

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION  
MINUTES

October 7, 2008  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Yantis, Commissioners Beighle, Hoople, Huenefeld-Gese, Lazetti, Stout,

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Seltzer

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

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Chair Yantis who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Seltzer who was excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 4, 2008

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Lazetti reported that she recently attended the Washington Mental Health Counselors Association continuing education classes on the mental health needs of veterans. She noted that huge needs in the area of post-traumatic stress disorder are anticipated as soldiers return from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Commissioner Hoople reported that he and Commissioner Beighle attended the Building Bridges Collaboration hosted by the city at the North Bellevue Community Center after the last Commission meeting. He said he also attended the workshop called Breaking Cultural Barriers hosted by ERIC at the Lake Washington School District board room. He said the levy oversight board recently held a session on homelessness in the cities of SeaTac and Tukwila and noted that he attended. He said he also attended the Washington State Society for Clinical Social Work session focused on the war veteran in American films and how post-traumatic stress disorder is portrayed in movies.

Commissioner Hoople said he also attended the LIHI groundbreaking for McDermott Place in Lake City. He noted that LIHI is seeking opportunities to have a presence on the Eastside, possibly at the old Lexus building on 112<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.

Commissioner Beighle added that the Conversations on Race and Culture verified in her mind the great job the Bellevue Police Department is doing in providing training.

Commissioner Stout said she recently participated in a meeting at Highland Middle School sponsored by the PTSA and the police department. The focus was on keeping children safe from sexual assaults. The point was driven home that most sexual assaults in the community are done by someone known to the children and their family. The event was not particularly well attended.

Commissioner Stout said she has been asked to participate in an evaluation process to look at the administration of the Parents as Teachers program that is used by Friends of Youth. She said the process will take about a year to complete.

Chair Yantis said he attended the recent East Community Council for United Way meeting on September 19. Information was shared about the Eastside Landlord Liaison project.

Chair Yantis said on October 6 he presented to the City Council the position of the Commission regarding the Bel-Red Subarea Plan.

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly took a moment to introduce new intern Warren Leyh, a second year student in the University of Washington School of Social Work.

Assistant Director Terry Smith thanked Commissioner Lazetti on behalf of the city for volunteering her time on the Commission. He noted that she would be finishing her time on the Commission at the end of October. Commissioner Lazetti said the time went very fast and said she enjoyed every moment of the experience.

## 6. PUBLIC HEARING

### A. Preliminary Human Services Funding Recommendations for 2009 CDBG and 2009-2010 General Fund

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano stated that the City of Bellevue annually receives a federal allocation of the Community Development Block Grant, and receives applications for capital projects. The city is also on a two-year cycle for the Human Services General Fund stream. In April 2008, the City opened the process for nonprofit organizations to submit applications for funding for the 2009-2010 cycle. The city also posted a notice of public hearing in April, and on May 6, the Bellevue Human Services Commission held this public hearing, to receive oral and written comment on housing and human service needs in the city.

Applications for funding for both CDBG and the Human Services General Fund were due on June 5, 2008, at 4:30 p.m. By the due date, the city had received 91 applications for funding, totaling about \$3.3 million in requests. The city had a total of nearly \$2.4 million to be allocated through the CDBG and the General Fund. As such, requests exceeded available funds by over \$900,000. (Note: The City of Bellevue received applications totaling about 4.1 million in requests and had a total of nearly 3.35 million to be allocated through the CDBG and the General Fund. The requests received exceeded available funds by \$764,000.)

The Bellevue Human Services Commission engaged in a two-phase review process. The first phase occurred in Commission meetings from June 19 to August 5, wherein the Commissioners conducted a preliminary review of all applications and identified questions and concerns for clarification, all of which were forwarded by city staff to the applicant agencies. Concurrently, staff wrote reviews for each human services application. The reviews were provided to the Commissioners along with answers to specific questions offered by the agencies.

The second phase constituted a second review by the Commission that was conducted between August 19 and September 16. Applicant agencies were invited to attend Commission meetings during that time in case commission members had questions for applicant agencies. During the second phase, the Commissioners began discussing preliminary funding recommendations, which were drafted after the September 16 meeting.

On September 22, the city posted a notice for an October 7 public hearing to receive oral and written comments on the Commission's recommendations and on the city's housing and human services strategies.

The Commission's preliminary funding recommendations were sent as a draft to applicants via email on September 26 via the contact information provided on each application.

Mr. Adriano clarified that the funding recommendations as made by the Commission are regarded as preliminary and could change before they are sent to the City Council for consideration.

Chair Yantis explained that the public hearing was focused on the preliminary recommendations of the Commission for allocating General Fund resources and the anticipated 2009 CDBG federal award to Bellevue. He said the Commission would also welcome comments on the practice of the city to dedicate CDBG funds to human services purposes. He noted that copies of the city's current strategies for affordable housing and human services were available, adding that the strategies would be incorporated into the application for the 2009 federal CDBG award. Information outlining the allowed uses for CDBG dollars was also made available.

Motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Hoople. Second was by Commissioner Beighle and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Steve Roberts, Executive Director of Congregations for the Homeless, thanked the Commission for the recommendations and for its willingness to step into the housing business. He said housing is the real solution to homelessness. With the success of the Eastside Landlord Liaison program, it has been shown that it is possible to place as many people as there is funding for.

Ms. Arlette Lamphere with NAMI Eastside thanked the Commission for its recommendation to award funding to the agency. She asked the Commissioners, however, to reconsider allocating the full requested amount. The ever-increasing population of the mentally ill has been snowballing and has gotten to crisis proportions. Society is not acting proactively to help individuals before they reach the crisis stage, and that makes it necessary to spend far more efforts in time and expenses to help them through the recovery process. NAMI Eastside has a new family in the family support group, new trained leaders, and a waiting list for the Peer to Peer program. There are also leaders being trained for other classes, two consumers looking forward to starting a connections class, a new vision class working with parents and teachers at school, and is evaluating the comprehensive housing program and working with others. The agency receives calls for service from people in all Eastside cities, and operates a speakers bureau that is particularly active during the school year. It all takes resources.

Ms. Erica Horn with HERO House thanked the Commission for including the agency in the next round of funding. She said approximately 35 percent of the clients currently being served by the program are from Bellevue, and the anticipation is that percentage will grow. While the program has not been around for long, it has an impressive proven track record; a great deal has been accomplished in the past three years, including international certification for clubhouse development. Services are offered to members free of charge, and that makes things much easier with regard to Medicaid eligibility. Weekend and evening services are offered by the program, which is unusual in the mental health system. HERO House works very hard to

prevent hospitalization or incarceration. The program is deliberately set up with qualified but limited staffing, which means the members must participate in guiding their own recoveries. The program has developed excellent outcomes but is facing the loss of the innovative services grant money that has been heavily relied on for the last two years.

Mr. Jesse Levine said before he joined HERO House he lived a somewhat isolated life. He said he was diagnosed bipolar at age 18. He said HERO House brought him out of his shell and gave him friends and bonds that will last a lifetime. He said he plans to go back to school soon.

Mr. Joe Cunningham, Senior Development Officer for Kindering Center, said his son was diagnosed with Autism at age three. It was his child care providers who recognized his repetitive behavior and lack of achieving certain development milestones. Their concerns were the impetus to seek testing. Their training was what Kindering Center offers. He thanked the Commission for its continued investment in the Kindering Center.

Ms. Tracy Myers with Catholic Community Center said the Emergency Assistance Program served 448 Bellevue residents in 2007, 228 of whom were children under the age of 18. To date in 2008, the program has served 167 Bellevue residents. The goals for clients served and case management have not been met, but the goal number of bednights has been exceeded by a substantial margin. Bellevue funds have been used appropriately to help those in need. The program is in fact on track to meet all of its goals for the year; the second quarter report filed with the city was not accurate. A new coordinator has been hired and is working to correct numbers that were not appropriately tracked. The goals for clients served and bednights in 2007 were met, though the goal for case management hours was not met. The program outcomes have since been changed from case management to financial aid. It is true that there has been staff upheaval in the agency, due primarily to the loss of \$22,806 from United Way. The program is on track to meet the 2008 direct assistance goal. The coordinator position was increased to three days a week in July and to four in September. If there is a 50 percent cut in Bellevue funding, however, it will be difficult to maintain the current staffing level. Other programs are serving fewer clients in Bellevue but with more money.

Ms. Meghan Altimore with Hopelink thanked the Commission for its recommended funding for the agency. She allowed that the difficult economic times are hitting the city as well as the clients served with the funding allocations. She said Hopelink has seen a 32 percent increase in the number of average visits to the food banks in the last year and a 71 percent increase in the number of emergency food bags distributed. The numbers are early warning signs of what is coming. One issue being faced is the fact that people cannot afford to put gas in their cars and drive to the food bank; that is why they are coming at other times seeking emergency food. Hopelink intends to continue providing support to the best of its ability.

Ms. Eileen Rasnack thanked the Commission for its strong support in the community for human services programs and services. She further thanked the Commissioners for donating their hours to the cause. She said Volunteer Chore Services, which receives funding through Catholic Community Services, provides chore services for older adults, which helps them remain independent in their homes. The service is particularly helpful for those who do not qualify for state services. The economic times are causing and increase in the number of calls from citizens concerned about being able to keep their housing arrangements and meet all of their other monthly expenses, including food. The program partners with local businesses, those in the faith communities, civic and youth groups, and with schools to help older adults remain independent.

Ms. Jenn Daly, director of Fund Development at St. Andrew's Housing Group, thanked the Commission for its support of the resident services program. She said the allocation will help hardworking families in Bellevue build self-sufficiency. She said the agency is also very happy to be working on Andrew's Glen, a new 40-unit veterans housing project in Factoria.

Ms. Amina Ahmed said the economy is making it difficult for many in the community to make ends meet. Many who otherwise would qualify for food stamps find they are prevented from applying because of a language barrier. The proposed allocation to Refugee Women's Alliance will help reach out to many with assistance in completing the food stamp applications. The needs are truly overwhelming.

