

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on October 2, 2018

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

September 5, 2018
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-112

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Mercer, Commissioners Kline, Ma, McEachran, Oxrieder, Perelman, Piper

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Mercer who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Perelman who arrived at 6:30 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 3, 2018

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

B. July 17, 2018

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS – None

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Proposed Use of 2019 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds and 2019-2020 Human Services Funds

Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano explained that over the course of seven meetings the Human Services Commission reviewed the applications and developed preliminary funding recommendations for the human services general fund and the CDBG allocation. For the allocation period 2019-2020, the Commission received 100 general fund applications. Six CDBG applications for 2019 were also received. She said the intent of the public hearing was to give all interested parties opportunity to address the Commission about the funding recommendations. She said the Commission would take into consideration all comments made before voting on its final funding recommendations and passing them on to the City Council for approval. The Council is scheduled to review the funding recommendations on November 5. Final approval will occur as part of approval of the city budget in December.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Piper. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Oxrieder and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Kathy Fleming, Executive Director for Attain Housing, said the organization has a 29-year history of working with homeless families with children on the Eastside, having been created through the merger of Housing at the Crossroads and KITH. Two properties are owned in Bellevue and four in Kirkland and residents are offered case management. As the need increased, the program was expanded by adding an eviction prevention and move-in assistance program called Welcome Home. The program provides flexible funds and has grown up to 25 percent every year for the last four years. Nearly 100 percent of the families served are still in their homes three to six months after receiving flexible funds. Over the past two years Bellevue has funded the program with a little over \$8000, which is only a small percentage of the overall cost of the program. To date, Bellevue has contributed some 17 percent of the overall program cost while about 40 percent of the clients served come from Bellevue. By contrast, the city of Kirkland has contributed about 42 percent of the program costs even though only 31 percent of the clients live in that city. The increased request for funding from Bellevue was intended to balance things out. It is anticipated that 120 Bellevue residents will be served in 2019 and the concern is that without increased funding it will not be possible to serve them all. To date in 2018, 20 percent of applicants to the program have been referred by Hopelink. There is clearly room for both organizations to operate. Attain Housing is the only organization that was previously funded by Bellevue that is not recommended for funding for 2019-2020. The Commission was asked to reconsider and fund the program at some level.

Mr. Debbie Lacy, Executive Director for the Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition, said the organization does not provide direct services and thus did not

apply for human services funding. The organization advocates for local systemic needs and looks at the way local institutions, organizations and cities are responding to immigrant and refugee communities and other communities that tend to be marginalized. Many of the ERIC members and partners do provide direct services and have submitted requests for human services funding. She noted that it has been about 12 years since any of the immigrant and refugee communities have participated in feedback and provided input regarding resources and services provided to them. A community conversation around some of the new issues that have emerged is long overdue, particularly given the times and new resources and needs that are in the community. King County has stepped in with critical funding for communities in need. She said it was her understanding that the Eastside cities were planning to begin a series of conversations that will include engaging the community more. Input from the Commission would be welcomed. With regard to equity and inclusion relative to the application process, she said concerns were brought to her attention by applicants, many of whom are grass roots organizations, who are struggling to find a way to create solutions within communities. A way needs to be found to balance the expectations the city of Bellevue has for organizations to demonstrate their competency and ability to fulfill contracts, balanced with the need to support innovation and responsiveness to emerging needs and new populations. What is missing is the ability of communities to come up with their own solutions and be supported by local government. There should be a conversation about access to funding opportunities and the application process, what the expectations are, and the ways those expectations might exclude instead of include.

Ms. Wendy Davis thanked the Commission for recommending funding for the Community Homes workshops on housing for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She said the organization started in 1995, the year her son was three and started attending the special needs preschool program at Woodridge Elementary. He is now 26 and three months ago moved out on his own as an independent resident in a shared living home sponsored by Community Homes, a home he shares with two other young men and a caregiver. Parents of special needs children do not have a specific roadmap to navigate and the task is daunting. The parents of special needs children depend on other parents and workshops, including those offered by Community Homes. The three workshops offered lead families step-by-step through the housing process that leads to independence. She said Community Homes has been a lifeline to her and many others in the way it has provided education and information. Persons with developmental and intellectual disabilities deserve to live, work and play in their communities, including Bellevue.

