

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on January 5, 2012

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

November 15, 2011
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Habib

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

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Plaskon, who arrived at 6:33 p.m.; Commissioner Perelman, who arrived at 6:34 p.m.; and Commissioner Habib, who was excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. October 18, 2011

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Jeff Brandt, Elder and Adult Day Services Executive Director, thanked the Commission for its continued support. He said the organization provides day health services to adults with acquired and developmental disabilities, and the services provided include skilled nursing, occupational therapy, and recreational and social therapies. Sixty percent of the participants are adults with developmental disabilities,

many of whom have complex medical, physical and emotional needs. Thirty-five percent are seniors with dementia; five percent are adults with other acquired disabilities such as traumatic brain injuries. National studies have shown that adult day health is the lowest cost healthcare service, and the cost effectiveness of congregate programming means all needed services can be provided for less than it costs for a home visit by a home health aide. The congregate setting has tremendous therapeutic value. The city's dollars allocated to the program are leveraged to provide care having a cash value far in excess of the actual allocation. The organization pays wages and benefits to employees who are Bellevue residents, purchases goods and services from Bellevue-area businesses, and works with other non-profits to advocate on behalf of Bellevue citizens with disabilities. During the last year the organization touched more than 700 Bellevue residents, either as clients, family members, donors or partners in advocacy efforts. The latter will become even more important in the coming year given that the City has cut its Developmental Disabilities Division budget by \$11 million, and 73 percent of that amount was trimmed from the adult day health budget even though it accounted for only 16 percent of the total budget for the division. Employment services programs, which account for nearly 80 percent of the division's budget, were cut by less than \$3 million. Over the last three years DSHS has repeatedly positioned adult day health to take big cuts while protecting employment service programs in line with a decades old agenda. In 1998, frustrated that so many families were choosing adult day health programs over employment services, DSHS persuaded the legislature to pass a law requiring all adults with developmental disabilities to participate in employment services programs. While forced participation increased employment for some adults with mild to moderate disabilities, many families of adults at the other end of the spectrum saw no benefits and were frustrated by the resources wasted by the mandate. DSHS officials continue to argue that employment services is a one-size-fits-all solution for every Washington adult with developmental disabilities. On October 1 adult day health funding was moved to the COPES waiver; the move ended developmental disability adults access to day health services programs. Hundreds of adults on the developmental disabilities waiver voluntarily transferred to the COPES waiver just to keep their day health services, but now DSHS has proposed elimination of day health services on the COPES waiver. The impact of such a move would be tremendous. Families should be given the freedom to spend whatever resources they have in ways that will most benefit them. Day health should be one of the program choices on the COPES waiver and on the developmental disabilities waiver. The Commission was urged to remind state legislators about the importance of day health programs.

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Stout reported, that along with Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly, she had spent time recently working on a pending reorganization of the Healthy Start program since Friends of Youth no longer wants to serve as the lead agency. She suggested the Commission will want to keep an eye on the changes.

Commissioner Stout said she also participated in a meeting with Friends of Youth and the Vuecrest Community Association around the teen shelter proposed to be located at Grace Lutheran church. She said she was pleased in the end to see that her community was very supportive although some in the West Bellevue neighborhood have expressed concerns. It appears that rather than having the shelter open two nights a week, the shelter will be open daily. A vote by the entire church congregation will not be taken until January.

Commissioner Bruels reported that earlier in the day he had attended the King County Alliance of Human Services meeting. He noted that the King County budget includes an extra million dollars to address homelessness issues; how the funds are to be used it not yet clear, though there is a slim chance some of the funds could be allocated to supporting the Eastside Winter Shelter in Bellevue. There is a lot of hope among the Alliance members that King County will look at sustained and consistent human services funding. On a down note, it was reported that the Alliance is facing significant financial difficulty and in fact has had to let go some of their support staff, leaving the organization to function with volunteers.

