

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on May 17, 2016

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

April 19, 2016
6:30 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, Dee Dee Catalano, Jaime Fajardo, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair McEachran who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Marcy 15, 2016

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Councilmember Robinson reported that she serves on the Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) Oversight Committee. She said she has consistently highlighted the need for prevention and has advocated for more funding for people who do not have stable housing.

Councilmember Robinson said the plan for Bellevue is bring online 250 affordable housing units each year for the next ten years, which will bring with it a need for support services. There is a quite a lot of interest in the community, which is encouraging.

Commissioner Villar distributed to the Commissioners information regarding the Incredible Intensity of Just Being Human exhibition in Issaquah, which is a partnership between ArtEAST, the Issaquah Schools Foundation, and others. The primary focus of the exhibit is teen mental health. The exhibit will officially open on April 29 at the Issaquah Senior Center.

Commissioner Villar also reported that she attended the recent Leadership Eastside Incubator Forum and served as a facilitator for two issues: basic needs, which focused on affordable housing; and education, which focused on preparing students for getting a career. King County Executive Dow Constantine was the keynote speaker at the event.

Chair McEachran reported that earlier in the day he attended an in-service on babies exposed to drugs in utero. He said he learned that once they are born, such babies need about two months to get off the drugs. He also noted that he would be attending The Sophia Way Breakfast with a Purpose event on April 21.

Chair McEachran said he also has been tapped to serve on the Technical Advisory Group for the Bellevue Affordable Housing Strategy. The group is charged with reviewing, supplementing, testing and refining an evaluation to assess the potential effectiveness of the actions that will be provided by the Council at the end of the year relative to an affordable housing strategy. Of the 15 people appointed to the group, a third have through the years been deeply engaged with Imagine Housing.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Initial Review of Human Services Applications – Round 1 (Goal 1 Preliminary Review)

Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano thanked the Commissioners for their willingness to fill out the scoring sheets. She provided them with a summary of the total scores by agency program and Commissioner. She said the purpose of the preliminary review was to highlight any questions the Commission may want answered by the agencies.

Commissioner Kline suggested that the applications in the Goal 1 area are the primary ones that would drive any request for additional funding. Ms. Leslie explained that because the budget proposals must be submitted by the end of the month, she and Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly had been working on an ask and had developed a short list of things to include as a new investment. She said she would

highlight them as the review progresses.

Chair McEachran commented that the affordable housing initiative being developed by the Council will have major significance. The Council has already set aside \$75,000 for a consultant, and the Council has been reminded that the initiative will carry with it a need for human services in a number of forms.

1. Andrews House Washington: Andrews House

Commissioner Perelman said the application represents a duplication of services already provided, and there is nothing in the application about outcomes.

Commissioner Bruels agreed and added that the model outlined in the proposal is too new and the Commission is not in the habit of funding pilot projects. If in a year or two the program has some real data, funding may be warranted.

Commissioner Kline indicated her support for the concept, which she called brave and innovative. She said the program is worth tracking for possible future funding.

There was agreement to preliminarily not recommend funding the application.

2. Attain Housing: Transitional Housing/Welcome Home

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Perelman, Ms. Catalano said the agency, which was previously called Kirkland Interfaith Transitions in Housing (KITH), received funding for transitional housing in the previous funding cycle. The current application, however, is really for the Welcome Home program.

The Commissioners had no specific questions for the agency.

3. Catholic Community Services: Eastside Winter Shelter for Families

Commissioner Perelman asked if the proposal is to develop and operate a full winter shelter for families. Ms. Catalano explained that for the current year Sophia Way contracted with Catholic Community Services to operate a winter shelter for families and single women. The proposal is to split the two, with Catholic Community Services taking on the shelter for families and Sophia Way addressing winter shelter for single women.

Commissioner Villar asked staff to ask if the agency will be engaging in any fundraising efforts on its own for the program, and if not, why not.

4. Catholic Community Services: Emergency Assistance

Commissioner Villar asked staff to ask if the agency will be engaging in any fundraising efforts on its own for the program, and if not, why not.

5. Catholic Community Services: New Bethlehem Day Center for Families

Commissioner Perelman noted that the program is new and asked if any other agency provides the service. Ms. Leslie said there currently is no day center for homeless families on the Eastside. The proposed program will be located in Kirkland.

