

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION  
MINUTES

September 9, 2010  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commissioners Beighle, Bruels, Hoople, Plaskon, Stout, Yantis

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Chair Huenefeld Gese

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Terry Smith, Megan Farwell, Patrick Foran, Doug Sanner, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Commissioner Beighle who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Chair Huenefeld Gese, who was excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 8, 2010

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

B. July 20, 2010

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 Bruels called attention to the update included in the Commission packet regarding the Crisis Diversion facility. He reported that he has been hired to serve as Program Manager for the strategy.

Commissioner Stout said she and Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly paid a visit to the Crossroads Sea Mar Community Health Center. She said the facility is very impressive and she assured the Commission that it made the right move in providing some funding for the facility. She said she and Ms. O'Reilly took the opportunity to tell the staff about the Family Resource Center in Redmond and encouraged them to work collaboratively with other agencies. Sixty-one percent of the clients served in the Bellevue facility are without medical insurance, and a high percentage of them are first language Spanish speakers.

Commissioner Hoople said he and Ms. O'Reilly met recently to prepare for the Eastside veterans meeting scheduled for October 7 at the North Bellevue Community Center. He reported that on September 8 he attended the King County Regional Policy Committee meeting at which the Veterans and Human Services Levy Mid-point Evaluation Performance Report was highlighted, which was well received. The levy boards have been meeting in joint strategy meetings for the last six months working on the evaluations.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie said the Eastside Month of Concern for the Hungry is set to kick off on September 25 and will run to October 23. At the September 20 City Council meeting there will be a proclamation presented by a board member of Hopelink. Volunteers are needed to visit grocery stores. The event is a collaboration of seven Eastside cities.

Ms. O'Reilly informed the Commissioners that the Family Resource Center in Redmond has officially changed its name to Together Center.

Ms. O'Reilly allowed that as soon as the Needs Update is published it is out of date given how quickly things change. She stated that in order to keep on top of things, intern Megan Farwell had added up-to-date data for a number of the indicators. Copies of the update were provided to the Commissioners, and it was indicated that the website includes a link to the update as well. Work on the next full update will begin by the end of the year.

Ms. O'Reilly announced that on November 3 the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative will be conducting a forum on transportation in conjunction with the Washington State Department of Transportation. WSDOT wants feedback with regard to tolls on the SR-520 bridge, which is set to begin in the spring of 2011, and how the tolls will impact low-income people.

## 6. DISCUSSION

### A. City of Bellevue Budget Update

Parks and Community Services Director Patrick Foran said the work undertaken by the city to initiate an entirely new budget process in a very short amount of time has been nothing less than phenomenal. The staff have demonstrated their willingness and their abilities in remarkable ways throughout the process. The work of the results teams has been accomplished and their various reports have been placed in the hands of the City Manager. The City Manager is now working on his budget proposal which will be presented to the City Council.

The Council will be having budget discussions every two weeks to sort through more than 500 proposals and try to get their arms around it all. They will raise questions that the various departments will need to research and answer. The first phase of the Budget One process deconstructed the budgets for every department and put them into outcomes. The Council has indicated it wants to see things in the context of how each department will be affected; that will to some degree involve the departments reconstructing what was a complex deconstruction.

Parks and Community Services Quality Control Manager Doug Sanner said the city's general fund is facing a projected \$10 million deficit, and the capital budget is looking at a \$100 million shortfall. The revenue reductions translate to an approximate seven percent budget cut for the general fund. In order to address that issue, the city is engaged in a process that will essentially reset its service levels.

The City Manager has recommended an outcomes-based budget process similar to what is in use by ten or fifteen jurisdictions across the country. The Budget One approach evaluates everything done from the perspective of the citizens, and ranks programs relative to each other based on data and performance information. The tensions create incentives to find efficiencies and take innovative approaches. At the end of the day, the idea is to purchase as much service as possible with in the reduced funding available.

Mr. Sanner said at the beginning of the process the Council approved seven outcomes. Those outcomes became the framework for putting the budget together. The Innovative, Vibrant and Caring Community (IVCC) outcome is primarily the category under which the human service investments were evaluated. Parks programs competed in four of the outcomes: IVCC, Healthy and Sustainable Environment, Quality Neighborhoods, and Safe Community. The other three outcomes were Responsive Government, Improved Mobility, and Economic Growth and Competitiveness.