Ms. Cristina Wheatley with Kinderling Center said the organization serves young children with special needs. One service offered is early care and education consultation. The team of consultants provides a variety of services to benefit children, their parents and the staff who are employed by child care and preschool programs in Bellevue. The organization provides child observations and developmental screening services, works with families in guiding them to appropriate evaluations and resources, and works with child care, preschool providers and

families to develop strategies to help support children at home and in early care programs. She thanked the Commission for recommending funding for the Kindering Center consultation program. The city's generous and ongoing support has made it possible for the organization to provide its invaluable services to so many Bellevue residents. Over the past few years there have been steady increases in the number of children presenting with emotional and sensory regulation issues that significantly impact their success, or lack thereof, in group studies. There have been steady increases in children who are later diagnosed as having an Autism spectrum disorder. There has been a continuing need for services of the type offered by Kindering Center. Many parents are struggling to find quality child care services for their children, and have fears about accessing community or school-based services. When Kindering Center's consultation services are used, the children who typically are expelled from programs are retained instead. Accessing services sooner helps children reach their potential and prevents long-term health and educational challenges.

Ms. Rachel Krinsky, Executive Director of Lifewire, thanked the Commission and the staff for all of the work done to fund so many wonderful programs, including Lifewire. She said the agency is appreciative of the Commission's continued support for its survivor advocacy services, emergency shelter and housing stabilization programs. There is a significant overlap between family homelessness and domestic violence; some 80 percent of homeless women nationwide indicate they have experienced domestic violence. She also thanked the Commission for recommending CDBG funding and said the search is on to find an appropriate property.

Ms. Judy Faast, Associate Director of Education and Employment for Hopelink, thanked the Commission for its leadership and commitment to helping the city's most vulnerable residents by prioritizing their most basic needs and increasing the level of financial support for the next two years. She also thanked the Commission for partnering with Hopelink in providing a package of services to help people stabilize in crisis and to acquire the necessary skills and tools to exit poverty. Hopelink served over 5600 Bellevue residents over the last year. The agency offers a number of programs and services, and the partnership with the city helps to make that possible.

Ms. Kailey Fiedler-Gohlke, CEO of Hero House Northwest, formerly called Hero House, said the organization has opened a second clubhouse and is focused on opening another soon. The clubhouses serve adults with mental illnesses and seeks to get them back into employment. She thanked the Commission for continued funding of the program. The employment program has been doubled over the last couple of years and continued expansion is planned.

Ms. Kim Rettig said she has a mental illness and is a survivor of a traumatic brain injury. She said with those two things hindering her ability to work, she went on disability in 2003. She explained that the treatment she received kept her from working. A year ago, after being a member of Hero House since 2007 and no longer receiving treatment, she worked with an employment specialist to identify

employment opportunities. She said Hero House found her part-time employment with Panera Bread. Working side-by-side with the Employment Specialist, she was able to continue her employment for nine months after which she was reevaluated and is now working as an Architectural Assistant, a profession she previously had. She thanked the Commission for its support for Hero House.

Ms. Karen Koenig with Old Friends Club explained that the program offers social activities for those who are living with Alzheimer's, have had a stroke, or have other cognitive issues. Most clients live at home and the program gives their caregivers a break during the day a couple of times a week. The non-profit organization was started in 2015 in Carnation. A second program was opened in 2016 in Kirkland, and a third was opened in Sammamish in 2017. Seed grant funds were received to help launch the Kirkland and Sammamish operations, and seed grant funds have also been received for Bellevue and a location is actively being sought in the city. The hope is that a Bellevue site will be opened in October, possibly in January. There is even the possibility of opening a second Bellevue location serving the Asian community in cooperation with Keiro Northwest. Several Bellevue residents are already being served in Kirkland and Sammamish, and an increased demand is being heard from Bellevue residents.

Mr. Paul Padilla said his wife was diagnosed with Alzheimer's five years ago. He said he participated in several programs in Seattle given a recommendation to remain active. He said Old Friends Club has proven to be a blessing in that he has been freed from some of his caretaker duties to do things he needs to do.

Ms. Theresa Curry Almuti with Solid Ground, operator of the Housing Stability project, thanked the Commission for proposing to continue funding for the project. She said the project has been in place for 20 years and the city has provided support for about 12 years. The program partners with Catholic Community Services and Hopelink plus ten other organizations in King County to provide financial assistance to prevent eviction and to pay the moving costs for people who were homeless or who are currently not in stable housing. The program also provides action planning and budgeting so participants can maintain stability going forward. Over 95 percent of the participants are still housed six months after receiving assistance through the program. The program is a critical resource for the Bellevue community. Funding from the city ensures that citizens of Bellevue are served by the program. King County provides funding for the program as well and the majority of the referrals come through 2-1-1. Most clients come from south King County where the demand is high. Funding for homelessness prevention needs to be increased given that it is more cost-effective to prevent homelessness than it is to help people obtain housing after they become homeless.

