

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

November 18, 2008
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commissioners Hoople, Seltzer, Stout

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Chairperson Yantis, Commissioners Beighle,
Huenefeld-Gese

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Warren Leyh, Terry
Smith, Department of Parks and Community
Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Patricia Chou, East King County Literacy
Consortium; Cathy VonWald, Gary Dickerman,
Network on Aging

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Vice-Chair Stout who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Chair Yantis and Commissioners Beighle and Huenefeld-Gese, all of whom were excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 16, 2008

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

B. October 7, 2008

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Hoople reported that he attended the Veteran's Day parade in Auburn for which there were more than 260 entries.

Commissioner Stout said she participated in developing a television spot focused on access to food and food insecurity. The spot will run on BTV and on the city's website in December.

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said she attended the annual luncheon of Childcare Resources. She said a video was aired which showed some of the city's human services dollars at work. The video was shown to the Commissioners as well.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Presentation on East King County Literacy Consortium's Adult Basic Skills Program

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano introduced Patricia Chou from Bellevue Community College.

Ms. Chou said the Consortium is comprised of four Eastside community and technical colleges, specifically Cascadia Community College, Lake Washington Technical College, Renton Technical College and Bellevue Community College, as well as Hopelink. The Consortium's focus is on ADE, ESL and GED classes.

Ms. Chou said the Eastside Educational Transition Center for young adults is an experimental project. It is being operated with funding from the Workforce Development Council of Seattle/King County. The program began in May 2008 and operates primarily at Bellevue Community College. The number of participants remains low, and the limited funding available does not allow for hiring staff at each campus.

The program focuses on young people aged 16 and 25 who are at a basic skills level and has an emphasis on career planning. In order to achieve self sufficiency, more than short-term job training programs are needed. The students are encouraged to participate in the short-term job training programs, but then time is spent with them planning how to articulate the short-term programs into a fuller certificate program; the credits the students earn are accumulated and eventually lead to a degree. The students are informed that they can exit the program as needed to work, and that they can reenter the program without having to start again from scratch.

Ms. Chou said some of the students are high school dropouts, some of whom are actually native speakers but have limited English skills. The program includes a number of immigrants, some of whom have been frustrated with how long it has taken them to progress toward mastering English and obtaining job skills. Students

are recruited to the program from the Bellevue Community College campus but also from the Hopelink food bank program and community centers.

Ms. Chou pointed out that ESL students are known to underutilize the campus resources available to them. Often that is because their English skills make it difficult for them to understand what they need to do. The Adult Basic Services Program seeks to bridge the gap by developing specialized knowledge in the basic skills department.

The career training uses a modified version of the Integrated Basic Educational Skills Training (IBEST) programs, which are relatively new. The focus is on existing college certificate programs, but modifications are made so they can be more useful to students at the basic skills ESL level. They include additional English classes, so it takes somewhat longer to work through the course. In the end the ESL students earn college credits toward a college certificate. The certificate programs offered by the various institutions include Certified Nurse Assistant; Office Assistant, which can be articulated to an Office Management AA degree; Early Childhood Education; Accounting and General Services; and IT Service Tech.

Answering a question asked by Mr. Adriano about how the program is tied to homeless prevention, Ms. Chou explained that those who are homeless are in crisis mode and as such are not necessarily ready to seek an education. Once their housing and transportation situations are stabilized, they are ready to focus on gaining an education and career skills. There have been ongoing conversations between Bellevue Community College and the King County Housing Authority, which is trying to facilitate their existing residents in moving out of their units to accommodate those on the waiting list. Their belief is that programs like Adult Basic Education can result in students receiving higher wage jobs, making it possible for them to afford their own places.

Ms. Chou said of the eight native English speakers in the program, four have unstable housing situations which is not improved by their low-income status. Many have family issues that leave them without any family support. While not living on the streets, they are all just one step away from homelessness. The jobs they have are hourly and minimum wage. Many require tuition assistance.

Commissioner Hoople asked if any of the students near the higher end of the age bracket are returned veterans who received traumatic brain injuries and thus are in need of being re-educated. Ms. Chou said Hopelink recently indicated it will be going after funding to serve veterans. What will come of that remains to be seen, but the colleges are expecting to see an influx of students who are veterans.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Update on Bellevue Network on Aging

Cathy VonWald said she is employed by the Parks Department and serves as manager of Aging Services and the North Bellevue Community Center in addition to serving as staff liaison to the Bellevue Network on Aging. She explained that the purpose of the Network is to support Aging Services and that the group serves in an advisory capacity to Parks. The Network is dedicated to healthy aging in the community by promoting awareness of needs and resources that support older adults through life's transitions. The goals for accomplishing the mission have not changed since the Network was formed in 2006.