Commissioner Bruels informed the Commission that the King County Legislative Forum is scheduled for Thursday, November 17, at St. Mark's Cathedral at 6:30 p.m. He said he was planning to attend.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie shared with the Commissioners copies of the press release announcing the Eastside Winter Shelters. She said the scheduled opening is November 22 at St. Peter's United Methodist Church and The Salvation Army. She also noted that at its November 16 meeting the Committee to End Homelessness Task Force on Shelters for Single Adults will talk about winter shelter models in all different areas of the county, what the challenges are and how they fit into the whole spectrum of services for the homeless.

6. DISCUSSION

A. 2011-2012 Human Services Needs Update

Ms. O'Reilly said the state funding cuts that have already occurred, and those being contemplated, are going to drastically impact and possibly eliminate many health and human services programs that are serving communities throughout the state. The impacts will affect the data in the Needs Update. The legislature is set to meet in special session beginning November 28, and whatever they decide will go into effect January 1. Their work will be closely monitored, and information in the Needs Update will be revised as needed.

Ms. O'Reilly said in addition to the fluidity of the available data, some difficulties have been encountered in obtaining data. Some of the difficulties have had to do with staff shortages at the agencies, and reports relied on in the past have been delayed in being released. She said she and intern Evita Almassi are seeking the latest data

from a number of agencies, many of whom are in the process of forecasting what funding cuts will mean for their operations.

Once the Needs Update is finalized and released, some hard copies will be printed, but for the most part it will be posted online in pdf format. As things change, the online documents will be updated to reflect the latest data.

Ms. O'Reilly said the school district released its data during the first week of October, which was after the Needs Update had been drafted. The new data shows an increase in the number of students enrolled, and the percentage of students eligible for the free and reduced price lunch increased to 22.8 percent district wide, up from 22.5 percent the previous school year. The number of languages spoken in the new data was 82 where for the previous year it was 83. The number of students categorized as white stands at 48.8 percent, down from 49.3 percent. During the previous school year there were 160 eligible for McKinney-Vento; as of October 1 the number stood at 120 students, a figure that may increase as the year progresses.

New data has been received from a variety of sources regarding sexual assault services and domestic violence incidents. Information not previously in hand about older adult abuse has been collected, and the public health clinic at Eastgate was able to provide some data about dental services provided. New data from the 2008-2010 American Communities Survey (ACS) has also been received and incorporated into the document; the data shows that the number of older adults who do not own a vehicle is increasing.

Ms. O'Reilly said some additional information from the city's demographer Gwen Rousseau was received regarding ACS census data and was used to update the Community Profile section. A slight increase in the number of foreign-born residents is indicated by the new data, and the number of languages other than English spoken in the home is also up. The data also shows that the higher income residents living in Bellevue had the largest increase in income over the past several years when compared to people in the lower income categories.

Ms. O'Reilly said staff are still waiting for additional information, particularly from the Communities Count survey, the social and health indicator report through Seattle/King County Public Health. More data is also expected regarding the 2008-2010 ACS, and from the Eastside Pathways effort of the Bellevue School District, and of course the results of the special legislative session set to begin November 28.

Ms. O'Reilly informed the Commission that early in January the Commission will be asked to discuss how the data should be used in terms of developing focus areas and strategies in terms of the next funding cycle. Certainly the needs of the community and all ongoing efforts will take center stage, but the Commission will likely also want to look at programs in new ways, to evaluate how agencies collaborate with each other, and to identify new efficiencies.

The Council will be provided with an update regarding the findings at its second meeting in January or their first meeting in February. By waiting that long, the data collected will paint the most accurate picture possible.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Mid-Biennium Review of Human Services Contracts

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano reminded the Commissioners that at the previous meeting there was consensus to invite representatives from several agencies to answer specific questions.

Mr. Adriano said the questions the Commission had regarding Refugee Women's Alliance centered on the need to understand the nature of the outreach units that are part of the grant, and how many of the applicants typically would have been rejected by DSHS had the agency not been there to help.