Ms. Karina Wiggins, Director of Homeless Youth Services for Friends of Youth, said the agency supports young people in a variety of different circumstances and crises, including homelessness. Friends of Youth has consistently received funding from the pooled cities, including the city of Bellevue, and the funds have supported outreach

and drop-in services, transitional living programs for young adults and young families, and shelter care services for young adults. The agency recently received Bellevue Youth Link funding to purchase additional supplies for The Landing shelter and to support additional drop-in services at the Crossroads Community Center. The city's support ensures that the staff can meet the needs of youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. Shelter is offered for 20 young adults seven days per week throughout the year in Redmond, with clients coming from all over King County. The recommended funding will support transitional living services, including the New Ground Kirkland Totem Lake and Bothell facilities for a total of 19 units for young adults and 14 units for young families. The Commission was thanked for being part of the solution to resolving homelessness in Bellevue and King County.

Mr. Josh Terlouw with Congregations for the Homeless thanked the Commission for partnering with the organization through the years in its work to support unsheltered residents in Bellevue and across the Eastside. He said as the winter shelter was shut down in the spring, staff worked with the men to determine where they would go. Overwhelmingly they said they did not want to go to shelters in Seattle, preferring instead to stay in Bellevue and on the Eastside. Steps are being taken in conjunction with Bellevue to get the day center operating with additional hours, and to get a low-barrier shelter operating year-round. The shelter that has been operated offers homeless men a dignified place to be and receive the support they need. In 2017 some 107 people were assisted in accessing housing where 96 percent remained stably housed. Over 83,000 meals were served in the rotating shelter, and 70 percent of those entering the rotating shelter were able to find permanent housing as they exited.

Ms. Angela Murray with Sophia Way said she appreciated the difficult decisions the Commission faces in deciding how to disperse limited dollars. She offered her thanks for the continued support of Sophia Way since its inception in 2008. She noted that for the coming year the agency was seeking a modest increase for some programs and a modest decrease for others. Operations for the day center have been increased by 85 percent since 2015, which means far more women are being served seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The plan is to increase those hours to 5:00 p.m. to bridge the gap between when the day center closes and the emergency shelter opens at 8:30 p.m., during which time there is no place for the women to go. Ultimately the intent is to be able to provide day center and emergency services at the permanent emergency shelter site, construction of which will begin in the spring of 2019. The application anticipates the gradual ramping up of services leading toward the 24/7 model. The decrease in the ask for the day center from Bellevue looks forward to 2020 when the services will be relocated to Kirkland, and thus seeks an increase from Kirkland. The increase in the ask for the emergency shelter is indicative of the fact that it is being ramped up to operating year round. Sophia Way serves any women who is experiencing homelessness, even if they do not provide an answer to their most recent place of address.

Ms. Alma Gonzalez with NISO Programs said the program was created by and is lead by the community. She said the agency did not submit an application for funding and suggested there should be a more open access approach for small programs wanting to apply for grants. Community input about needs should be taken into consideration. More needs to be known about what small agencies need to do in order to apply.

Mr. Derek Delvalle with Imagine Housing noted his appreciation for the time and consideration the Commission gave to each application. He allowed that the task is not an easy one, and he said Imagine Housing appreciates the funding that has been recommended for it. Imagine Housing provides affordable housing for residents who reside on the Eastside. Simply providing housing for families and individuals is not enough; supportive services are also needed and they are provided by Imagine Housing, including basic needs items and community meals. A new property will be opening in April. Called 30 Bellevue, it will provide permanent housing for families referred from the coordinated entry system.

Ms. Kris Burkett, Social Services Director for Salvation Army, thanked the Commission for its support in the past. She said there were several reasons for the increase in the ask. Over the last couple of years there has been an increase in requests from clients that has been more than the agency is typically able to pledge. Many clients say they are facing higher and higher rents and are being priced out of the homes they have lived in for many years; many of those clients do not have the money to actually move to some place less expensive. Salvation Army provides financial assistance but runs out of money before the end of the year. That means giving each client less money, making it necessary for them to seek assistance from multiple agencies. She said she is also hoping to add on some transportation options for clients. Salvation Army receives referrals from several other agencies, including Hopelink and St. Vincent DePaul, and works with other agencies, including Eastside Baby Corner and Community Meals. The agency provides after-school programs and summer camps.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Perelman and the motion carried unanimously.