Soon after its formation the Network formed three subcommittees: transportation, support services and housing. The three subcommittees have had the same members since 2006, but with five new members set to join the Network, there may be some transitions following the annual retreat, which is slated for January 8.

Network member Gary Dickerman said during the past year the group has continued its effort to understand the different aspects of aging in Bellevue. Members have reached out to the community in various ways, have attended many different community events, and have gained more of a feel for how the Network can be more effective.

The Network developed a local version of the Vial of Life program jointly with the Kirkland Senior Council. The program was initiated by the Medic One Foundation with the support of Bartell Drugs. The program has been very successful in assisting Emergency Medical Technicians dealing with incidents involving older adults in their homes.

The Network has created several resource materials during the past year. They include a resources bookmark; a listing of resources for older adults that is available both in hardcopy and online; and an overview of how the Network serves the community. The group partnered with Overlake Hospital in presenting the Home Sweet Home Fair on November 8 which provided resources and information to older adults who have chosen to stay in their homes and age in place. Network members have also participated in the Seattle/King County Aging Providers Coalition, and the East King County Aging Providers Coalition, which is an outgrowth of the Eastside Human Services Forum. The Network remains committed to the Gatekeeper Program which seeks to train Bellevue staff and neighborhood groups on aging issues. In addition to the Home Sweet Home Fair, the Network had a presence at the Fall Prevention Fair, the Kelsey Creek Farm Fair, the city's Fourth of July celebration, the Strawberry Festival, and the Lake Hills Neighborhood open house. Several Power Point presentations have been developed for showing at neighborhood associations.

Continuing, Mr. Dickerman said the Transportation Subcommittee is a participant in the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative in partnership with Hopelink.

Ms. O'Reilly explained that about four years ago she along with Ms. VonWald and

transportation staff from Hopelink attended a workshop focused on coordinated mobility as a way to make sure all population groups, including seniors, are well served with transportation options. Following that event, the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative was formed; it has been meeting ever since. The organization is Bellevue-based currently while waiting for staff support from other Eastside cities.

Continuing, Ms. O'Reilly said through the partnership with Hopelink the Collaborative has been able to bring a couple of programs to the Eastside, including the Bus Buddy and Travel Ambassador programs. Hopelink recently put together a grant application for federal funding to hire a staff person part-time for the Collaborative. There has been no word yet on whether or not the application will be funded.

Ms. VonWald said BTV has plans to do a feature story on the Bus Buddy program. Hopelink is working to identify people to star in the story.

Ms. VonWald said she would be working with Ms. O'Reilly in 2009 on the next rendition of the Needs Update, and Ms. O'Reilly will be assisting in putting together the Vision 2009 update, which is a senior services review outlining strategies for serving older adults in Bellevue.

Commissioner Hoople said he has not heard much about the topic of adult daycare, adding that there are very few agencies on the Eastside with that focus. Ms. VonWald said that is something the Network could talk about. She said the Support Services Subcommittee has taken aim at making people aware of available resources, but they are also interested in identifying existing gaps.

Ms. O'Reilly reported that there is funding available through Medicaid for adult day services, but the funding is at risk. The issue likely will come up in the state legislative session.

Ms. VonWald said she sits on the Aging and Disability Services Advisory Council, and is also a member of the Governor's State Council on Aging. She said the latter group is conducting statewide regional forums on aging readiness; the first was held in Spokane in September, and one will be held in the Seattle/King County area soon. The forums are in preparation for the Governor's aging summit which has not yet been scheduled.

Commissioner Seltzer said the Network is peopled by those who are aging and those who serve the aging community. The members are all people who are used to doing things which has facilitated getting things done.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Adriano reported that the Commission's recommendations for funding have been forwarded to the City Council. They will be voted on early in December.

Commissioner Stout extended her appreciation to staff for the quality of work that went into the transmittal memo. She said it was comprehensively done.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly said steps are already being taken to effect the next Needs Update. The RFP for the phone survey was released and the bid from the same group that has done it for the past several years has been selected again. The survey will be conducted in late February or early March.

Commissioner Hoople informed the Commission that the veterans side of the Veterans and Human Services Levy is about to approve one of the last procurement plans, which will be for a veterans 2-1-1 number.

Commissioner Hoople also reported that the committee on the human services side currently has only eight members. The area that is short is Bellevue because King County Councilmember Jane Hague does not currently have a representative. He said anyone with suggestions to fill the post should submit names to Councilmember Hague.

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

11. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Stout adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date