Commissioner Mercer observed that according to the application, 24 Bellevue families will benefit from the program based on the number of Bellevue families served in the Eastside winter shelter.

Commissioner Villar asked staff to ask if the agency will be engaging in any fundraising efforts on its own for the program, and if not, why not.

6. Congregations for the Homeless: Drop In Center

Commissioner Perelman said she would like to know when the lease is set to expire for the site where the program is currently located. She voiced concern over funding a program that does not have a location in which to operate. Ms. Leslie said staff are working diligently to find the program a new location. Their current lease expired at the end of March because the church building is scheduled to be demolished. There is at least one option for a building in Bellevue, though the owner wants a three-year lease at a monthly rate that is significantly higher than what they are currently playing. Some tenant improvements would also be needed to make it a functional space. The Eastside cities have been contacted regarding the need for the agency to have funding committed at a level high enough to pay the increased rent. The agency will be conducting some additional fundraising for the program. A second and less expensive option that involves a city owned property is also being investigated.

Ms. Leslie added that in addition to the increase in rent, which is a part of the application, the agency is seeking more funds to add case management. She said the program is one that could be added to the list as part of an additional ask from the City Council.

Commissioner Bruels said he would support doing whatever can be done to support the program. Ms. Leslie said the drop-in centers have become places for persons experiencing homelessness to engage in a non-shelter setting and to get the services they need. The program has experienced difficulties in obtaining funding from non-city sources that are primarily focused on housing.

Commissioner Villar said the lower score she gave the application was the result of questioning the likelihood of the program finding a new location in which to operate. She said knowing they will have a location would increase her score.

7. Congregations for the Homeless: Eastside Winter Shelter

Commissioner Perelman observed that the application projects serving fewer Bellevue residents even though the agency is asking for more money from Bellevue.

Commissioner Mercer pointed out that the program will be moving to operating year round. Commissioner Perelman said she could see how that would trigger a need for more funding, but said that does not explain why the number of Bellevue residents served would go down. Commissioner Mercer said the reduction shown in the application could simply be a typo. Ms. Leslie said she would put the question to the agency.

8. Congregations for the Homeless: Housing & Shelter

The Commissioners had no specific questions for the agency.

9. Congregations for the Homeless: Housing

The Commissioners had no specific questions for the agency, but Ms. Catalano said she was curious to know why the agency was not seeking any funding from King County. Ms. Leslie agreed to ask the agency to address the question.

10. Congregations for the Homeless: Outreach

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bruels, Ms. O'Reilly explained that what the agency is seeking is funding for an additional outreach person. Currently they have only one and there are more calls than he can handle. The second person would be spread among the other cities and would provide some staffing at Camp Unity, which is different from the current model.

Ms. Leslie said the outreach is a high priority for the city given that it serves as an excellent resource for police and fire. She said the program could be added to the list for additional funding.

Commissioner Perelman said she was somewhat bothered by the fact that the application contained no real description of an outcome. Ms. O'Reilly said every contact is tracked in the outreach database. What frequently happens, however, is that the contact cannot be found later.

Commissioner Bruels suggested it would be helpful if the program could also track things like police contacts to be able to better understand how many police contacts can be avoided by having an outreach coordinator.

Commissioner Villar suggested there should be tracking done to determine if the contacts followed up with resources recommended as a result of the outreach.

Chair McEachran pointed out that when the agency came asking for funding, they used the premise that people who end up in either the men's or women's shelter are afforded a pathway to other services. Outreach can at least offer the opportunity to get folks in touch with the services they need so they can move toward stability.

11. Community Homes, Inc.: Community Homes

Commissioner Mercer said the application is new to the city. The agency was started by a couple that had wanted to provide housing for their daughter. They then expanded the program and it feels like they are acting in a deliberate way. She said the application indicates that some of the program's partners are advocacy partners but says little about the services they are offered by the partners.

Commissioner Kline commented that according to the application, Community Homes currently provides housing, utilities and food at \$671 per month per resident. Ms. O'Reilly said the amount appears to be what the state provides per month in the form of a disability award, but agreed to verify that.

Commissioner Mercer said she was leaning toward funding the application at some level in that it hits both Goal 1 and Goal 3. Commissioner Bruels said he was not yet sure given that there is very little wiggle room in the available funding. He said he was okay with considering the application in the next round.

