

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

January 20, 2011
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Huenefeld Gese, Commissioners Beighle, Bruels, Hoople, Stout

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Plaskon and Yantis

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Kimberly Walker, Department of Parks & Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Chair Huenefeld Gese who presided until after the election process was completed.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners Plaskon and Yantis, both of whom were excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. November 2, 2010

Commissioner Hoople called attention to the penultimate paragraph on the first page and noted that he had attended the Veterans Conference but stayed only long enough to hear the opening speeches.

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

B. November 16, 2010

Commissioner Stout referred to the third paragraph under Item 5 on page 2 and asked that the last sentence be worded to read "Children under the age of three from some at-risk families could lose their case management and home visits."

Commissioner Stout also called attention to the third paragraph on page 5 and clarified that the Mobile Crisis Team will be staffed with two persons countywide who will be able to co-respond with law enforcement.

Commissioner Bruels noted that in the fourth paragraph on page 5 “Jackson Lake” should read “Jackson Place,” and “Jackson Lane” should read “Jackson Place.”

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Huenefeld Gese noted she had on behalf of the Commission received a thank-you from the Eastside Cultural Navigator Program for supporting the program, and a happy holidays card from AtWork!

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion to open the floor for nominations for Chair was made by Commissioner Stout. Second was by Commissioner Hoople and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion to nominate Commissioner Beighle to serve as Chair was made by Commissioner Stout. Second was by Commissioner Hoople.

Motion to close the nominations was made by Commissioner Stout. Second was by Commissioner Hoople and the motion carried unanimously.

The election of Commissioner Beighle to serve as Chair carried unanimously.

Motion to open the floor for nominations for Vice Chair was made by Commissioner Hoople. Second was by Commissioner Stout and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion to nominate Commissioner Bruels to serve as Vice Chair was made by Commissioner Hoople. Second was by Commissioner Stout.

Motion to close the nominations was made by Commissioner Hoople. Second was by Commissioner Stout and the motion carried unanimously.

The election of Commissioner Bruels to serve as Vice Chair carried unanimously.

Commissioner Stout took a moment to thank Chair Huenefeld Gese for doing an outstanding job of leading the Commission.

Chair Huenefeld Gese thanks the Commissioners and staff for their support and then passed the gavel to Commissioner Beighle.

6. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Hoople reported that he attended the Martin Luther King event at Crossroads Shopping Center. He noted that he had during the month already attended five levy-related meetings, including the Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee (EHAC). The focus has been on sharing information with and hearing from stakeholders about what has changed since 2005 when the levy was first approved. King County staff have begun conducting review sessions for the strategies; local experts are being brought in to each meeting to update the board with regard to what has changed, and the information will be used to

develop support for the levy. The King County Executive has indicated a desire to see the levy put on the November ballot, which the oversight committees favor, whereas some of the King County Councilmembers generally favor the August ballot. Details about where the levy lid stands in various efforts still need to be determined.

Commissioner Bruels said he attended the King County Martin Luther King celebration where King County Executive Constantine gave the keynote address. He said there was wonderful music and inspiring poetry.

With regard to the crisis diversion facility, Commissioner Bruels said the focus continues to be on engaging the neighborhood. He said another community forum is planned for later in the month.

Chair Beighle announced that Issaquah school board member Marnie Maraldo has been named to serve on the board of the Eastside Human Services Forum.

Chair Beighle also noted that on December 13 the City Council unanimously adopted the Meydenbauer Bay Park Plan.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie commented that the Eastside Social Sustainability Partnership that the Eastside Human Services Forum has undertaken is going into another phase. A consultant will be hired to continue the research started by the Bainbridge Graduate Institute on entrepreneurial activities in government that might be able to contribute to the funding of human services. Applications have been received from seven consultant teams, and three have been interviewed. A selection will be made very soon and the consultant work will continue for the next six months or so.

