

*The Human Services Commission approved these minutes as amended on Jan. 20, 2011*

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION  
MINUTES

November 2, 2010  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Huenefeld Gese, Commissioners  
Beighle, Bruels, Hoople, Plaskon, Stout

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Yantis

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

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 p.m. by Chair Huenefeld Gese who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of  
Commissioner Yantis who was excused.

3. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Bruels reported that he attended the recent Veterans Conference. He  
said it was well attended on both days. The topics covered included brain injuries,  
sexual assault in the military, post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicide prevention.

Commissioner Hoople said he attended as well and noted that all of the presentations  
will be available online. King County Councilmember Dow Constantine gave the  
keynote address.

Commissioner Stout said she is continuing to work on getting Eastside nominations  
for the Veterans and Human Services Levy Oversight Committees.



Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said a dramatic overview of the budget was provided at the last Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) Oversight Committee meeting. The cuts recommended by the governor for non-Medicaid services were reviewed and it was noted that about all that will be funded will be Level 1 services. The focus is on scrubbing the budget to see what other unspent dollars they might be able to glean and transfer to programs that will experience cuts. The second part of the meeting centered on MIDD revenues generally.

Commissioner Bruels said the Crisis Solutions Center is the new name for the intervention facility. The location will be on South Lane Street in Seattle. He said the Downtown Emergency Service Center has scheduled a forum November 9 at the nearby school to allow all stakeholders to make their concerns known. The new center is planned to open in May 2011.

Ms. O'Reilly reported that Councilmember Balducci has been appointed Regional Jail System Coordinator for King County. She attended the last MIDD Oversight Committee meeting wearing that hat.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie noted that on November 1 Councilmember Chelminiak attended his first Council meeting since his accident. She said it was good to see him back in operation. The Council had on its agenda discussion of the Safe Communities outcome area, but there was no discussion of the Severe Weather Shelter.

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano said the new activation corridor for the Severe Weather Shelter is November 1 through March 31. The trigger threshold for opening the shelter will be temperatures of 32 degrees.

Mr. Adriano said when the dialog regarding the shelter was opened with the two contractor operators, the notion of involving faith-based organizations was raised. At the time, the prime contractor was resistant to the idea. The new contractor is far more interested in revisiting the topic.

Ms. O'Reilly provided the Commissioners with a summary of the budget cuts the Committee to End Homelessness put together. She noted that the material included information on how the cuts will affect homelessness.

Ms. O'Reilly announced that during the months of November and December she would be conducting an analysis of the Needs Update phone survey in anticipation of the next round. She said the current methodology needs to be revamped because it relies on a random digit dial survey, which is no longer adequate given the number of cell phones in use among residents 30 and under. She said she would have more information at the next Commission meeting.

Ms. Leslie reminded the Commissioners that the Human Services Commission was in charge of the upcoming joint Human Services Commission/Park Board annual

holiday potluck. She said the event will be held at Crossroads Community Center on December 7 beginning at 6:00 p.m.

## 5. DISCUSSION

### A. Update on Veterans and Human Services Levy

Linda Peterson, director of the King County Community Services Division, said planning for the next levy is under way, predicated on voter approval of course. She said Anna Marquee has been hired to coordinate the activities to be funded by the next levy, and to conduct the stakeholder involvement process. That process will involve the human services community.

Ms. Peterson shared with the Commissioners a map with dots representing all the places around the county where there is some kind of levy funded service being provided. She noted that the map included more than 130 different sites, some of which provide more than one levy funded service. The dots were color-coded to indicate services funded by the Human Services Levy, the Veterans Levy, and both levies, and by number to indicate the specific service offered.

Carol Maurer with the King County Children and Family Commission said one of the programs funded on the Eastside is the Healthy Start Program. The \$280,000 received through the levy was used in part to help expand the Healthy Start program into Renton where it serves 25 additional teens. There is a waiting list in the area and more home visitors could be used in the area. Another portion of the funding was used to help enhance the existing program. The ideal case load for home visitors is 25 families; prior to getting the levy money, the Friends of Youth case loads were much higher, but the funds have made it possible to bring the case loads down to the best practices level. That has resulted in better services to the young families involved in the program. The current expense fund has been proposed to be cut, and the families being served have taken it upon themselves to provide testimony and call for the funding to continue. Renton has begun contributing to the program, which has been helpful. The program is very cost effective and its outcomes are phenomenal.

Ms. Mauer said the best practice standards that have been established nationally include unwed mothers not having an additional pregnancy for at least two years. Other best practice standards include finishing high school or obtaining a GED, seeking advance training, and several elements relating to the development and welfare of the child. Nationally, teen parents have a domestic violence rate of about 15 percent, but for King County the rate is closer to three or four percent.