Commissioner Perelman said one of the units is located in her neighborhood and said the residents walk around like lost souls for more than eight hours each day. She questioned the level of support services the clients are receiving.

12. Eastside Baby Corner: Meeting Basic Needs for Children

The Commissioners noted that the program has established great partnerships.

The Commissioners had no specific questions for the agency.

13. Emergency Feeding Program: Emergency Feeding Program

Commissioner Mercer raised questions regarding the number of people served compared to the number of sites. She asked for an additional breakdown as to how many people are seen per site in the different areas. She said she also had questions about the budget, highlighting the fact that for the number of people on staff, the salaries and wages line item appears to be quite high.

Chair McEachran said he had multiple questions and significant concerns about the program. He said the Commission previously recommended placing the program on hold pending a satisfactory resolution of the finding of the agency's most recent submitted audit. He disclosed that his faith community is the program's largest faith community supporter in terms of dollars and also serves as a distribution site, though

little or no activity occurs there. Additionally, the Better Business Bureau does not recommend the agency given their weak annual report and unclear financials, and the agency does not have an active board. He voiced concern over the capacity of the agency to do what it claims to be doing and said the Commission should see the financials and the agency's management base for the grants provided.

Commissioner Bruels pointed out that the Commission has raised questions about the agency during nearly every funding cycle.

14. Friends of Youth: Homeless Young Adult Housing

Commissioner Villar said she did not understand the numbers in the application relative to the total number of young adults served and those who were transitioned into stable housing. Commissioner Mercer said the application indicates 17 were served, of which eight were transitioned into stable housing.

Commissioner Kline observed that the application indicates the program outcome has been changed, but noted that it is unclear what the outcome was before. She said she would like to know what the outcome was before, what it is going to be, and the rationale for making the change. The agency should also be asked to relate the outcome change to the statistics included on page 4 of the application.

Commissioner Perelman said she was unclear with regard to the agency's reasoning for increasing their ask given that they are removing the Youth Haven component. Commissioner Villar explained that the Youth Haven program is being moved into a different application, and Ms. Leslie pointed out that New Ground Bothell had been added to the application, and Bothell is being asked for \$10,000.

Commissioner Villar said it was curious Bellevue was being asked to fund five unduplicated clients at \$90,000, while Redmond was being asked to fund four unduplicated clients at only \$35,000.

There was agreement that the agency should be asked to explain how they split off Youth Haven and added in the Bothell component, and to generally clear up the numbers.

15. Friends of Youth: Homeless Youth Outreach and Drop-in Support

Staff confirmed that the program has two services, the youth street outreach and the drop-in center, and that the agency was seeking funding to be able to open the drop-in center on weekends.

Commissioner Perelman pointed out that the program has not previously been funded by Bellevue.

Commissioner Bruels said he saw nothing in the application that justified the need to expand services. He added that he would like to see them make the case for funding the application.

Commissioner Villar questioned why the agency is doing so little to fundraise for the program.

Commissioner Kline said it would be worthwhile to ask Friends of Youth to explain to the Commission their entire funding situation.

Commissioner Perelman pointed out that the city is already funding quite a few drop-in centers. She said she would prefer to give them more rather than putting money into another one. Commissioner Villar commented that the other centers are not targeting youth. Commissioner Perelman said plans are in place to develop a new family drop-in center, which the youth could certainly be part of. Maybe what is really needed is for Friends of Youth to have staff who specialize in youth posted to the family center.

Commissioner Mercer said the application pointed out the need to build trust with the youth given that in many cases they do not trust older adults. The idea that the drop-in shelter will be specifically targeted to youth is important.

16. Friends of Youth: Shelter for Youth and Young Adults

Commissioner Mercer suggested the questions asked about the Homeless Youth Outreach and Drop-in Support application need to be asked of the Shelter for Youth and Young Adults application.

Ms. Leslie clarified for Commissioner Kline that Youth Haven is for those who are under the age of 18, whereas The Landing is for those who are 18 and older.

Commissioner Villar said she did not understand the numbers in the application under the first outcome area. Commissioner Kline said the first outcome relates to The Landing; the second relates to Youth Haven. Ms. Leslie clarified that there are two separate components and that Bellevue residents would be at both.