Ms. Leslie said the HUD auditors were on site from January 10 through January 12 collecting information and looking at files. They identified some areas in which more needs to be done in order to be in compliance with all federal laws, primarily in the area of environmental review associated with the Home Repair Program and Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice.

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano said he met on January 19 with new agency contractors.

Mr. Adriano said that during the latter part of 2010 city staff along with staff from Redmond and Kirkland began meeting with community agencies who were concerned about the severe weather shelter and the fact that it operates as an emergency shelter only under specific criteria. Several who are active with the Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee voiced concerns that the criteria are not sufficient to meet the reality, which is that it is homeless persons who are using the shelter, not residents who have lost their power and heat. Their contention was that the shelter should be open every night. Staff explained that the cost of taking that approach would be prohibitive; as it is, the city will lose about \$25,000 during the season.

Mr. Adriano said things got to the point where the contractor, Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council, stood up and made it clear that Bellevue has been doing all it can and continues to do all it can, and that if changes are to be made the other cities will have to step up with funding. As a result, both Redmond and Kirkland decided to look into steps they could take. Redmond managed to secure the old Redmond School House Community Center to be used nightly. It was agreed to revise the criteria and raise the threshold

temperature to 37 degrees, which essentially meant having the shelter open nightly through January 14, at which time the Redmond shelter opened. Thus the project has become an Eastside Winter Shelter.

Commissioner Huenefeld Gese raised the issue of transportation for those in need of accessing the shelter. Mr. Adriano said he spoke about that with the city's emergency managers, Luke Meyers and Caroline Dunn, and with Jan Beck from Parks who works with shelter issues. He said historically Redmond police have dropped clients off at the Crossroads facility; with the Redmond facility opening, Bellevue police will drive clients there.

Ms. Leslie said staff expected the number of clients to decline initially when the shift to Redmond was made, but in fact they have largely remained unchanged. The shelter will remain open in Redmond every night for the next month; the nightly opening will end on February 15, but a few days in Redmond will be reserved for emergencies for the rest of the season. The work group intends to seek a solution that can be implemented in the future.

Commissioner Stout suggested the Commissioners should have been given a heads up about the shelter situation before reading about it in the newspaper. She said she also hopes the situation will not put the Commission in a bad light with the Council. Ms. Leslie said she found out on December 18 that there would be enough money to keep the shelter operating and at that time informed all of the department heads. She apologized for not including the Commissioners in that notice.

Commissioner Bruels said making the shelter a regional issue will help to address the issue of pressing the community center into offering a service it was never designed to offer. The city had to do something to prevent people from dying on the streets, but it is time to turn the page and go in a new direction.

Commissioner Huenefeld Gese said the weather people are saying that in February the region could again see snow. City residents should be informed that in the event of a power outage or other problem during cold weather there is a place they can go. Ms. Leslie pointed out that if there were to be a major weather event, the city would open more than just the severe weather shelter.

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly informed the Commission that the city will be hosting a presentation by Washington State Department of Transportation staff on January 27 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Crossroads Community Center regarding the SR-520 bridge tolling which is set to begin in the spring. The focus will be on educating human service providers and that fact that with few exceptions all vehicles will have to pay the toll.

Commissioner Stout asked if there will be any way to track the impact the tolls will have on low-income commuters. Ms. O'Reilly said she will be putting that question to the providers. She said WSDOT has no plans to do any such tracking.

7. DISCUSSION

A. 2011-2012 Human Services Needs Update

Ms. O'Reilly stated that much was achieved during the past year to make the case for retaining and increasing funding for human services by using the information in the Needs Update. She said Mr. Adriano has been working diligently to get all of the agency

negotiations completed and their contracts signed in anticipation of another year of challenges. State legislators are facing even more difficult choices that will affect people in the coming years; the same is true at the county level. There are indications that unemployment rates are improving, but the creation of new jobs continues to be slow and it will be some time before a new normal is achieved.