Ms. Peterson said her department also funds the Cultural Navigator Program on the Eastside. The program has wonderful outputs, but it is difficult to determine its outcomes. A training initiative is also funded by the department. Childcare Resources receives a grant which they use to invest in and promote play and learn

groups throughout the county. The groups are targeted to family, friends and neighbors because about 51 percent of all children in King County under the age of five are in unlicensed childcare with family, friends or neighbors. The play and learn groups allow the caregivers a break and the opportunity to learn more about child development. Trained facilitators interact with the children. The groups are very popular and there are currently 60 of them in operation.

Ms. Peterson said her department has a contract with the University of Washington for promoting first relationships. Every year an RFP is conducted to entice childcare providers, family support centers and clinics that work with at-risk families to send a staff person to an intense train the trainer program. Along with the 300 hours of training, funding is provided to backfill the staff person's position. To date 13 different agencies throughout King County have been trained, and each of them are now skilled to train people within their organization. The RFP process for 2011 is under way, though only two applications have been received.

Commissioner Stout stressed the need to reach out and train persons who are fluent in languages other than English.

King County Veterans Program manager Joel Estey said on the veterans side it was fortunate to already have a couple of agencies in place providing services; they were able to adapt quickly to add new services to their mixes. When the levy money began flowing in during 2006, it was necessary to take a look at the areas where services were not being provided. A number of sites in the rural areas of the county were established to provide life-stabilizing social work services, which includes rent, food and utilities. Staff also worked with about ten different senior and community centers where a lot of Vietnam veterans attend, many of whom need assistance with getting connected to medical care and other services through the Veterans Administration.

Mr. Estey said the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs has been a partner for many years, and with the levy funds they have been able to expand their jail project. The project works with veterans who have been incarcerated and negotiates with the legal system to get them released to treatment, which is far less expensive than incarceration. It has been shown that the recidivism rate is much lower for those who obtain treatment.

In the early 1990s the Veterans Administration had stopped providing services to families of veterans. The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs designed its trauma project to provide services to spouses, children and significant others living with soldiers diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and other ailments. The levy funds have made it possible to add additional clinicians and to increase the number of service hours.

A new 800 line for veterans has been put in place. While the service operates only during regular business hours, those who leave messages find they get a response

quickly. The program tracks the individuals with regard to the service they are directed to.

Several forums have been conducted covering services to veterans. The Veterans Administration has been brought in to talk about post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries, as well as the veterans culture. The forums have traditionally been held in Seattle, though one was conducted in Bellevue that was very well attended. Others are being planned.

Commissioner Stout said it appeared that time and money has been spent building infrastructure when in fact the human services system already has infrastructure in place. She said it would be a good idea to use the human services infrastructure and staff where appropriate rather than duplicating administrative overhead. Mr. Estey said he often receives requests from senior centers wanting presentations specific to their populations. Those requests have brought about the opportunity to provide training and information regarding services.

Commissioner Bruels asked if there has been any talk about supplanting levy dollars like is being done with the MIDD during the budget crunch. Ms. Peterson said every attempt is being made to hold the line, but the task is a difficult one. Both the levy and the MIDD were designed to enhance existing services, but that is difficult to accomplish when existing services are taken away. So far no funds have been supplanted.

Ms. Peterson said getting the re-approval will be a challenge but will be pushed. The politicians will have to decide how to go about it and will have to decide if funding new services will be dropping off existing services. The problem with expanding the levy is that King County is at its levy lid maximum; to expand the levy would require cutting out something else or action by the state to relax the rules.

Commissioner Hoople noted that the levy funds were allocated through an RFP process and thus were not available for being taken; the same was not true for the MIDD. Councilmember Ferguson requested funding from the Veterans Program for a legal project in support of veterans. That is the only program the County Council has asked to have reviewed for possible reallocation. Ms. Peterson said the pot of money in question was small, and because another project was starting late the money was available. It was within the definition of everything in Strategy 1.

Ms. Leslie said she heard recently that the Veterans and Human Services Levy renewal will appear on the ballot at the same time as the Seattle Families and Education Levy. Ms. Peterson said whether to put the Veterans and Human Services Levy on the ballot at the same time has not actually been decided yet; all alternatives are being studied.

Ms. Maurer suggested there would be nothing wrong with looking at the 130 programs to make sure they are doing what they were intended to accomplish.

Those that are not should be upset and the funds invested where they will have a greater impact.

Ms. Peterson said the various forums and the work being done with the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs is aimed in part at sensitizing agencies to the veteran's culture. Part of what the state is doing under the program is trying to educate police officers and first responders. County agencies are all required to ask their clients if they are veterans, and where possible they are being connected to services.

- 6. OLD BUSINESS – None
- 7. NEW BUSINESS – None
- 8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Huenefeld Gese adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

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Secretary to the Human Services Commission

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Date

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Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

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Date