

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on February 7, 2017

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

January 3, 2017
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson McEachran, Commissioners Bruels, Kline, Mercer, Oxrieder, Perelman, Villar

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Kayla Valy, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Chair McEachran who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present except for Commissioner Kline who arrived at 6:22 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. November 1, 2016

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Mercer. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oxrieder and the motion carried unanimously.

B. November 15, 2016

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Oxrieder. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Villar and the motion carried unanimously.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Betsi Hummer, 14541 SE 26th Street, said she was present as a private citizen rather than as a member of the East Bellevue Community Council. She noted that the East Bellevue area has a number of adult family homes, a use that is allowed in single family neighborhoods. What is happening in the area, however, is that older and smaller rambler homes on fairly large lots are being purchased for \$500,000 to \$700,000, torn down, and replaced with structures that are 4000 to 5000 square feet. While intended to look like a single family home, the individual rooms get rented out to adults in need of care. What the neighborhood is primarily concerned about is the need for transparency in the process; it should be clear up front that the new structures will be used as adult family homes. With regard to the issue of affordable housing, she noted that the neighborhood has quite a few affordable units. What is needed is a fair citywide plan regarding affordable housing that is also transparent. The issue of single room rentals in single family homes began in the Lake Hills neighborhood. The city acted to curb the activity, but what is still needed is a rental registration process so that every person renting in the city is registered, something that would be safer for the neighborhoods and safer for the tenants. With regard to parks, she noted that in the city the underlying zoning is residential because there is no park zone. The concern for the Lake Hills community is that Larson Lake and the Lake Hills Greenbelt could ultimately be turned into something for which it was not intended. Bellevue College as a state entity is allowed to build whatever it wants on its properties, which it has lately expanded into the Lake Hills neighborhood. The city needs to maintain open communications and strong relationships with Bellevue College as well as other state entities, such as the state patrol, which also has property in Lake Hills. East Bellevue Community Council constituents are Bellevue residents, most of whom own their homes, vote and support the parks. The Larson Lake bathrooms were closed during the recession, so those who actually used the park could not use the facilities.

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Chair McEachran noted that the turnout for the holiday party was excellent.

Commissioner Oxrieder said the re-framing workshop sponsored by the Eastside Human Services Forum was very good.

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said the Framework Institute presented at the annual meeting of the Eastside Human Services Forum, and then the next day held a half-day training workshop that was well received. It was noted that people often do not know what human services entail and it was suggested the focus should be on well being and the concept of human potential, which are things people can relate to. Constructing a house requires a team of specialists working together. The same is true where structural changes are needed to improve the well being of people.

Commissioner Oxrieder added that it was pointed out that terms such as “at-risk” and “vulnerable” should not be used as they imply being victims.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie called the attention of the Commissioners to two upcoming Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. events sponsored by the city’s Diversity Advantage Program. She said the first would be in Council Chambers at noon on January 5, and the second would be at the Crossroads Shopping Center on January 9 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Ms. Leslie also informed the Commissioners about the poverty simulation exercise on January 7 from 9:00 a.m. to noon at St. Louise Catholic Parish. The event is put on by Seattle University.

Information was provided to the Commissioners regarding the annual One Night Count, now called Count Us In, set for 2:00 a.m. Friday, January 27.

Intern Kayla Valy said she and Ms. O'Reilly were working with the outreach worker for Congregations for the Homeless and the King County Library System Bellevue library to create a Bellevue Community Resource Fair. She noted the event has been slated for January 24 at the Bellevue Library from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

A motion to open nominations for Commission Chair was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oxrieder and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to nominate Commissioner Villar to serve as Chair was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oxrieder.

No other nominations were made.

A motion to close nominations was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oxrieder and the motion carried unanimously.

The motion to nominate Commissioner Villar to serve as Chair carried unanimously.

A motion to open nominations for Vice Chair was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oxrieder and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to nominate Commissioner Mercer to serve as Vice Chair was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oxrieder.

A motion to close nominations was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oxrieder and the motion carried unanimously.

The motion to nominate Commissioner Mercer to serve as Vice Chair carried unanimously.

The gavel was passed to new Chair Villar who then took a moment to thank Commissioner McEachran for his service and leadership, and for serving as a strong role model. She said she grew up in unstable low-income housing in Alabama and took advantage of a variety of human services. She said it was really meaningful to her to be able to be a community servant and looked forward to a great year.

Commissioner Mercer thanked the Commissioners for choosing to elect her Vice Chair.