Ms. Thuy Tran, Family Support Program Manager, said Refugee Women's Alliance is located in Seattle. The multi-ethnic community based organization offers a comprehensive set of services to refugee and immigrant communities in King and Snohomish counties. The agency was established in 1985 and has a complement of staff that collectively speak some 37 languages. She thanked the Commission for its continued support.

Ms. Tran said agency staff are stationed at the Crossroads Community Center in Bellevue two days each week, and also conduct outreach at the Hopelink food bank, the low-income housing complex, and at community gatherings. The staff approach people to talk about the State's Basic Food Program, the benefits and eligibility requirements. If a person indicates they meet the income guidelines, an appointment is scheduled to help the client fill out the application forms. During that meeting, clients are educated with regard to what to expect during the DSHS interview and what items they will need to bring with them. Their information is also used to calculate how much their benefit could be.

Continuing, Ms. Tran said the outreach effort is crucial for clients who may not speak English and who are not familiar with the system. Many have heard about benefits from the State but are scared to work through the system by themselves. Without the assistance of Refugee Women's Alliance, the chances of getting signed on to the basic food program are very low; as many as four applications out of ten may be denied without some assistance and follow-up.

Commissioner Bruels pointed out that in the email reply to the questions it was stated that two out of ten applications are rejected by DSHS for missing information and the like. He asked how that compares to the success rate of the agency in getting people onto benefits. Ms. Tran said the success rate for Refugee Women's Alliance for getting Bellevue clients signed on is 60 percent.

Commissioner Perelman asked if any other agency is providing similar benefits. Ms. Tran said Public Health of King County has a presence at Hopelink for the State Food Assistance Program. Potential budget cuts, however, could eliminate the basic food program. Refugee Women's Alliance is working with other agencies in making sure the state understands the importance of the program and the need for outreach programs.

With regard to HERO House, Mr. Adriano pointed out that the target for the first outcome was 25 percent and asked for clarification. Ms. Erica Horn said it is more about the way the numbers are reported. She said while the report shows 21 percent, if one uses the 25 percent target it is actually an 82 percent achievement toward the goal. She said the outcomes were changed from the first time around because they were too vague. The percent of people employed in a fidelity based supported employment program should be right around 40 percent, but the agency is new to that approach and so it is aiming at a level that can be obtained in the first year or two. The fact is 82 percent is not too bad, and the next time around the numbers will increase as more persons find work.

Ms. Horn said four persons were found work during October, and to date in November one person had been placed in the bio fuel field. The agency, working with King County, is now a Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) provider, which means reimbursement of up to 50 percent for the transportation program, not including the driver. High utilization has not yet been seen. The intent has been to reach out to some of the more rural areas and to get people in for services. The first supported employment fidelity review is set for December 6 and 7; King County will be on-site for two full days reviewing all processes and interviewing members. One staff position has been frozen for the past two months.

Alaric Bien with Chinese Information and Service Center said the additional recession funding received for the Cultural Navigator Program allowed the agency to increase staff hours. He said it was his understanding that the funds were to be allocated only one time and that they were intended to focus on the impacts of the recession. When the dollars run out, the plan is for the staff hours to once again be decreased. If the need continues, however, other funding will be sought to retain the increased staff hours.

Mr. Bien informed the Commission that the agency has staff that speak a variety of different languages, including Hindi, Urdu, Russian, Spanish, Chinese and Vietnamese, though the staff are not all operating from the same office; the staff who speak a needed language are not always at the right site to accommodate clients as they come in. The decision has been made to use Skype video calls to serve all the different language groups more effectively.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bruels, Mr. Bien clarified that no new staff were hired using the recession funds; hours for existing staff were increased. By increasing staff time, the staff were able to meet the demand for services.

Mr. Adriano said the concern voiced by the Commission regarding Friends of Youth was centered on what appears to be a shortfall in the number of foster care bednights. He noted that a communication had been received from the agency seeking a contract amendment transferring the value of the unspent foster care bednights to shelter bednights.