The results teams were created with staff from across departments. Each team had about seven members, each of which was essentially pulled off their regular duties for a period of about six months. They read all of the proposals, ranked them relative

to each other, interviewed staff and experts, and generally did a tremendous amount of work. In essence, they acted as buyers of services on behalf of the City Manager and the Council.

Parks and Community Services submitted 50 operating proposals and 20 capital proposals across four outcome areas. In addition to responding to the buying directions from the results teams, the focus was on preserving and enhancing the existing revenue base. Parks brings in about \$9 million annually through user fees, and careful steps were taken to make sure that cost cutting would not result in revenue loss as a result. Attention was given to enhancing user fees where possible, working with contractors to squeeze the percentages where appropriate. The department is committed to providing front line services to the fullest extent possible, including human services, community centers, probation services, as well as maintaining park facilities. Every effort has been put into making sure community partnerships are not compromised. Staff assignments were shifted, and some of the contract work was cut.

Mr. Sanner said each Parks division, including human services, was asked to come forward with a five percent revenue enhancement or revenue reduction as part of their basic proposal. As a consequence six staff positions were eliminated, including managers, administrator, and direct services personnel.

With regard to human services, Mr. Sanner said the human services contracts with non-profit agencies funding with CDBG and city dollars was the number one proposal within the IVCC results team. The proposal included a three percent increase based on the Council's longstanding formula for human services. Also funded was the human service planning and contract management program, which is the staff group needed to manage the contracts, and the Utility Tax Rebate Program.

A new proposal called Bellevue Cares, which is focused on recession response, was submitted for 2011 and 2012, but the results teams found only enough money to fund it for 2011. The proposal includes scholarship support for recreation programs, additional utility bills relief, mortgage counseling for individuals, and additional information and referral as part of the customer service package.

Since the release of the results teams recommendations, the City Manager asked the leadership team to conduct a peer review of the proposals and suggest compromises aimed at bringing those proposals that fell below the funding line above the line. The Safe Communities Results Team had roughly \$5 million of unfunded proposals after the results teams went through Round 2; the unfunded proposals included police bike patrols, officers, and criminal investigation support. The leadership team has made suggestions for additional cuts that would make it possible to fund those proposals, and that work has left in question even the 2011 funding for Bellevue Cares.

The recommendation of the Safe Community Results Team is that the city should attempt to find non-profit organizations willing to operate the Severe Weather Shelter

for the city. That approach, when previously explored was not feasible, and for that reason the leadership team has recommended putting that item back into the funded budget.

Mr. Sanner said the special recession impact request adopted by the Commission in July is not on the funded programs list. It was submitted during Round 2 but was not funded by the results teams and in fact does not even show up on any of the lists. The City Manager has been reminded that the recommendation was put forward by the Commission.

Ms. Leslie said Councilmember Chelminiak remains committed to the Commission putting the program forward as an option. It will be included in the presentation the Commission will make to the Council in October.

Mr. Sanner shared with the Commission a list of reductions over and above the five percent budget reductions submitted by Parks and Community Services. Under the IVCC and Quality Neighborhoods outcomes, the impacts to recreation include operation of the Northwest Arts Center as a full-cost recovery site, which will be a challenge and will require the elimination of all subsidized programs, and elimination of special event sponsorship subsidies to the Bellevue Downtown Association, which will affect Fourth of July, Magic Season, the Jazz Festival and other events. Park maintenance will be impacted as well, including reducing janitorial services in community centers to five days a week, the closure of some park restrooms or the removal of sanicans from sites, significant reductions to streetscape maintenance, reductions to seasonal help, and the elimination of regular parking lot sweeping.

Mr. Foran said those are just highlights and do not really capture the reality of what people will notice. Some 70 percent of the labor hours in the park system are provided by contractors, and those contracts will be significantly constrained. The Youth Link program is at risk of full elimination, and the 24-Hour Relay program will not be funded.