7. DISCUSSION

A. 2017 Human Services Commission Work Plan

Ms. Leslie reviewed with the Commissioners the items on the work plan and sought from them input with regard to agenda items for the coming year. The list included the need to amend the 2016 Action Plan of approved projects; the Annual Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report; the Annual Action Plan; development of the new Human Service Needs Update; and a review of applications for federal CDBG funding for 2018. The list of possible agenda topics included joint meetings with other Eastside human services commissions; following legislative issues; implementation of regional human services funding sources; keeping up to date relative to regional collaborations; updates regarding Bellevue initiatives; the work of Eastside Pathways; agency site visits and tours; updates regarding ARCH and the two Home Repair Programs; trends in various service areas; and immigration issues.

Chair Villar reported that she attended a Community Forum on the impacts of the election on various services in the community. She suggested that any joint meetings with area human services commissions should include some discussion of how comfortable immigrants are asking for services.

Commissioner Mercer said she would like to have someone in a position of authority with the Bellevue School District to address the Commission about the grants they apply for.

Commissioner Perelman said she would like to see the district address all of the different collaborations that are happening in the schools. She added that it would be good to have someone from the Bellevue Schools Foundation participate in the conversation.

Commissioner Oxrieder suggested the list of potential agenda topics should include opioid use and mental health issues. She said she would like data on how many mentally ill persons are arrested without having a place to send them.

Commissioner McEachran said he was interested in receiving an update regarding coordinated entry, the interface of human service organizations with Police and Fire, the economic development currently going on in the Spring District, and what will be happening in the Eastgate/Factoria area in regard to where human services will interact with economic development there. The Council on December 12 accepted the report from the Affordable Housing Technical Advisory Group and will welcome feedback in March.

Commissioner Mercer said she would like an update from Hopelink relative to moving away from using transitional housing. She suggested it would be helpful to have a panel discussion with the groups that are offering programs that wrap around the schools.

Chair Villar called for an update regarding how the agencies that saw cuts or reductions in United Way funding have rebounded.

Commissioner Bruels suggested the Commission should be kept informed with regard to any rollbacks to the Affordable Care Act in the coming year, and how the changes might strain local infrastructure. It would also be helpful to have a presentation from Congregations for the Homeless and the city regarding the Eastside shelter project.

Commissioner Mercer said where possible the Commission should expand its thoughts about diversity beyond race and culture to include sexual orientation and the like.

8. DISCUSSION

A. 2017-2018 Human Services Needs Update

Ms. O'Reilly provided the Commissioners with the draft data collection schedule. She noted that quite a lot of work has already been done relative to the phone and online survey. Working with Northwest Research Group, some of the questions have been tweaked, and focus is being given to cutting down the amount of time it takes to do the phone survey, which was up to 20 minutes. Questions that have provided data that has not really been used in the past will be eliminated.

The city's Finance Department will be doing a survey at about the same time, and they will also be using Northwest Research Group and will be coordinating with the Needs Update survey. Rather than random dial, both surveys will utilize an address-based sampling approach. To get 400 participants requires sending out some 4000 letters.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Mercer, Ms. O'Reilly explained that the address-based sampling is somehow more likely to be linked with a cell phone

number. Random-number surveys are on the way out in the industry because of the reduced number of land lines and the fact that those who do have land lines often represent an older geographic. Every attempt is made to reach certain percentages of people who live in single family homes and single family units, and 50 percent males and 50 percent females. By assuring scientific validity, the survey results can be compared over the years to determine trend lines. The consumer survey is much shorter and it is offered to folks in shelters as well as in other locations. Commissioner Perelman agreed with the need to move away from being focused on land lines. She suggested, however, that as fewer people are interested in participating in any phone survey, new trends should be introduced.

Commissioner Mercer asked about constituencies like Bellevue College where not everyone necessarily lives in Bellevue, and those who work in Bellevue but find it too expensive to live in the city. Ms. O'Reilly said efforts have been made to reach out to the latter group. The city's Office of Economic Development conducted an employer survey last year and has been contacted about adding a couple of questions about human service needs for when they put out their survey again.

Chair Villar observed that businesses pay attention to what the Office of Economic Development puts out because they are wanting certain things to happen. She suggested their survey should ask employees that do not live in Bellevue why they have chosen not to live in the city.

Commissioner Oxrieder suggested utilizing the term "well being" over "human services." Ms. O'Reilly agreed. She noted that four years ago during the recession the survey included questions related to how the recession was affecting people. Two years ago with the recession officially over, the questions were revised to focus on how people were managing since the recession ended. The survey questions will once again be revised to substitute questions about either well being or optimism.

