

## **BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING**

### **MINUTES**

**March 7, 2024,** Hybrid Meeting held at North Bellevue Community Center, 8:30a – 10:30a

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Anne Rittenhouse; Eleanor Lee; Beverly Heyden; Andrea Kline; Kari Marino; Diana Thompson; Barbara Carey; Shana Aucsmith; Elaine White; Beth Hanley; Bhavana Pahwa; Julie Hart.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Abigail Brown; Mary Rita Hurley;

**STAFF PRESENT:** Dan Lassiter, Bellevue Parks & Community Services – Recreation Div.

**GUESTS:** Karen Hartman; Hannah Kimball; Andrew; Ruth; Sandra Hills; Evelyn.

**PRESENTER(S):** Ruth Blaw-Human Services Manager; Christy Stangland-Human Services Planner.

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Daniel Lassiter, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

**WELCOME AND ROLL CALL:** The meeting was called to order by Anne Rittenhouse

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** No comments from public members.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** February 2024 minutes were approved.

**PRESENTATION:** Ruth Blaw-Human Services Manager. **Human Services Needs Update and the Strategic Plan 2024.**

**History:**

- Biennial City of Bellevue Human Services Needs Updates has occurred since 1989.
- Used by the City, human services agencies, and other funders to better understand the needs of the community and to inform policy decisions.

**Data Collection**

Community engagement for this needs update centered the voices of those with lived experience accessing the human services system, along with intersectional identities, including race, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

Data Sources

- Community Survey
- Provider Surveys
- Key Informant Interviews
- Network/Coalition Meetings
- Focus Groups
- Presentations to Human Services Commission
- Existing quantitative data

**Themes emerged from the data.**

- Changing Demographics and Meeting Needs in a Culturally Specific Way.
- Disproportionate Impact by Race and Language.
- Knowledge of Available Resources.
- Communication, Collaboration, and Convening.
- Growing Challenges for Human Services Providers.
- Cost of living, availability of housing, and availability of Services.

## Key Findings in Critical Service Areas

- I. Survey respondents are able to access a human services provider when needed.  
Survey respondents able to access services that supported language and culture needs.
- II. Housing and Homelessness:
  - The number of individuals who are severely cost burdened by rent has risen significantly.
  - The number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Bellevue and across the region is rapidly increasing.
  - There are significant disparities about who is more likely to be experiencing homelessness.
- III. Trend in number of students experiencing homelessness in Bellevue School District. The number has more than double since 2021 and is currently approximately 650 students.
- IV. Food Security:
  - There is an increasing number of Bellevue residents experiencing food insecurity and in need of financial assistance to maintain stability and well-being for their household.
  - There are significant racial disparities in resources and experiences of food insecurity in Bellevue.

Percent of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Recipients in Bellevue, by race/ethnicity.

- Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian – 15.46%
- Native American – 0%
- Hispanic or Latino – 13.09%
- Asian – 1.85%
- Non-Hispanic Black – 19.90%
- Full Population – 4.37%

**V. Health and Well-being**

- Across the US, there are significant needs related to physical and behavioral health that have increased following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- While needs are rising across demographic groups, there is variability in access to appropriate behavioral health services by race/ethnicity and language.

**VI. Fatal overdose rates in King County by drug type (See King County Overdose Data Dashboard)**

- At least tripled since 2021 using Meth and Fentanyl.

**VII. Violence Prevention and Survivor Support and Advocacy**

- Service data demonstrates the significant and ongoing need for support for domestic survivors in Bellevue.
- Service data also highlights the need for support for individuals experiencing other types of violence such as sexual assault, abuse, or trauma.
- The Bellevue School District identified violence as a contributor to families facing eviction and experiencing homelessness.

**VIII. Employment and Education**

- While unemployment in Bellevue is relatively low overall, Black, and Indigenous residents experience disproportionate rates of unemployment.
- Factors such as access to affordable childcare and accessible transportation can have a significant impact on employment.

**IX. Services for Older Adults**

- Older adults identify as having significant challenges in accessing services.
- Older adults identify a need for increased access to transportation, in-person services, and materials in-print to support meeting their basic needs and to support ongoing involvement in their community.
- There is a need for affordable housing that meets the specific needs of older adults.

**X. Accessibility for older adults**

- 42% felt they could find the services they needed in the community.

- 40% were not able to obtain services within a reasonable distance.
- 43% were able to receive services within a reasonable amount of time after contacting the organization.
- 48% were able to receive services from an organization that supported their culture or language needs.
- 47% were satisfied with the quality of services received.

#### **XI. Services for Individuals Living with a Disability**

- Added barriers for individuals with a disability who do not speak English as a first language.
- There is a need for community-specific outreach, engagement, and programming.
- Providers and community members highlight gaps in services for children and youth with disabilities.

### **2024 – 2030 Strategic Plan**

This is Bellevue’s first strategic plan created from the HS Needs Update.

Given the upcoming end of COVID-19 funding and given the increase in the community’s human service’s needs, what can we do differently with available resources to best address community need and make equitable investments in the human services system?