Paul Johnson, program manager for the Friends of Youth foster care program, explained that foster care programs in general are in fact homeless programs in that the courts determine that the kids do not have a parent willing or capable of taking care of them. Friends of Youth specializes in taking on children who have serious behavioral or mental health problems, and as such the foster parents require a lot of support. Usually the kids in the program have been in the state foster care system but have not done well. Friends of Youth puts time into recruiting foster homes all over King County, including Bellevue, and some of the funds received from Bellevue are used to that end. The program also helps prepare the children for the transition into adulthood in the absence of their natural parents. One of the reasons the contract numbers are low is that there are few kids who originally started in Bellevue. Once they are identified, they typically remain in the program for many months. It is not possible to predict where the children will be from when referrals are received from the state.

Mr. Johnson said those in the shelter care program typically stay between 20 and 30 days. The program is obviously connected with the recently homeless. The hope is that the shelter care beds can be counted instead of the foster care beds.

Commissioner Stout said it appeared to her that the definition of Bellevue in the case of the foster care program was not exactly appropriate. She said the kids belong to the community whether or not they had a start or live in Bellevue. Mr. Johnson agreed that "city of residence" is problematic when it comes to homeless families.

With regard to the Consejo contract, Mr. Adriano said the concern voiced by the Commission was centered on what appears to be an underperformance relative to community advocacy and legal advocacy. He said in advance of the meeting he spoke with staff from the agency and learned that they have concerns with the way the grant writer wrote the application, which affected how the contract is structured.

Ms. Lida Norman, grants and contracts specialist, said she began her employment with Consejo in November 2010, by which time most contracts were already executed. She said because she had not seen the data, she had to rely on previous applications and contracts. It is clear that the numbers used were unrealistically high for the advocate who works on the Eastside. To date, the advocate has provided 525

hours of direct services, and the domestic violence department has almost doubled its legal advocacy hours.

Ms. Monica Baldoceca, domestic violence advocate for Consejo for the Eastside, said she works with survivors in helping them understand the legal system. It requires many hours of time for each client given that each case can last as long as three years. The domestic violence support group in Bellevue has been successful; it helps women talk about their issues and gain the help they need. Changes in the system have made it more difficult for domestic violence survivors and their children to obtain services, and that has negatively influenced the number of clients served.

Commissioner Yantis asked how the service units delivered for the current contract compare to previous years. Ms. Norman said there were 14 clients served in 2009, 15 clients served in 2010, and to date in 2011 16 clients have been served. In past invoices, the cost unit was \$125, but currently it is \$16.44. In the support groups, legal advocacy and community advocacy services were lumped together, but multiplying the \$16.44 by three still does not come up to where it should be. There is still a lot of work to do to get the issues ironed out.

Mr. Adriano suggested that a contract amendment would be in order given the issue with the way the original contract was written.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Stout, Ms. Norman said she has been with the agency for 13 years but only recently took on the responsibility of overseeing the domestic violence program. She said a lot of changes are being made administratively in order to get on target and move forward. Another program manager will be hired soon to work with the domestic violence staff and to improve overall compliance.

Declan Wynne, Sound Mental Health program director, informed the Commissioners that the person who wrote the most recent grant application did not accurately reflect the numbers, and that has made the program's outcomes look very bad. In 2010 the agency was awarded approximately \$10,000 for 115 hours of services for ten clients at \$100 per unit. The person who wrote the recent grant put the units at 277 at \$45 per unit; the mistake should have been caught but was not. He said he has talked over the issue with Mr. Adriano and agrees that an amendment is needed to work out the problem. The program has already enrolled the number of clients anticipated to be served in 2011. In 2010, 2000 units of service were provided under the old program, and to date in 2011 some 3500 units have been provided. The program has more clients on Medicaid than before. Clients are served on a sliding scale, and the Bellevue grant has helped offset the costs.

Commissioner Bruels asked if the agency tracks rates of client recidivism. Mr. Wynne said tracking is done because the agency is provided with notice regarding all clients that go to jail and how long they are there. The agency sends staff to visit them in jail. The program's recidivism rate is actually lower than the national rate.