Chair Villar expressed concern that "optimism" could be interpreted to be a political word. Commissioner McEachran concurred and suggested using "supportive services" instead. Commissioner Oxrieder said she would not rule out using "optimism" if worded specifically to focus on the survey taker's life and/or future.

Ms. O'Reilly said a great deal of valuable information is garnered from the providers survey. It is sent out to all of the providers funded by the city as well as providers not funded by the city. The city of Issaquah has hired a consultant to conduct a Human Services Needs Assessment in the coming year, though it will not include a phone or online survey. Their timeline will be similar to Bellevue's but their work will be different from the work done by Bellevue, except that the two jurisdictions will collaborate on the providers survey.

Ms. O'Reilly sought input from the Commissioners regarding the community conversations. Commissioner Perelman proposed the hospitals and the mosque in Bellevue. Commissioner Bruels suggested the India Association of Western

Washington. Commissioner McEachran said the recent Bellevue College conversation served as a helpful beginning and suggested there is more information that could be tapped from there.

Commissioner Bruels proposed talking with winter shelter guests. Commissioner Kline suggested targeting an employer community, such as Rotary or the Chamber of Commerce. Chair Villar said it would be helpful to use the city's Neighborhood Outreach Department to gain access to some of the neighborhoods.

From the audience, Ms. Hummer pointed out that there is a microcosm of employees and residents in place at City Hall. Working directly with city employees could yield a great deal of information.

Commissioner Bruels suggested talking with English language learner class participants. Commissioner Mercer proposed meeting with both the B-GLAD and PFLAG groups.

Ms. O'Reilly said she would work to schedule the community conversations and would let the Commissioners know the meeting dates. She noted that the Commissioners are welcome to participate.

Ms. O'Reilly said Seattle University recently conducted a countywide survey of faith communities. The Eastside-specific data they collected will be reviewed.

Ms. O'Reilly said Eastside Pathways was a focus area during the last update. She also noted that about eight years ago each needs update included one or two focus areas and encouraged the Commissioners to think about what specific areas should be focused on. One possibility is the merging of behavioral health and substance abuse into a single entity in terms of funding for the state and county. Physical health will be included in another year or two, and the new approach has the potential to really change the face of how funding and services are delivered in the healthcare system.

Chair Villar said chronic illness has not received a great deal of attention in the past. She suggested the category could include things such as mental health, physical disabilities, diabetes, AIDS and chronic pain.

Ms. O'Reilly said the opioid epidemic could be a focus area.

Commissioner Mercer mentioned refugee and immigrant issues given the current political climate.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Kline regarding a regional needs update, Ms. O'Reilly said historically the cities have not had the staff or funding to create their own individual updates. Ms. Leslie said the Needs Update Bellevue produces is not specific to Bellevue and as such gets heavily used by the other

jurisdictions. It costs Bellevue \$35,000 for the phone survey, and to add another jurisdiction would mean the cost would go up by another \$35,000. Redmond has in the past done a version of the needs update, but Bellevue remains the only jurisdiction in the county that conducts a comprehensive needs assessment. It is possible that a single regional assessment could be made, but it would be unlikely to produce information specific enough to draw conclusions for the individual jurisdictions. Commissioner Kline commented that with All Home and other services moving toward a regional application approach, some consideration should be given to potentially matching the Needs Update up to the delivery of services.

Chair Villar said it would be good to schedule some joint meetings between the Commission and other Bellevue boards and commissions whose work is touched by the Needs Update.

Ms. O'Reilly said staff is seeking time on a Council agenda in March or April to talk about the work to compile the Needs Update and to seek from them suggestions for specific focus areas.

9. OLD BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS – None

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Betsi Hummer, 14541 SE 26th Street, said she had followed closely the Eastgate rezoning work before the Planning Commission after her husband was involved with the Eastgate CAC in 2010. She said she was surprised when the homeless shelter was proposed for Eastgate. The homeless shelter should have been in the conversation as far back as 2010. The proposed shelter will affect the entire rezone area. It is apparent that if the city is going to be involved in helping to organize the shelter, it should be under the auspices of a citywide initiative. There are homelessness throughout the city, and shelter activities should not be concentrated in a single neighborhood. Homelessness should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan just as affordable housing is. The Eastgate/I-90 CAC was not involved in the conversation, nor was the Downtown Livability CAC or the Bel-Red/Wilburton area. The approach to homelessness needs to be better planned and more broadly based.

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner McEachran. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mercer and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Villar adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date