Commissioner Villar noted that in the first one the application states the goal is for 50 percent of the clients to exit to safe and stable housing, but all of the targets indicate 100 percent. The numbers should be clarified relative to each of the programs.

Ms. Leslie said application 16 addresses shelter for youth under the age of 18. The Landing is for youth 18 and older. The Homeless Youth Adult Housing program in application 14 addresses transitional housing for youth and young families.

17. Hopelink: Emergency Services Financial Assistance

Chair McEachran said he would like to better understand what Hopelink did in changing its funding methodology relative to unit costs.

Commissioner Villar said it appears their new methodology conveniently matches up to a decrease in fundraising. She also noted that the application on page 7 indicates the agency schedules an appointment within a couple of days if funding allows, but nothing is said about what they do should they run out of funding.

Commissioner Mercer observed that the Solid Ground housing stability project does some of the same things and mentions Hopelink, making it sound like some of what Solid Ground delivers is done through Hopelink. She said she would like to know more about the two programs and the degree to which the applications cross over.

18. Hopelink: Emergency Food

The Commissioners had no specific questions for the agency.

19. Hopelink: Housing

Commissioner Perelman observed that the Commission was being asked to fund the gap caused by losing funds from both HUD and King County. Ms. Leslie said the agency is going through the conversion of their properties. The particular transitional housing property in Bellevue is being removed from the coordinated entry process, which is why they had to give up the county funding.

Commissioner Villar pointed out that the application seeks funding for more people than the number of Bellevue residents they serve. Commissioner Mercer added that the application is asking the other cities to fund far less than the number of residents they serve from each jurisdiction.

Commissioner Perelman said the issue could be addressed by not giving as large an increase as is being sought.

BREAK

21. Imagine Housing: Resident Services

Commissioner Bruels said the agency's \$50,000 decrease in the program budget was puzzling and should be accounted for. Commissioner Perelman noted that the application did not include a listing of expenses.

Commissioner Villar said she would like to know why Imagine Housing, which conducts a very successful fundraising effort every year, gives none of the fundraising dollars to the program. Commissioner Kline said she was troubled by the

reference to the capital campaign on page 17 of the application given that capital campaign dollars are not supposed to be used for operations; if it was not in fact a capital campaign and was only a fundraiser, that would be different. Commissioner Villar said it was presented to the donors as a capital campaign.

There was agreement that clarity regarding the budget numbers was needed, particularly why the ask represents a 90 percent increase while the program budget has been decreased.

Commissioner Bruels said he was pleased to see the partnerships.

22. LifeWire: Housing Stability

Commissioner Bruels said the program is focused on homelessness prevention among domestic violence victims. He said he was not convinced the application makes the case for why it is not working to access the same services through other resources.

Ms. Leslie said the program is not new, though it has not previously requested funding from Bellevue. It is based on a statewide model. Private funding from the Gates Foundation has been involved. The program director previously addressed the Commission and talked about how valuable it is to have the flexible funds in working with the clients. The first year of funding from the Best Start for Kids levy will be used for youth and young adult homelessness, and the LifeWire housing stability model will be utilized.

Chair McEachran said the program's director of philanthropy shared with his faith community that the program had received a grant of \$100,000 that required a match in the amount of \$50,000. The statistics shared were impressive with regard to how successfully the program has improved housing stability for victims of domestic violence.

Ms. Catalano pointed out that the Gates Foundation funding, which has been in place for several years, is running out.

Commissioner Villar observed that the agency indicates a reduction in fundraising of more than \$10,500. Additionally, the application indicates that direct aid to clients is moving from \$6700 to \$48,200, yet Bellevue is the only city being asked for funding.

23. Renewal Food Bank: Renewal Food Bank

Commissioner Bruels commented that the application was not filled out well.

Commissioner Villar said she visited the site and found the agency comes off much better than they do in the application. She noted that a client has been added to the board, which was feedback given at the site visit.

Commissioner Mercer asked why the program targets users to the Hopelink food bank using their flyers. Commissioner Villar said Hopelink only lets people visit their food bank twice a month, and those visits do not provide enough food for an entire month. Renewal Food Bank lets people visit once a week. Commissioner Kline added that Hopelink corroborates that information and lists Renewal as a valuable partner.

Ms. O'Reilly reminded the Commissioners that changes to the food stamp program have resulted in many people being cut off, increasing the need for food bank services.