The council invested more than \$20 million in one-time funds in response to the pandemic. These funds will end in 2024.

#### **Objectives of the Plan**

- 1. Expand equity-focused and data-driven decision-making that best addresses the most significant community needs, prioritizing investments in the areas of greatest disparities for Bellevue residents.**
- 2. Increase the capacity of Bellevue’s human services system by providing equitable access to human services funding opportunities, to support organizations in meeting the needs of and reducing disparities among Bellevue’s most marginalized residents.**
- 3. Expand access for Bellevue residents to culturally and linguistically specific human services.**

4. **Increase key stakeholders' awareness regarding the City's human service needs, including disparities by community, and serve as a catalyst to collaboratively address those needs.**

Link to the plans:

**<https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/parks/community-services/human-services/human-services-needs-update>**

### **Human Services Report – Christy Stangland**

Christy reported that Human Services Applications for Funding for 2025 opens March 4<sup>th</sup> and ends April 8<sup>th</sup>. Monies distributed will include housing (part of the 1590 fund) health and support services. They expect to have approximately 7million to distribute. BNOA members indicated the need for this group to spread the word to those who serve older adults in Bellevue to possibly seek funding. Christy stated that the HS Commission makes the decisions on funding priorities. The Human Services Commission is seeking new members. Please let people know. As the City of Bellevue Council meetings are moving to Tuesday, the Human Services Commission will be moving their meetings to Mondays.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** *Members were asked to read the following committee reports before the meeting for discussion.*

### **Advocacy Committee Report - Diana**

Diana reported that funding for food affecting older adults was approved in the legislature.

The committee will start thinking and watching for federal and state agendas for the upcoming year. Efforts to align our committee's agenda with the COB and City of Kirkland legislative agenda's, trying to collaborate items if possible. Any comprehensive planning by both cities could also be a resource for senior issues.

## **Outreach Committee Report – Shana**

The BNOA was asked to seek more delivery sites for the Neighborhood News and report them to Shana.

Planning and scheduling for the Bellevue Famers Market & Crossroads are in motion and Shana is needing everyone’s help by registering for a few time slots to staff a table at one or both sites.

## **Housing and Transportation - Anne**

FindARide.org asking for feedback by February 29th. A few people participated and found it less helpful than in previous surveys.

The Rides and Smile program was renamed to Hyde Shuttle. Dan encourages KSC members to keep working on shuttle.

The city of Bellevue’s first safe parking lot will be at Eastgate Lincoln Center. Hasn't opened yet but will accommodate "20 households living in their vehicle at a time...The program will prioritize (but not exclusively serve) families with children that are living in their vehicles."

Printing costs for the Resource Guide published by Kirkland have increased. Discussion about Bellevue offsetting that cost or printing in house as this option is more affordable. KSC has made changes to the guide to make printing the directory more affordable. PDF is available,

King County Executive Dow Constantine announced \$26 million in funding for 10 affordable housing developments" <https://medium.com/kingcounty/executive-constantine-announces-affordable-housing-investments-opening-760-new-units-across-region-5d2ad474aba4>

Light rail service on the Eastside will start on Saturday, April 27th.

King County Parks is updating its ADA Transition Plan to help address access for all individuals. They are taking a community survey to get feedback on how to remove barriers to access to local parks and regional trails in a way that is consistent with the community’s needs. Anne did this, and it took about 20 mins.

## **Old Business – none for this meeting.**

ZOOM meetings will stop and Microsoft Teams will begin as the method to hold meetings by the end of 2024. The City of Bellevue would like not to financially support ZOOM any longer due to cost and believes the earlier issues of using Microsoft Teams have been resolved. A smaller BNOA group will be set up to test how well the group members do with TEAMS before officially moving to the application. A benefit would include having a “chat” function again.

Some members on the committee would like to talk about BNOA having more of a connection with the Bellevue City Council. There was no time to discuss and will be taken to the next meeting.

## **New Business**

The next Proclamation celebrates older adults' month of May. Members were asked to participate and maybe have a member provide some remarks to the City Council. Likely May 7<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup>. Members indicating able to participate include Bhavana, Mary Rita, and Abigail.

For the older adult abuse awareness day Proclamation for June 15<sup>th</sup>, Diana indicated she would work on a remarks.

Name Tags – Dan asked members their preference of first and last name or just first name on name tags. Dan is planning on ordering soon and has asked all members to let him know their preferences. Also, a reminder to the members to wear these pieces of identification when representing the BNOA.

An Ad hoc committee was formed to continue the follow-up work for future meeting with the City of Bellevue on reflecting the needs of Bellevue older adults while planning. Anne, Beth, Beverly, Kari, Mary Rita, and Abigail showed interest in being on a committee. The meeting is set up monthly to follow the BNOA monthly meeting.

Completing new background checks was discussed. People are asking how to complete it without giving too much of their personal information. Dan will be checking on the issue.

*Meeting adjourned at 10:35a.m.*