2 and said it was her intention to say that there is no guarantee that programs typically funded by Bellevue will get funded if the money is given to another city.

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner McEachran reported that he attended the Transportation Commission meeting on April 11 at which the Bellevue Transit Master Plan update was discussed. He said it is easily recognized that there is a clear tie between transit services and human services.

Commissioner McEachran said he also participated in the visit to Andrews Glen during which he was able to visit with a number of the residents and listen to their stories. Among the concerns raised were roadway tolls and availability of affordable childcare.

Commissioner McEachran said he also attended the Imagine Housing auction which proved to be very successful and highlighted what can happen when the faith communities get involved.

Commissioner Stout said the Downtown Livability CAC has not yet met. The first meeting has been set for May 15. Staff are also attempting to schedule a tour for the CAC members.

Commissioner Stout reported that she was supposed to have participated in the visit to Planned Parenthood earlier in the day but did not when it was discovered the organization does not have access for the disabled. She allowed that while the city does not fund Planned Parenthood, all agencies that are funded by the city should at the very least be ADA compliant to all service areas as a condition of funding.

Commissioner Stout said she did participate earlier in the day in the training on human trafficking. The event was well attended by elected officials, board and commission members from various cities, staff from various cities, and representatives of the faith community.

Commissioner Beighle mentioned that Commissioner Stout did an excellent job in making the presentation to the City Council. Commissioner Stout said the Councilmembers were very receptive and are anxious to see the needs assessment.

Commissioner Beighle reported that she and Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly visited the Friends of Youth young adult shelter, The Landing in Redmond. She said they were well received by the young men who were there, most of whom said they feel unaccepted in the community for a variety of reasons.

Ms. O'Reilly added that because the agency has lost some federal funding it will be reducing the number of beds available at the facility from 21 to 15, and with fewer staff there will be less case management offered.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Home Repair Program Update

Home Repair Program Director Sam Ezadean introduced David Curtice, King County Housing Authority construction supervisor, and Siu-Man Lui, a Home Repair Program client.

Ms. Lui said she is a single mom, and when she needed a new furnace in her house the program staff arranged everything. They also remodeled one of the bathrooms.

Mr. Curtice said because Ms. Lui qualified for the weatherization program, that work was done for her as well. He explained that when Bellevue clients who are qualified for the weatherization program contact his office they do not have to be added to the waiting list.

Mr. Ezadean noted that a lot of the program's activities have been focused on Lake Hills and northeast Bellevue. Few repairs have been requested for homes in west and northwest Bellevue. The program is being marketed to the newly annexed areas of Hilltop, Horizon View and Tamara Hill, and to date some six clients from those areas have been enrolled. Prior to annexation, those communities were serviced by King County.

Mr. Ezadean said there are three elements to the Home Repair Program. The deferred loan program offers qualified homeowners no-interest loans that do not have to be paid back until the home is either sold or transferred to a new owner. Under the leveraged loan program the homeowner is responsible for half the cost of the repairs needed; as with the deferred loan program, the loan does not have to be paid back unless the home is sold or transferred to a new owner. The emergency grant program is available only to very low-income residents and does not have to be repaid at all; the maximum grant award is \$1500 and the funds must be used for emergency home repairs. The weatherization program is operated by King County with federal, state and energy company funds. In all cases, the income requirements must be met.

Repairs covered by the Home Repair Program include roofs, plumbing, heating systems, driveways, and health and safety issues.

Before and after pictures of repairs made were shown to the Commissioners. Mr. Ezadean pointed out that most of the clients are seniors, though single mothers make up a large percentage.

Mr. Ezadean said the Home Repair Program started in 1986. With limited funding available, the number of clients served annually is limited, even more so as repairs costs have gone up. He said he does all of the outreach, underwriting and application processing. Once homeowners are approved, bids for the work to be

done are sought and the contractors work directly with the homeowners. The project is supervised from beginning to end and once it is completed the contractor is paid.

