

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES

November 6, 2008  
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Room 1E -120

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lynne Robinson, Jim Messner, Eileen Rasnack, Berta Seltzer, Dwayne Dilley, Diana Thompson, Howard Katz, Gary Dickerman

MEMBERS ABSENT: Christina Coulter, Stephen Lam, Marjorie Todd

STAFF PRESENT: Cathy VonWald, Department of Parks and Community Services

OTHERS PRESENT: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 8:41 a.m. by Chair Robinson who presided. All committee members were present with the exception of Jim Messner, who arrived at 8:46 a.m., and Christina Coulter, Stephen Lam, and Marjorie Todd.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. October 10, 2008

**Motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Dickerman. Second was by Ms. Seltzer and the motion carried unanimously.**

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE REPORT

Ms. Thompson made available copies of the legislative platform of the Washington Association of Area Agencies on Aging for the 2009 legislature. She suggested that while the platform is something the Network should support, there is some vagueness. She said she intends to research the issues and be able to explain them better by January.

Ms. Thompson said two of the speakers at the September 17 conference were mesmerizing. Tony Lee of Solid Ground made several very good comments about contacting the legislature. He said a personal letter is more effective than a form, postcard or email. He allowed that the legislative hotline is quite effective, as is working for a campaign or giving monetary support. A personal visit to legislators are very important, but they should be brief, should include a simple message, and should include a request to do something like support for a particular issue. Legislators need to know how a particular legislation will affect the population in question.

The Network was informed that February 17 is Senior Lobby Day in Olympia.

Ms. Thompson said Dennis Moller, director of the Thurston Area Agency on Aging, also spoke at the September 17 conference. He stressed the need to frame issues for legislators

and to work together with others. He pointed out the importance of keeping issues in the forefront, first by lobbying, by sending letters, and by attending public hearings, and second by calling talk radio programs.

Ms. VonWald said she was a guest on *Bellevue Today* the day after the last Network meeting. She said she discussed the goings on at the North Bellevue Senior Center. She said getting on that radio program would be very easy and would be a good way to get some important issues on the airwaves.

Mr. Dilley said the stations with the greatest coverage and listenership are KOMO and KIRO. He suggested that callers to either of those stations need to be a bit pushy or raise an issue that has not yet been covered.

Chair Robinson suggested adding the topic of promoting senior issues to the list of things to discuss at the January retreat.

Mr. Katz reminded everyone not to forget about the executive level of government, including the Attorney General's office, when there is a need to raise an issue. He said he would be willing to invite Rob McKenna, Washington state Attorney General, to attend a Network meeting and offer a few remarks about issues pertinent to older adults.

Mr. Messner said if the Attorney General accepts the invitation, the Network should also invite the Kirkland and Mercer Island senior groups to attend. Ms. VonWald agreed and suggested having the meeting in the evening could facilitate others attending as well, including the City Council members.

Ms. Thompson said it would be good to also hear from someone in the King County Prosecuting Attorney's office.

## IDENTITY THEFT

Mr. Dickerman said he continues to have a relationship with the FBI as an alumnus of their citizen academy. He said the local FBI office has special agents willing and eager to speak on any topic from white collar crime to identity theft.

It was agreed they should be invited, but not at the same meeting with the Attorney General.

Mr. Dickerman said the alumni of the FBI academy is active in taking certain projects out into the communities. The first program developed is focused on the dangers of children on the internet. He said he has developed a program on identity theft as well.

Mr. Dickerman said anyone who carries with them either a credit card or their Social Security card is a candidate for identity theft. Identity involves the taking of the distinguishing attributes persons use to authenticate themselves. It is not possible to be 100 percent safe, but there are positive steps that can be taken.

White collar crime is a phrase used by the FBI for crimes involving fraud. The Federal Trade Commission is very involved in the problem of identity theft; they estimate that some nine million Americans annually fall victim to identity theft at some level. Sometimes it can take weeks or even months before it is discovered that a crime has been committed. Washington state ranks high on the list of places with the most identity thefts per hundred thousand residents.