Commissioner Stout asked what the unemployment impact will be from cutting back on contract services. Mr. Sanner said he has not quantified that. Mr. Foran allowed that if calculated in terms of full-time equivalents, the reductions would be significant. Hours for community centers will be reduced, but just to keep them open upwards of 20 10/40 or part-time employees will be let go. The full-time staff will have to pick up the slack in addition to their regular duties.

Mr. Sanner said one issue that likely will become a major consideration for the Council is the results team proposal for the city to reevaluate the Probation Electronic Home Detention Program. The recommendation calls for cutting two of the program's 14 FTEs, and there is some implication that the service should be turned over to King County.

Mr. Foran agreed that an in-depth analysis of the program would be a good idea, not to determine whether the services are needed at all but to decide if the right model is in place. The review, however, should be left to the city to conduct.

The Beach Lifeguard Program has been earmarked to be cut as well, but that likely will be replaced. The leadership team has come up with scenarios to reinstate the dollars needed.

Mr. Sanner said Parks has a general fund budget of around \$25 million. User fees reduce that outlay to where the net cost is \$22 million per year. The reductions submitted by the department amounted to \$1.3 million per year, and the results teams recommendations identified an additional \$1.6 million per year in reductions. Based on what was submitted to the Council in August, Parks is facing a 13 percent total cut. Some may raise the issue of proportionality given that the city overall is facing only a seven percent shortfall.

The City Manager's budget will be submitted to the Council on September 27 along with an updated financial forecast. The new financial forecast is unlikely to be any better; the real question will be if it will be worse enough that the city will have to rethink things completely. The budget issue will dominate the fall months, with Council adoption scheduled for December 6.

Commissioner Plaskon observed that the budget proposals put forth by Parks were reviewed under four of the seven adopted outcomes and he asked if any other city department has such a broad footprint. Mr. Foran said Parks is the most comprehensive in terms of its effect on the city. The Department of Planning and Community Development spans only two of the outcome areas. The Department of Transportation programs were reviewed under two outcome areas as well, though primarily only one. The Police, Fire and Utilities departments each had their programs fall under a single outcome.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Hoople, Mr. Foran said the department is facing significant reductions in its ability to fund projects on the adopted CIP list. At a minimum, Parks will be preserving the dollars that came in through the levy; by law the funds cannot be used for anything else. The piece that affects the ability of the department to deliver the projects in a certain timeframe is the general fund CIP dollars that were supposed to match the levy dollars, which is \$28 million. There are a couple of existing CIP projects that require a local match, and those challenge grant dollars have been protected as things stand, so the Youth Theater Foundation and the Botanical Garden Foundation can continue their fundraising efforts. The levy includes an operation and maintenance component which continues in perpetuity. The CIP also has a renovation fund, and that has been protected so far.

Ms. Leslie said the Commission's funding recommendations are scheduled to be presented to the Council on October 4. Typically, the presentation includes the

general fund and CDBG recommendations along with the contingency plans and any special requests. At a subsequent regular meeting, the Council will vote on the CDBG portion because the application has to be sent to HUD by November 15. The remainder of the human services recommendations will be part of the budget adoption in December.

## B. Severe Weather Shelter Applications

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano reminded the Commission that two applications had been received from agencies interested in operating the Severe Weather Shelter for the upcoming winter season. The shelter was last activated in 2009 and remained open for 18 nights. During that time, 59 unduplicated individuals were served with more than 300 bednights. Most were male and the average age was 41. Just under half indicated they were Bellevue residents. The impression of the contractor was that many were homeless persons who happened to be in Bellevue.

Mr. Adriano reiterated that no funding to operate the shelter is confirmed for after the end of the year. The predictions are for a La Nina winter, which could result in increased precipitation in late fall and early winter and colder than normal temperatures.

Mr. Adriano said Ms. Farwell did a lot of work gathering feedback from interested parties, including the contractors Catholic Community Services and Congregations for the Homeless. She also spoke with the Parks structural staff who are in charge of the building and Crossroads Community Center staff. Generally, the feedback indicated a need for improved training of contractor personnel, increased direct communication between the center staff, the structural staff and the contractor, and increased responsibility on the part of the contractor.