Ms. O'Reilly commented that the federal dollars used for the Home Repair Program come with a lot of strings. HUD requires an environmental review for every repair, including a determination of whether or not lead-based paint is involved. The staff at the King County Housing Authority are trained and certified in lead-based paint, which every house built prior to 1978 could potentially have.

Commissioner Plaskon observed that some home repairs have been carried out in the Bel-Red corridor and asked why the city would choose to put money into homes in areas that are likely to redevelop. Ms. O'Reilly said future zoning is certainly a factor that is taken into account.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Perelman, Mr. Curtice explained that the King County Housing Authority is a private non-profit and is not an arm of King County government.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Additional Funding

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano explained that the city has annually attempted to maintain a reserve made up of unexpended CDBG funds. However, the city's CDBG reserve has grown to the point of potentially incurring penalties from HUD. To avoid the penalties, it will be necessary to allocate approximately \$210,000 from the reserve fund prior to October 31, 2013. Commissioner Stout asked if \$210K was the amount to spend? Mr. Adriano indicated that this is the best estimate that we can come up with right now.

Mr. Adriano said a request for letters of interest was broadcast in March. The major Home Repair Program staff indicated that they are in the process of ramping up in anticipation of receiving its 2013 CDBG allocation and has the capacity to expend an additional \$150,000 by the end of September. Additionally, International Community Health Service submitted an application for \$50,000, and Lifewire submitted an application for \$55,000.

An amendment to the existing contract with the King County Housing Authority major Home Repair Program could potentially be created up to \$50,000 without having to obtain the permission of the City Council; contracts exceeding that limit must be approved by the Council.

Commissioner Beighle asked if any program other than those represented by the three requests should be considered. Mr. Adriano said the effort to advertise the dollars was extensive but only the three responded. The funds must be actually spent, not just allocated, by the end of October, and of course they must be used for

CDBG-eligible projects, and that requirement limited the number of responses.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Plaskon, Ms. Leslie explained that the CDBG reserve fund cannot exceed one and a half times the annual award.

Commissioner Perelman voiced her support for allocating additional funds to the King County Housing Authority for the major Home Repair Program. Mr. Adriano reiterated that \$50,000 could be added to their current contract without Council approval. To add \$100,000 to that amount, bringing them up to the \$150,000 they say they could spend prior to the end of September, would require Council approval.

Commissioner Plaskon asked if having to seek approval from the Council would be problematic in any way. Ms. Leslie said the only issue lies with scheduling; she said it would probably be at least July before the funds could be allocated to the project.

Chair Yantis asked staff if they had any sense as to how close either International Community Health Service or Lifewire is to actually launching a capital campaign or proceeding with construction. Mr. Adriano said his impression after reading both applications is that the International Community Health Service project is much further along, and that the Lifewire project is just ramping up.

Commissioner Stout voiced concerns about the application from International Community Health Service. She said it was very loosely and poorly written, but allowed that there is no question about the need for more community health centers offering services to everyone.

Commissioner Plaskon said the way people seek healthcare assistance is often based on culture. Many are inhibited by the mainstream healthcare facilities and prefer accessing services that are culturally sensitive, which International Community Health Service is.

Commissioner Beighle agreed that having International Community Health Service on the Eastside would be a net positive. She said regardless of the wording of the application she would favor supporting the project.

Commissioner Stout reminded the Commissioners that back when the Commission was focused on mental health and domestic violence programs, several populations highlighted the need to have their own facilities. The Commission, however, has encouraged Lifewire to increase the number of languages they work with and the agency has responded positively. To continue will be to add administration and building costs to what should be a community health center, not an international community health center. She said she would favor HealthPoint looking at having an additional clinic in Bellevue, where the demographics likely are such that they would support it. True community health centers are needed in Bellevue, not individual facilities serving individual populations.

Commissioner Beighle noted that Lifewire as Eastside Domestic Violence Program was awarded CDBG funds recently to effect roof repairs and she questioned the degree to which the proposed remodel and expansion will tear out what was previously done.

Commissioner Stout said Lifewire is an agency the city has worked closely with for many years and has a proven track record. They need more space in which to carry out their various functions.