Some identity theft is generated by people working at banks. They will feed information to a third party. Some is generated through the sending of bogus emails seeking personal information; it should be remembered that legitimate financial institutions never send emails with requests for personal information. Thieves often target unlocked mailboxes and can gain sensitive information in that way. Thieves also go through dumpsters and trashcans seeking information they can use.

Persons who fraudulently obtain identities use the information in any way they can to gain access to checking accounts, open new credit accounts, make purchases, and change billing and mailing addresses.

Mr. Dickerman urged everyone to regularly review their bank and credit card statements looking for suspicious activity. Everyone should have a locking mailbox. No one should ever respond to an email that requests personal information. All passwords should be strong, in order words not ones that are easy to figure out; the same password should not be used for every account. Persons should minimize what they carry in their wallets or purses; Mr. Dickerman said he carries only one credit card and his driver's license. No one should carry with them their Social Security card. All sensitive documents should be shredded religiously.

Anyone suspecting activity on their behalf should contact local law enforcement immediately and receive a case number, and should contact one of the three credit reporting bureaus to place a fraud alert on their accounts. A report should also be filed with the Federal Trade Commission on their website; they offer a number of helpful templates for reporting fraud to vendors. The FBI gets involved only in interstate or very large cases. Any account with suspected fraudulent activity should be closed.

Each of the three credit reporting agencies offers a free annual credit report. Every four months one should visit one of the agencies to request a report.

Mr. Katz said he fell victim to identity theft last year. He said he checks his bank account electronically every couple of days and during one such check found that his checking account had been drained over a weekend. He said he reported the crime, and Bank of America put back all of the money that had been stolen. It was necessary to close the checking account and open another one.

Mr. Dickerman said thieves have been known to install miniature cameras on ATM machines to steal both card numbers and pin codes. Some have also placed false fronts on ATM machines that simply steal the numbers electronically.

Chair Robinson asked about the possibility of creating a kit to hand to people who have experienced identity theft. The kit could include some of the forms that need to be filled out and sent in along with other information. Mr. Dickerman said the Federal Trade Commission has put everything needed into their little booklet, which is readily available.

Ms. Thompson thought it would be helpful to offer a presentation on identity theft at the senior center. Ms. VonWald said several such presentations have been made there and they are always well attended. She said she would arrange to have Mr. Dickerman give his presentation there.

Ms. Rasnack noted that periodically special collections are offered in the community. One of the options is documents to be shredded. She suggested there should be a regular schedule for shredding that is well advertised in the community.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Katz said the nominating committee screened all applications and conducted interviews over a period of two days. In the process, the committee concluded that it should hold off on filling every vacant position on the Network. The issue of having non-voting members of the Network should be held over to the retreat.

Ms. VonWald noted that of the seven applicants interviewed, five were selected.

Ms. Rasnack said William “Bill” Merriman lives in Bellevue and is retired from corporate America, having been involved in marketing and sales. Mr. Merriman said after his retirement he chose to become involved with Synergy Home Care as its Northwest Regional Director and general manager. He also serves on the board of directors for Emerald Heights Retirement Community and has a number of strong affiliations locally and nationally. The committee concluded Mr. Merriman would make a good addition to the Network.

Bob Magargel was also approved by the nominating committee for membership on the Network. Mr. Magargel lives and works in Bellevue. He has a lot of volunteer experience in the community, is involved with the Bellevue farmers market, and has done a lot of sports coaching in the area. He has a real interest in seniors through his work and life experiences.

Mr. Dillely said another candidate chosen by the committee is Hannah Kimball. Ms. Kimball is retired from Boeing where she held a high position. She is retired and lives in Bellevue and has community involvement in her background.

Julie Gray has been involved with aging issues in Kirkland. She lives in Bellevue and works with Northwest Senior Services. Ms. Gray is under 50 years of age.

Heidi Ressler is also under the age of 50. Ms. Wrestler lives and works in Bellevue as a property and casualty insurance agent. She has had a strong and hands-on connection with her parents and grandparents. The nominating committee felt Ms. Ressler would be one who would challenge the status quo.

Answering a question asked by Mr. Messner, Ms. VonWald said each person would be appointed for a two-year term.