****BREAK****

7. DISCUSSION

A. Finalize Preliminary 2019-2020 Human Services Funding Recommendations

A motion to accept the current recommendations was made by Commissioner McEachran. The motion was seconded by Commissioner.

Commissioner Oxrieder said she appreciated the arguments made by Attain Housing and said she gets that they are serving a need and filling a gap. Agencies clearly are having to send clients to other agencies to get their needs met given their limited funding amounts, and it is good that all of the agencies are working together. She indicated, however, that she could not think of any application that should be reduced in order to increase funding for Attain Housing.

Commissioner Ma agreed that the argument from Attain Housing was strong. He noted that the Commission had agreed to put more into Hopelink and he suggested some of those additional funds could be reallocated to Attain Housing instead. Hopelink references its partnership with Attain Housing. The Salvation Army representative made the comment that clients facing homelessness do bear a cost associated with having to visit multiple agencies, so it is possible that giving certain organizations more money could allow them to potentially give out more funds per person. The idea behind consolidating funds is to keep clients from having to go to multiple sources.

Commissioner Kline concurred. She noted that the Commissioners had gone out of their way to make sure the dollars for emergency financial assistance were not reduced in any way. The area is one for which the Commission would like to have more money to allocate. The request from Attain Housing included money for a navigator which would in fact take money away from direct emergency financial assistance. She said she would support an additional ask of the Council to fund the category at a higher level.

Commissioner Oxrieder pointed out that Hopelink imposes an overall annual limit on the amount of emergency financial assistance a client can receive. Once that limit is reached, any additional dollars needed by the client will have to come from some other source, which will not limit clients traveling from agency to agency.

Chair Mercer allowed that the Commission wrestled with the topic over the course of several meetings. The topic fairly quickly became a theme for the Commission. The conclusion reached was that the overall dollars for the category should be maintained. She suggested that ahead of the next funding cycle the Commission should dig into topic with an eye on how best to foster collaboration. The Attain Housing ask included only a small amount for emergency funding, and the decision was made to put the funds elsewhere. She said notwithstanding the great testimony offered, she was not willing to change her stance.

Commissioner Piper said he too was reluctant to change his stance. The amount that would otherwise be moved to from Hopelink to Attain Housing is relatively small and would not necessarily be meaningful.

Commissioner Ma said he was open to the idea of moving funds from Hopelink to Attain Housing. He agreed that the Attain Housing ask included funds for a navigator, which would take funds away from emergency assistance, but argued that a different

agency could potentially reach a different population group. He allowed, however, that the decision previously reached by the Commission was made based on solid reasoning.

Ms. O'Reilly said when the recommendations of the Commission are handed off to the Council, comments can be included about other things the Commission would like to have funded had money been available. She stressed that the Commission had been instructed not to make any additional asks, but it is perfectly acceptable to share with the Council about needs in the community that continue to grow. Chair Mercer directed the staff to include on an upcoming agenda a discussion of what information should be shared with the Council.

There was consensus not to adjust the current recommendation for Attain Housing.

Commissioner Perelman said it had been insightful to hear information about the Old Friends program. She suggested that prior to the next funding cycle the agency should be encouraged to submit as much information as possible to the Commission for consideration.

Commissioner McEachran said the point was well taken that upstart organizations find it difficult to take route in the funding process, particularly in the shadow of the name brand organizations. Some mentoring would not be out of order. Ms. Catalano said the Eastside cities staff will soon be holding some discussions on that topic. A program was recently piloted in South King County for smaller, grassroots type agencies that are not skilled in grant writing. Something similar would be appropriate for the Eastside.

Ms. O'Reilly added that Ms. Catalano recently participated in a conversation with staff from several Eastside cities about setting up key informant interviews with representatives of diverse communities in order to identify emerging needs. That is done as part of developing the Needs Update every two years, but a more coordinated approach will be taken after the first of the year.

Commissioner Kline commented that United Way used to play a big role in mentoring young agencies. She said her perception was that is not longer occurring, but allowed she could not say for sure that was the case. She suggested putting some effort into finding out what services are available from United Way or others in that regard.