Ms. Shelley Hunsinger, director of My Sister's Home emergency shelter at Eastside Development Violence Program, noted that October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. She thanked the Commission for its funding recommendation for the shelter program and the community advocacy program. There is no community that is safe from domestic violence, and all women are at risk; one in three women statistically fall victim to domestic violence.

Ms. Joan Eads with Eastside Legal Assistance Program said she met recently with several women from the long-term homeless shelter and an agency attorney. She said the opportunity brought home to her how important the funding allocations from Bellevue are.

Motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Hoople. Second was by Commissioner Huenefeld-Gese and the motion carried unanimously.

**\*\*BREAK\*\***

Ms. Leslie reminded the Commissioners that following the last Commission meeting staff reviewed the recommendations and discovered an error that left about \$6,000 left over. In consultation with Chair Yantis and Commissioner Stout, it was agreed to propose bumping up the applications that needed only a small amount to bring them up to their full COLA level, and to allocate the balance to Eastside Baby Corner.

There was general consensus to accept the proposal.

Chair Yantis brought back to the table the application from Catholic Community Services in light of the testimony received. He allowed that increasing the allocation for the agency would require reducing the allocation for some other agency.

Ms. Leslie commented that over the course of the last couple of years Catholic Community Services has seen quite a lot of staff turnover. About eight months ago the North and East funders met with the director of the agency and expressed concern about what was happening. They received assurances that the agency is committed to providing services. The agency made some adjustments due to the loss of some funding, including moving their office.

Commissioner Hoople said he was bothered by the indication from the agency that they would be doing less case management and putting more emphasis on financial assistance. He suggested that is tantamount to putting out the fire without addressing what is causing the fire; case management is what helps people move away from needing financial assistance.

Commissioner Stout said she was concerned by the fact that in explaining their predicament the agency blamed former coordinators and pointed out that other agencies are receiving more than they are. They did not make assurances of stability, which could mean the same issue will continue over the next couple of years. The city is not flush with money for human services and must be absolutely sure in allocating funds that it will get services for them.

Commissioner Lazetti said she took the time to read the written comments from Catholic Community Services prior to the meeting. She suggested the submittal was not particularly well done, and added that she had not been swayed by the oral comments offered during the public hearing. It simply does not bode well that the agency is not on track to meet its goals for 2008 and may not meet them again in 2009.

There was agreement not to revise the proposed allocation to Catholic Community Services for this particular program (#1).

Chair Yantis commented that Congregations for the Homeless has done an incredible amount of work with the \$15,000 given by United Way. They have as many housing units as they have people to put in them. What they need are case managers, though it appears they will be having funds coming from some other source. He suggested the bumps to the various applications needed to bring them up to full COLA could be targeted for the Housing Program instead, noting that the total is about \$4,300.

Commissioner Stout said she could support going in that direction. Ms. Lazetti concurred.

Commissioner Hoople recommended putting \$4,000 to the landlord liaison program, and the balance of \$348 to Eastside Baby Corner.

Ms. Leslie called attention to the application from the YMCA Lake Heights child care program for which the Commission recommended flat funding, primarily due to concerns about the perceived quality of the program and lack of participation in SOAR. She suggested the Commission is not in a position to be able to judge quality of care; the same standard was not applied to any other child care program.

Mr. Adriano said the COLA amount based on their 2008 allocation would be about \$700.

There was general agreement to give the application a COLA and to revise the rationale statement accordingly.

Commissioner Stout called attention to the rationale statement for the application from the Emergency Feeding Program of Seattle and King County, noting that in fact the recommendation is for full, not partial, funding.

Commissioner Beighle called attention to the application from Elder and Adult Day Services and suggested that the allocation appears to be more than what a COLA alone would be. There was agreement that the Commission had intended to allocate more than a COLA and that the wording of the rationale statement should be revised to reflect that.

There was agreement to put an additional \$3,500 toward the Congregations for the Homeless Program, an additional \$733 toward the YMCA Lake Heights Child Care Program, and the balance toward Eastside Baby Corner.

Motion to accept the proposed allocation of funds was made by Commissioner Huenefeld-Gese. Second was by Commissioner Hoople and the motion carried unanimously.

## 7. DISCUSSION

### A. Finalize Funding Recommendations for 2009 CDBG and 2009-2010 General Fund

Ms. Leslie said she and Mr. Adriano recently attended a Northwest CDBG conference. The representatives from all of the cities present were hoping for at least flat funding. It will not be until the spring of 2009 before we know what the actual allocation will be.

Motion to approve the 2009 CDBG award recommendations and the contingency plan was made by Commissioner Hoople. Second was by Commissioner Stout and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Leslie said the package is scheduled to be forwarded to the City Council on October 27 in study session. She said it would be good to have as many Commissioners as possible attend. She proposed cancelling the October 21 regular Commission meeting and the Commissioners concurred.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Hoople reported that he attended the grand opening of the new Youth Eastside Services facility.

9. NEW BUSINESS

There was agreement to cancel the November 4 Commission meeting because it falls on election night.

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Yantis adjourned the meeting at 8:22 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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date