**Motion to accept the slate of new Network members, Bill Merriman, Bob McGargle, Hannah Kimball, Julie Gray and Heidi Wrestler, was made by Mr. Katz. Second was by Ms. Seltzer and the motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. VonWald said she would make contact with each person.

#### DECEMBER MEETING/CELEBRATION

Ms. VonWald said she and Chair Robinson had been discussing having only a celebration in December rather than a regular meeting and a celebration. She proposed holding the event in the evening on a weeknight, and to invite all current members and their significant others, those who previously served on the Network, and all new members. She recommended Thursday, December 11, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., either at Winters House or the new Mercer Slough environmental education center. December 17 was suggested as an alternate date.

#### STAFF REPORT

Ms. VonWald said she and Mr. Dickerman and Ms. O'Reilly would be providing the Human Services Commission with an update. The Power Point presentation will be shown at the November 18 meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Ms. VonWald informed the Network that Governor Gregoire responded to the letter sent to her by the Network following the October meeting. Chair Robinson read aloud the letter in which the Governor outlined her position with regard to healthcare for low-income citizens.

Ms. VonWald said she would be present at the Home Sweet Home Fair on Saturday, November 8, along with Chair Robinson, Mr. Katz and Ms. Thompson. She said additional volunteers would be welcome at the event, which runs from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at City Hall.

Ms. VonWald said she attended the King County Aging Providers Coalition meeting on November 5 along with Ms. Rasnack and Ms. Seltzer. The group is a subset of the Eastside Human Services Forum and it will be meeting quarterly beginning in January. Its primary focus will be advocacy and legislative issues. She added that the Eastside Human Services Forum will be conducting its annual meeting on December 10 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Crossroads Community Center.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS – 2008 Work Plan Updates

### *Transportation*

Mr. Dickerman said the subcommittee, working closely with the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative, was able to meet its goals. During the year the committee was able to see some pilot programs initiated. Committee members attended and participated in forums and workshops as they occurred. Support was offered for funding applications for the pilot projects. The subcommittee has yet to provide transportation speaking points to key influencers in the community.

Mr. Katz asked what actions the subcommittee will take given passage of the light rail tax. Mr. Dickerman said the group has been closely watching the issue. Now that it will happen, the subcommittee will be developing a strategic plan. The fact that the subcommittee has been working with the Easy Rider Collaborative, which is working on grant funding for a mobility manager position for the Eastside, puts the group in good stead for being fully plugged into the process.

### *Housing*

Ms. Rasnack said the housing subcommittee did not meet in October. The fact that members have had health issues has meant the subcommittee has not been active lately.

Chair Robinson noted that the City Council is set to vote in January on approving incentives for affordable housing. She said the Council would benefit from having specific numbers regarding the need for affordable housing for seniors in Bellevue. Ms. VonWald suggested getting some figures from Ms. O'Reilly and seeing if the Human Services Commission may want to weigh in on the topic as well.

The suggestion was made that the housing subcommittee should draft a letter to the City Council outlining the need for affordable senior housing in the city.

**Motion to authorize the housing subcommittee to draft a letter to the City Council regarding the need for senior affordable housing was made by Mr. Dickerman. Second was by Ms. Thompson and the motion carried unanimously.**

*Support Services*

Ms. Thompson said the subcommittee produced a lot of materials during the year, including a nice bookmark, a four-page list of resources for older adults, a flyer titled *The Network on Aging is Working for You*, and the banner that is used at all Network presentations. The group worked to develop a Power Point presentation that has been shared with several neighborhood associations. The subcommittee also shared materials with seniors at community fairs and gatherings, including the Strawberry Festival, Kelsey Creek Farm, Fourth of July celebration, Overlake Hospital Fall Prevention workshop, and at the North Bellevue Senior Center.

In July the subcommittee organized and hosted a forum of aging service providers. The Power Point presentation was shown and suggestions on it were sought. The event generated discussions by the representatives of agencies that do not always talk to each other.

The group will participate in the Home Sweet Home Fair on November 8.

NEW BUSINESS – None

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS – None

UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS

Thursday, January 8, from 8:00 a.m. to noon, was selected as the date and time for the annual Network retreat.

ADJOURN

Chair Robinson adjourned the meeting at 10:26 a.m.