Chair Mercer suggested that when the smaller communities are being discussed it would be good to have a representative from ERIC come in to talk about what they do and what they facilitate. There could be some way to have them fill a mentoring role.

Commissioner McEachran said it has been his experience that there is a lack of direct conversation between executive directors, development directors and support services folks. Getting those people together can result in finding common ground.

Ms. Catalano said during her tenure with Federal Way capacity building grants were offered to work with small agencies in a coaching and mentoring role. She said the approach could be considered for Bellevue as well.

Commissioner Perelman noted that transportation continues to be a major issue. She said her hope was that King County would step up with some flexibility solutions that could be offered to organizations instead of money.

The motion to approve the preliminary 2019-2020 human services funding recommendations carried unanimously.

B. Finalize Preliminary 2019 CDBG Funding Recommendations and 2019 Contingency Plan

Ms. Catalano called attention to the estimated program income figure in the funding recommendations. She shared with the Commissioners that loan paybacks from the Major Home Repair Program have been down this year and that she had reduced the estimated program income from \$300,000 to \$175,000. She clarified that the total available funds were still sufficient to cover the recommended allocations.

A motion to approve the preliminary 2019 CDBG funding recommendations was made by Commissioner Ma. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piper and the motion carried unanimously.

With regard to the contingency plan, Ms. Catalano explained that because the CDBG entitlement amount and program income are both estimates, a plan is needed to address what approach to take should the available funding be more or less than the estimated total. The plan is drafted to be as flexible as possible to avoid having to go back to the Council for additional approvals. The plan calls for increasing the allocation to planning and administration, public services and capital projects should the total be greater than the estimate. Should the total be less than estimated, the first step would be to reduce the allocation for planning and administration to comply with the Federal statutory spending caps, and the second step would be to reduce awards for capital projects, first by reducing the Sound Generations Minor Home Repair program award to no less than \$25,000, second by reducing the Lifewire Housing for Low-Income Domestic Violence Survivors Project allocation to no less than \$50,000, and third by reducing the King County Housing Authority Major Home Repair program award by the remainder of the difference.

Commissioner Kline suggested adding to Step 2 a fourth bullet indicating some combination of the first three bullets. Ms. Catalano agreed to do that.

A motion to approve the contingency plan as amended was made by Commissioner Ma. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piper and the motion carried unanimously.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly reviewed with the Commissioners the agenda topics for upcoming meetings. She noted that on September 18 King County Metro staff will make a presentation on their Solutions program. Representatives from Hopelink and Sound Generations, both of which provide transportation options, have been invited to attend as well.

Chair Mercer suggested inviting other organizations to attend and listen in, especially organizations that might have the ear of the Council, such as Congregations for the Homeless. Ms. O'Reilly said she would give that some thought. She stressed that the focus will be on allowing King County Metro to make their presentation rather than opening it up to a general discussion involving agency representatives.

Commissioner McEachran proposed also inviting the Council liaison to the Commission as well as city transportation staff.

Ms. O'Reilly said the October 2 Commission meeting will involve a review and evaluation of the allocations process. Time at the meeting will also be taken to discuss the presentation of the funding recommendations to the Council.

The city's new fire chief will be invited to attend the October 16 meeting and make a presentation on relative issues.

Chair Mercer said she would like to see joint meetings scheduled periodically with area human services commissions. Ms. O'Reilly said there is a monthly North and East funders at which joint meetings during 2019 can be discussed. Chair Mercer said she would be interested in knowing what other commissions are discussing in case someone from the Commission might want to attend, particularly around debriefing and lessons learned regarding the funding process.

The Commissioners were informed that the November 6 meeting will include a presentation from the city's economic development team, which has been renamed the Cultural and Economic Vitality Office. Then on November 20 there will be a discussion of the Needs Update with particular attention given to changing the look and feel of the document.

The annual holiday get-together with the Parks and Community Services Board is slated for December 4. Ms. O'Reilly said the staff of both groups will meet in a week to plan the event. She said she would welcome suggestions from the Commissioners as well.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Perelman asked if the city will be asking for any transportation dollars from the King County budget. Ms. O'Reilly said there was a conversation with the city's transportation department grant writers where the possibility of applying for some Washington State Department of Transportation money for special needs was explored. The determination was that it was not a fit. Other funds are actively being sought, but nothing has been found yet.

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Ma. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piper and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Mercer adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date