Chair McEachran said the strong effort to bring the faith communities to the table has been successful, as indicated on page 16 of the application. The community commitment is truly an example of collaborative impact.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Perelman regarding the statement on page 18 of the application that says there is no increase or decrease in the funding request from prior years, Commissioner Villar clarified that the current ask is the same as the ask made two years ago; the difference is that the Commission chose not to fully fund the application previously.

25. Solid Ground: Cooking Matters

Commissioner Bruels voiced his support for the model outlined in the application. It is a force multiplier by doing a lot to enhance the food services programs already in place.

Commissioner Mercer said her reaction after reading the application was in fact just the opposite. She said while the idea is good, the program as outlined may not be the best way to deliver.

Commissioner Oxrieder commented that eating behavior does not change easily or quickly. She suggested that six sessions of a cooking school will not have a significant impact.

Commissioner Villar said that she liked the element of the program where the clients are taken to farmers markets and shown how to affordably obtain nutritious food. This could trigger behavioral changes in some. The program also includes a focus on home budgeting.

Commissioner Perelman suggested that the program does not fit in the basic needs category and should not be funded.

Commissioner Mercer said she likes the idea of healthy eating but questioned the model. Commissioner Bruels pointed out that if anyone can carry it off, Solid Ground can. Commissioner Kline said that was her attitude as well.

There was agreement to carry the application over to the next round.

26. Solid Ground: Housing Stability Project

Commissioner Bruels said he had no questions about the program, which enjoys excellent partners.

Ms. Leslie clarified for Commissioner Mercer that the program focuses on homelessness prevention. It is carried out through partner agencies of which Hopelink is one. The financial assistance provided by Hopelink is actually different from the Housing Stability Project.

Commissioner Bruels pointed out that Solid Ground employs an anti-racism approach in all it does on the understanding that racism perpetuates poverty, and that to end poverty it will be necessary to end racism.

27. Sound Generations: Meals on Wheels

Commissioner Bruels noted that the agency was previously called Senior Services. The Meals on Wheels program is the same that has been in place for many years.

The Commissioners had no specific questions for the agency.

28. The Salvation Army: Eastside

Commissioner Mercer pointed out that according to the agency's website, the agency is an evangelical part of the universal Christian church, whose message is based on the Bible, whose ministry is motivated by the love of God, whose mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination. She questioned funding a religious organization.

Ms. Leslie allowed that the Salvation Army is a church. Commissioner Perelman said the problem was that they have trouble separating the church element from the social service element.

Chair McEachran said a distinction can be drawn between funding churches and funding programs that churches are vitally engaged with by collaborative impact. He noted that after the last funding cycle a site visit was set up during which specific questions were asked. He allowed that while he still had some reservations, he tended to lean toward allowing the agency some grace.

Commissioner Oxrieder pointed out that the large funding increase is based on the belief of staff that the need exists. Commissioner Bruels said that statement alone does not make the case. Nothing is said about how many, if any, clients are being turned away. Commissioner Perelman added that the fact the agency is located in

Crossroads and because they are building a new building does not mean there is an increased need.

Commissioner Villar commented that clients in needs of homeless services are taken to Seattle if they need longer term support than hotel vouchers.

Chair McEachran noted that the agency has an after-school program that is quite large.

Commissioner Villar said she was pleased to see a larger list of partner organizations included in the application, many of which are organizations supported by the city.

Commissioner Kline called attention to page 18 of the application and the statement that their emergency service allocation has been increased from \$250 to \$300 and questioned if that is sufficient to keep someone from being evicted. Ms. Leslie said clients typically get what they need by visiting several agencies, including Salvation Army, Hopelink and Catholic Community Services. No one agency is usually able to address the full need on their own, and the agencies generally work together to get the clients what they need.

Commissioner Villar said she would be willing to not put the application on the primary funding list, and put them on the list for extra funding. Commissioner Kline disagreed. She said either the agency is okay to fund or it is not.

Ms. Leslie said it is a given that the Salvation Army provides emergency financial assistance to Bellevue residents.

Commissioner Oxrieder pointed out that while their feeding program serves a clear need, the experience is also a religious one. Ms. Leslie said during the previous funding cycle the agency was asked to come in and explain how their religious approach does or does not enter into the delivery of their services. She said the agency could be asked to address that issue again.