City staff reported the need to improve compliance on the part of the contractor. During the December 2009 shelter opening there were minor incidents of security breaches. The center staff reported that on occasion the site was quite disheveled the morning after. Inconsistencies were encountered with regard to reporting on the part of the contractor. The recommendation is that contractor overnight staff should participate in the orientation with structural management and center staff.

Commissioner Stout asked what the relationship was between Catholic Community Services and Congregations for the Homeless. Mr. Adriano said Catholic Community Services was the prime contractor and theoretically is the party that should assume responsibility for the issues that were raised.

Mr. Adriano said a Severe Weather Shelter Handbook has been written, and the contractor will be required to follow all of the procedures in it. Structural staff felt the contractor did not read the original list of duties that since have been compiled into a manual. Ms. Farwell said the list had gone out with the RFQ and the expectation was that in applying the contractor had reviewed the list.

With regard to increased direct communications between all the parties, Mr. Adriano said sometimes it was difficult to reach the contractors. For their part, they felt the city bureaucracy hampered good communications, and that written communications were not centralized and viewable by all. The potential solution is to implement redundant and more consistent communications, and to have center staff, structural staff and the contractors meet every morning with the contractor personnel who had the night shift, and to repeat the process as the center staff shows up in the morning to begin their day.

Ms. Farwell said the shelter hours have been extended, so there will be a 30-minute overlap between contractor staff and center staff at each shift change.

Mr. Adriano said because of space and storage issues, the contractor is going to have to break down and assemble the sleeping cots every day. Additionally, a checklist will be provided and will be required to be used in restoring the facility to the way they found it after it has been used. The contractor will also have increased responsibility for restoring things like blankets and snacks. There is no requirement for the contractor to provide meals. The city's disaster blankets are not to be used for the shelter.

The increased shelter times, and the fact that the contractor will be required to obtain their own blankets, are the reasons the contract costs will rise for the city.

Commissioner Beighle noted that the proposal from Congregations for the Homeless includes warm meals that would need to be picked up and brought to the shelter. She asked how that can be accomplished if there is snow and ice on the ground. Mr. Adriano said there are some issues with that element; he added he was not sure the city would be allowed to permit that activity at all. The contractor can provide prepackaged snacks, but cannot serve food of unknown origin due to health department regulations absent having a food handlers license and an inspected kitchen. The shelter is about a warm place to sleep, not about providing hot food. Ms. Farwell stressed that the shelters are not intended to serve only the homeless; they are for anyone in need of a warm shelter during severe weather situations. If a regional power outage were to occur, the city would set up shelters that would remain open 24 hours a day and that would serve hot meals.

Commissioner Bruels commented that Congregation for the Homeless runs homeless shelters, whereas Catholic Community Services offers a universe of support services. It makes sense Congregations for the Homeless would try to provide hot meals in the same way it provides them at all its shelters.

Ms. Leslie noted that the shelter pilot program lasted two years, so the city has some data to fall back on. She said her staff held some extensive debriefing sessions with the facilities staff and community center staff who are obviously impacted by the

shelter. There were a significant number of issues with the primary contractor during the pilot program.

Commissioner Yantis asked if there had been sufficient time between when the issues were raised and the end of the contract during which the contractor could have corrected the issues. Mr. Adriano said the contractor was aware of problems in plenty of time to correct them during the contract period.

Commissioner Stout noted that over the past few years there has been a continual staff turnover with the contractor and very little continuity and consistency from year to year. She said the issues brought to light during the debriefing process only reinforced her concerns with the contractor.

Commissioner Bruels indicated he was leaning toward the Congregations for the Homeless proposal. The shelter program fits very well with what the agency does on a daily basis. They use facilities they do not own or manage, set up homeless shelters, provide services, and tear it all down in the morning. Through the years, they have maintained excellent working relationships with the churches they utilize. They also are a local organization with a lot of local knowledge.

Commissioner Stout concurred, as did Commissioner Plaskon, though he stressed the agency should be made to understand that the Severe Weather Shelter is not a homeless shelter and as such must operate under a different set of rules.

Motion to recommend the selection of Congregations for the Homeless to serve as the contractor for the Severe Weather Shelter Program was made by Commissioner Hoople. Second was by Commissioner Stout and the motion carried unanimously.

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

Commissioner Beighle adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

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Secretary to the Human Services Commission

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Date

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Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

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Date