Commissioner Perelman said she would favor funding the International Community Health Service at \$50,000, and the Lifewire application at \$55,000, and the balance of \$105,000 to the King County Housing Authority major Home Repair Program.

Chair Yantis said the Commission could elect to send a message to International Community Health Service disagreeing with their approach, but the facility will get built. Action by the Commission will not change that fact one way or another.

Commissioner Stout noted that the Commission has in the past encouraged existing agencies to expand their ability to serve broader populations over having new agencies serving a narrower population base locate in the city. She said there is no doubt that dental services are needed on the Eastside, but the International Community Health Service application is much bigger than just dental.

Chair Yantis agreed that in the past the Commission has received applications from agencies seeking to start delivering services on the Eastside. The Commission has in each case had to decide whether or not to encourage that or choose to focus on existing agencies. The current International Community Health Service application, however, does not appear to fall into the same category. The Commission will not change the landscape by its action one way or another with regard to the facility.

A motion to add up to \$50,000 to the existing contract with King County Housing Authority for the major Home Repair Program was made by Commissioner McEachran. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Beighle and it carried unanimously.

Ms. O'Reilly pointed out that with the expansion of the Affordable Care Act starting in January 2014 there will be a lot more people looking for a doctor because they'll have insurance. Having International Community Health Service will offer another option regardless of what language the person seeking healthcare speaks.

A motion to fund International Community Health Service at \$50,000 was made by Commissioner Beighle. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Perelman and it carried 5-1, with Commissioner Stout voting no.

Mr. Adriano said staff from International Community Health Service have been informed that general fund dollars are tight and that if they are considering submitting an application they will need to find a way to establish a real working relationship with an existing agency. It was also suggested that they should make the rounds and meet the decision makers in all of the Eastside cities.

Commissioner McEachran said the process of change should begin with a conversation with the Commission and he invited the staff to help make that happen. Commissioner Stout said the conversation will need to be broader. Commissioner Plaskon proposed inviting Seamar and others to the table the same night so introductions can be made and the conversation can be facilitated.

A motion to allocate \$55,000 to King County Housing Authority in 2013 was made by Commissioner Beighle. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McEachran.

Commissioner Plaskon commented that the government is broke and it will only get worse. He cautioned against spending money just to spend money.

Chair Yantis said if the funds are not allocated they will be lost, and the future CDBG base the city receives could be jeopardized. If in the future the city continues to build up a large reserve and have no place to spend it, the decision could be made to take another tack. The current situation, however, appears to be unique and should be addressed as such.

Commissioner Perelman pointed out that allocations to the Home Repair Program will eventually be returned to the city for reallocation.

The motion carried unanimously.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie noted it was National Volunteer Week and provided the Commissioners with a small token of appreciation for their volunteer efforts on behalf of the city.

Ms. O'Reilly said the Needs Update provider survey was sent out on April 24 to about 70 providers, 50 that are currently funded by the city and 20 others who have applied in the past. She said the results of the survey will be shared with the Commission once it is available. She also noted that 18 of the 22 community conversations have been completed along with ten key informant interviews.

Mr. Adriano reported that the quarterly report was recently launched online. Most of the feedback has been positive.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly informed the Commission that the city was contacted about a month ago by staff, from King County Public Health, who are leading the outreach efforts under the Affordable Care Act to begin enrolling the uninsured in King County. A meeting has been set up with Bellevue staff to go over how to assist them in facilitating their efforts. Staff from Kirkland and Redmond will participate as well.

Ms. Leslie said the Commission will be receiving a presentation in the fall about healthcare reform. She said it may be appropriate to have other boards and commissions join together for the presentation.

Commissioner Stout suggested the Commission could also benefit from having an update regarding the status of Medicaid in Washington state. Ms. O'Reilly said an update will be provided once the legislative session wraps up.

Ms. O'Reilly informed the Commission that two focus groups on the future of senior living are going to be held in downtown Bellevue on May 15 and May 22.

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Yantis adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date