Commissioner Kline said she came away from visiting the site with the feeling that the Salvation Army is no more likely to push religious views on anyone than any of the other religious-based organizations that are providing services. Commissioner Perelman said her experience was the opposite, that during her site visit she felt as though she was being preached to.

Commissioner Oxrieder said if she personally were hungry, she would seek help from the Salvation Army and would simply grin and bear any religious talk.

Ms. Catalano asked if clients are required to listen to a sermon in order to get food. Commissioner Bruels said they are not, other than saying grace before the meal. No one who applies for financial assistance must first listen to a sermon or be asked to pray about their situation.

Commissioner Perelman pointed out that the after-school programs include a religious element. Ms. Leslie clarified that the agency is not seeking funding for their after-school programs.

There was agreement to have staff ask the agency to address how their religious approach enters into the delivery of services.

29. The Sophia Way: Eastside Winter Shelter

Commissioner Villar said her question was whether or not the agency will be able to run the shelter. Ms. Leslie said the agency has clearly stabilized, which is why they have once again taken on the shelter responsibility.

Commissioner Bruels thanked the staff for the support provided to the agency. He said they deserve a large portion of the credit for saving the agency. Ms. Leslie said all of the Eastside cities came together to make sure the important resource would not be lost.

Commissioner Oxrieder pointed out that while the agency is asking for less and says it will be serving fewer clients, it is because Catholic Community Services is handling the family shelter element.

Commissioner Mercer noted that the agency previously sought emergency funds from the city and asked if they are doing a better job of budgeting to avoid a repeat. Commissioner Kline said she would question whether or not the agency learned from its previous experience given that the application shows no decrease in expenses even though the total ask is reduced by half. Commissioner Bruels clarified that the ask reduction is tied to Catholic Community Services taking on the family shelter element. Commissioner Kline said in that case the expenses should be less.

Commissioner Perelman said she hoped the budget was sufficient to address the needs of what a severe winter will bring with it. The bottom line is the agency should err on the high side to avoid having to once again seek emergency funds.

Chair McEachran said he would like to know what contingencies have been included in the ask.

Commissioner Villar suggested the agency should be asked about their fundraising plans for the program.

Commissioner Kline commented that most applications are tracking the United Way ask, yet the Eastside Winter Shelter ask of United Way is actually up, which is not the case with any other agency. Ms. Leslie pointed out that United Way is funding shelter programs and did at one point vote to extend the shelter. Commissioner Kline said of all the applications she read, she was most troubled by the winter shelter application.

Ms. Leslie said the winter shelter for women rotates from place to place and the agency typically looks at churches. The agency has stated that it will either be in Bellevue or Redmond for the next winter season.

30. The Sophia Way: Sophia's Place Shelter Program

Commissioner Mercer stressed the need to ask similar questions about the budget to make sure it is adequate and includes a backup plan.

Commissioner Bruels questioned the outcomes for the program. Ms. Leslie commented that when the cities get together and evaluate the applications, the outcomes were somewhat streamlined. She allowed that the outcomes element needs to be revamped as they are currently not helpful. As currently configured, agencies must pick outcomes from a list; they are not allowed to come up with their own in the application process.

31. The Sophia Way: Women's Day Center

The Commissioners had no specific questions for the agency.

32. YWCA: Family Village

Ms. Leslie said the long-time transitional housing program in Redmond that has over the years served Bellevue residents is converting most of its units to permanent supportive housing as a result of federal government requirements under the HEARTH Act. All communities are required to have a coordinated entry system, which up to this point has been done through the 2-1-1 system and The Family Housing Connection run by Catholic Community Services. The system changes have been under way for several years and are starting to come to fruition.

Commissioner Perelman said she was confused by the fact that there was no increase or decrease in the requested amount even though the model is being changed. Ms. Leslie said types of families served by the program will not be changing and they will be needing the same amount of support. Additionally, given that the transition has just taken place, the agency likely does not yet know exactly what the impact will be.

Commissioner Villar commented that under the transitional housing model, Bellevue residents placed in housing in Redmond could be expected at some point to return to Bellevue. Under the permanent supportive housing model, however, their return may be less likely and they essentially become Redmond residents. Being asked to provide half of the funding for de facto Redmond residents does not seem right.