Ms. Marty Jacobs, family services director for Child Care Resources, commented that as the economy remains challenging and unemployment remains high, the number of searches conducted for childcare have been kept low. Calls are down countywide, but in some cities the goals are being met or exceeded. The agency has traditionally reported the number of child care searches done for families, but the technical assistance provided to families has not been previously reported. Through October, 65 percent of the annual goal has been met; adding in the 27 technical assistance calls to date brings the total to 75 percent of the goal for the year. Most of the technical assistance provided has to do with affording child care. The cost of child care in Bellevue is high and the number of programs that provides subsidies for families are limited. Families that call in are given information about accessing financial assistance; those not eligible are given information about other ways to afford child care. Those conversations are not counted as a child care search. It would be useful to be able to use the technical assistance numbers along with the search numbers, especially during the recession.

Ms. Jacobson said the agency conducts outreach in Bellevue by handing out literature and by advertising on Google. The agency has had a web presence for many years.

Commissioner Yantis asked if the level of technical support has increased over the past years. Ms. Jacobson said the numbers are up a bit. Families are trying to mitigate their expenses and to that extent are seeking a different kind of assistance than the traditional child care search for full-time child care. They will have grandma watch for free on one day and an aunt watch for free on another day.

Commissioner Yantis asked why the number of placement calls has diminished. Ms. Deanne Puffert, CEO, Child Care Resources, said that is attributable to the fact that in some cases one parent is working but the other is not, and in other cases to the fact that a relative or trusted acquaintance is being used to provide the needed child care as a way to save money. Family, friend and neighbor care involves far different challenges than hired care does. Many child care providers have open slots at their facilities and are willing to provide one, two or three days of care, something that was not possible just a few years ago. Only 47 percent of child care centers accept child care subsidies, 62 percent of family child care providers accept subsidies, which is up from previous years. The subsidies are about 35 percent below the market rate.

Ms. O'Reilly pointed out that the cost of child care for a preschooler and an infant in a daycare home can eat up between 30 and 40 percent of the 2010 median income in east King County.

Ms. Puffert added that the governor's proposed budget includes cuts to working connections child care, which will mean even more families will need to piece care together; there is also talk of reducing TANF eligibility from 60 months to 36 months. She informed the Commission that as of mid-November the number of technical

assistance to providers hours stood at 115, which is close to the goal of 125. She also noted that migration to a new database system was accomplished at the end of 2010. One of the challenges realized after the third quarter was that the way the system was set up to count was off. The current approach will be retained through the end of 2011 in order to set up a good audit trail and will be corrected in 2012.

Ms. Puffert noted that Child Care Resources is an Eastside Pathways partner and reported that some of the pilot funds from the state to be used to work with infant and toddler teachers are being spent in Bellevue. Six child care centers in Bellevue will be receiving in-depth technical assistance, curriculum development and training.

Chair Beighle asked about the low number of units per date for advocacy for the Bellevue School District Human Service Specialist Program. Mr. Adriano said the agency responded to the question by email and offered an assurance that things are expected to pick up.

With regard to the Crisis Clinic, Chair Beighle noted that while the narrative indicates each call that comes in is logged by specialists in a computerized database and used for monthly, quarterly and annual reports, nothing was said in the report about where those counts stand. Mr. Adriano said Crisis Clinic reports on the number of calls but not on the number of residents. He allowed that the agency is able to indicate the number of calls from Bellevue, but not the number of unduplicated Bellevue residents.

Ms. O'Reilly noted that the Healthy Start Advisory Board was slated to meet on November 21. All of the partners in the collaboration will talk about the request of Friends of Youth not to be the fiscal sponsor lead agency. A new fiscal sponsor will need to be identified before July 2012. Commissioner Stout added that Friends of Youth intends to refocus itself back to its original mission, which was homeless youth. They do want to continue as a partner with Healthy Start.

With reference to Youth Eastside Services, Commissioner Perelman asked if other agencies report information and referral service units in terms of hours rather than by the number of individual calls. Chair Beighle said it is not an uncommon approach. Commissioner Stout pointed out that agency staff must spend hours on the phone with some of the kids who call in.