Ms. Leslie added that under the new approach, clients are given preference in regard to geographic area but they will be placed in housing that most matches their needs. The thinking is that the system is regional and should be operated accordingly.

Commissioner Villar noted from the application that the agency has no fundraising initiative listed for the program and suggested the agency should be asked to clarify that.

Chair McEachran asked for comments on the process and Commissioner Mercer said she would like to have had a discussion about how the scoring tool points were awarded and how they were weighted. She said the tool could be more useful than it is. The Commissioners should be given the opportunity during the next funding cycle to have input on the development of the tool.

Commissioner Bruels pointed out that the scoring sheets were not referenced even once during the review of the Goal 1 applications. Commissioner Mercer proposed that had there been proper weighting, the tool could have come into play.

Commissioner Villar noted that even where the questions were not applicable, it was not possible to simply skip to the next question. She said that led her to giving arbitrary scores.

Commissioner Bruels said the Commission could have a debate about whether or not to use the tool, but if it is to be used, it should be meaningful. In order to be meaningful, the Commissioners should have input on the questions and how they are scored and weighted.

Chair McEachran said after he completed the scoring sheet he was left with the feeling that it was contextual but that he would not want to do it the same way again.

Commissioner Oxrieder said she changed her scores repeatedly and came away thinking that the process was not very meaningful. She said there was no real focus on the track record of the programs and whether or not they are serving their clients adequately.

Commissioner Villar said her final scores do not necessary match which applications she would vote to fund.

Commissioner Mercer said because the scoring sheet did not represent what she was looking for, it was frustrating to fill it out. She said had it been relevant to what she was looking for, she would have had more buy-in to the scores.

Commissioner Kline said she found the score sheets to be useful. She noted that she recently went through a scholarship scoring process, though in that case she did not know any of the kids involved or anything about them, making it necessary to simply evaluate what was in the application. The fact is the Commission has a lot of history

with the organizations that are seeking funding so there is no way to evaluate the applications from a distance.

Commissioner Villar commented that for some of the applications, had she been able to score them based on the application alone they would have received a very low rating. However, having knowledge of how the programs are actually run and what they accomplish, the scores given were much higher.

Commissioner Perelman pointed out that the Commission has filled out the score sheets in the past but has not used them in making funding decisions. Commissioner Bruels countered that the Commission was not yet in a position to making funding decisions and therefore could not say with any degree of certainty that the score sheets will not play a role in those decisions.

Commissioner Kline said one option would be to hold off on filling out the score sheets until it comes time to making funding decisions. Ms. Catalano pointed out that the Commission made it clear early on that it did not want to rely on the score sheets too heavily in making funding decisions.

Commissioner Bruels commented that in the end the Commission will be called on to justify its funding decisions. In that arena, it may be necessary to fall back on something solid like the score sheets. Commissioner Kline countered that the numbers alone will not justify the decisions.

Commissioner Villar said it would almost be better to have a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) page. Chair McEachran pointed out that the staff evaluations highlight those issues very well.

A motion not to score the applications for the next round of reviews was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Perelman.

Commissioner Mercer asked if there were a way to add weighting to the score sheets. Ms. Leslie said that could not be done since the scoring has already begun.

Commissioner Bruels stated that the Commission agreed to try the score sheets and should follow through. Commissioner Oxrieder said she did not like the tool but agreed to continue using it. Ms. Catalano pointed out that it was not necessary to include comments on the form. Commissioner Villar said she included comments because it is a public record and she wanted to provide some justification.

Chair McEachran agreed the Commission should continue to move ahead using the score sheets. He also agreed that if the tool is used for the next funding cycle, some changes to it should be considered.

Commissioner Perelman reiterated that filling out the score sheets takes a great deal of time, even though they are not used during the deliberations. She suggested filling them out should be optional. Commissioner Kline agreed.

Commissioner Bruels pointed out that the staff asked the Commission to try to approach and to evaluate it at the end. That is what the Commission agreed to do.

The motion not to use the score sheet carried 4-3, with Chair McEachran and Commissioners Villar, Kline and Perelman voting yes, and Commissioners Bruels, Mercer and Oxrieder voting not.

- 7. OLD BUSINESS - None
- 8. NEW BUSINESS – None
- 9. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None
- 10. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Villar. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bruels and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair McEachran adjourned the meeting at 8:42 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date