Commissioner Bruels questioned the 17 percent figure included in the Consejo report. Commissioner Stout said she had serious doubts about the agency and its ability to continue providing consistent and quality services.

Mr. Adriano said staff is keeping the agency on its radar. He said he understood that incorrect data was included in the grant application, but he questioned why it took so long for the agency to find the error. Ms. Leslie said she was encouraged to see steps being taken to improve the agency's staff structure.

Chair Beighle questioned the fact that the Eastside Domestic Advocacy Program calculates advocacy units in 15-minute increments. She suggested that very little could be accomplished in 15 minutes given the issues presented by the clientele. Commissioner Bruels said as part of his work he has had occasion to call the agency and talk to an advocate seeking to know if they have a shelter bed available; often the conversation involves asking the question and receiving no for an answer, which does not take very long.

Commissioner Stout expressed some discomfort with regard to the Refugee Women's Alliance report. She commented that the number of residents served is quite low. Mr. Adriano said there was some email correspondence between staff and the agency after the third quarter report was submitted. He said he would share that information with the Commission.

Commissioner Stout referred to the report from Asian Counseling and Referral Service and said it appeared odd that year to date the program has only met 13 percent of the number of units predicted for the year, while having met 80 percent of the units predicted for Bellevue.

Chair Beighle noted that the Healthpoint report talks about dental visits and dentures, but includes a measurement outcome and a percent of pediatric patients. She said some clarification was needed with regard to who is being served.

With regard to the NAMI report, Commissioner Stout said she was unable to determine if mental or physical ailments are referred to with regard to families with brain disorders. Commissioner Bruels explained that the term is a federal one and is used to refer to mental health disorders.

Chair Beighle referred to the notes section of the SeaMar report and the statement that only 110 had more than one visit in the previous six months and said past the toddler age well child visits occur only once per year. She suggested some clarification was needed.

With regard to the Sound Mental Health report, Chair Beighle asked if it is normal for more hours to be spent on case management. Commissioner Bruels said he assumed that where children and families are involved there would be a lot of case management needed.

Therapeutic Health Services asked why only eight persons were measured of the 70 who were served. Commissioner Perelman agreed that the numbers do not appear to make sense and suggested some clarification is needed.

Chair Beighle said she was confused by the average cost per day figures in the report for the Bellevue College Early Learning program. Commissioner Stout concurred and added that she was confused with regard to what constitutes a unit.

With regard to the Boys and Girls Club Project Learn report, Commissioner Stout said she was confused about the child care unit figures and the year for which the units are reported.

Chair Beighle raised the issue of allowing Child Care Resources to count their technical assistance units along with referrals for their Child Care Information and Referral program. Commissioner Perelman voiced concern over the fact that in the past the agency also provided technical assistance but did not count them, yet was always able to meet their goals. She said it appears the request is simply to help make the program look better, and suggested that when the economy improves the agency may want to go back to its original approach. She expressed the view that a goal is a goal and said she would not make the change. Chair Beighle said she held the same view.

Commissioner Stout referred to the annual outcomes section of the Hopelink Adult Education Program report and said it appeared to her that there are two indicators for the same outcome statement. Mr. Adriano said that was in fact the case and allowed that the two should have been combined.

Commissioner Stout said she was a bit surprised by the Kinderling Center report. She referred specifically to the notes section where it was indicated the agency had served only nine unduplicated Bellevue residents in the third quarter, with 631 service units. The report also talks about maintaining the capacity of human service organizations in King County. As written, it is difficult to connect the dots and some clarification is needed. Ms. Leslie pointed out that the program is focused on providing consultation with other child care providers who are having problems with specific children, not to provide the actual child care.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly provided the Commissioners with a matrix outlining the budget cuts proposed by the governor that will affect health and human services.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie reminded the Commissioners about the holiday get together with the Parks and Community Services Board scheduled for December 6. She noted that it will be at the home of the Chair of the Parks and Community Services Board.

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Beighle adjourned the meeting at 9:06 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date