Ms. O'Reilly noted that in late 2008 when working to develop the current Needs Update the impacts of the recession were just starting to be seen. The findings were included in the report that was released in January 2009. While officially the recession has ended, the impacts that are still being felt will be reported in the new update.

Ms. O'Reilly said she would be working to set up appointments for interviews and community conversations within the next month or so. She said input from the Commission will be very important in determining who should be included.

The phone survey will be finalized by the end of January. In February department heads will be briefed and asked for input. A meeting will be held with Commission liaison Councilmember Chelminiak as well. The phone survey will be conducted in mid to late February.

Typically staff appears before the Council in March to let them know that the Needs Update work is under way and to solicit their feedback. The community conversations will continue during the month, and the Network on Aging and Parks and Community Services Board will be given updates. The consumer surveys will begin in March.

In April the online provider survey will be conducted and the consumer surveys will continue. In May the work of compiling the data will begin. The Commission will be kept updated as the information is brought forward. The task of writing the report will begin in June and the first draft will be presented to the Commission just before Labor Day. The data will continue to be updated during October, and in November the Commission will be asked to approve the final draft.

Ms. O'Reilly said the final draft report will be presented to the Council in January for approval. Once approved, it will be published online, which will allow for keeping the data as fresh as possible. Printed copies will be supplied upon request.

With regard to the phone survey, Ms. O'Reilly said she had a kickoff meeting with the contractor on January 19. The same firm conducted the survey two years ago and scored high in the bidding process by including in its proposal different ways to engage the community in addition to the land line phone survey. Instead of buying phone number lists from which to conduct random digit dialing, they buy lists of addresses and makes selections randomly. People will be getting letters in the mail from Patrick Foran that will talk about a survey to be done within a certain timeframe. The letter will include a link to a website on which the survey can be taken. The letter will stress that recipients who do not fill out the survey online will receive a phone call. It can be assumed that many who will fill out the survey online will be among those who do not have land line telephones. The projection is that out of a sample of 400 people, 35 to 40 percent will conduct the survey online and the rest will be surveyed by telephone.

The survey will include instructions in several languages other than English. While the online survey will not be available in languages other than English because of the cost of translating

it, the city will pay for the Language Line service which has been used in the past to give non-English speakers options.

Ms. O'Reilly asked the Commissioners to identify any information gaps in terms of the groups contacted for the last update.

Commissioner Hoople suggested more should be heard from the faith communities, including the Muslim community. He also proposed contacting the Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who are attending Bellevue College.

Chair Beighle suggested that when gathering information from veterans more should be learned about their spouses and children and the levels of support available to them.

Commissioner Bruels said it would be helpful to hear from single-parent households.

Commissioner Huenefeld Gese said she thought it would be good to hear from the Eastern European communities.

Chair Beighle said it would be good to make contact again with the Bellevue School District nurses and possibly talk about the issues of suicide prevention and homelessness.

Ms. O'Reilly reminded the Commissioners of the focus areas that have been selected in past years, which have included public transportation, housing, working poor, emergency preparedness, and school readiness. During the last update, the focus was on recession impacts. She asked the Commissioners to think about what focus areas should be chosen for the next update.

Commissioner Stout said the state and county budget cuts are greatly affecting many areas, including case management in all areas, healthcare for low-income residents, and mental health. She said it would be good to know what the cumulative impact has been in Bellevue.

Commissioner Hoople highlighted the need to know how agencies are changing the ways in which they deliver services in light of the funding cuts they have had to shoulder.

8. DISCUSSION

A. 2011 Human Services Commission Work Plan

Ms. Leslie said there are a number of things the Commission is required to accomplish each year. During 2011 the development of the Needs Update will be a recurring agenda item. The mid-biennium contract reviews will be done in the fall, and the Commission will need to focus on CDBG applications or updates for 2012 funding. In addition, the Commission takes on topics that are timely throughout the year.

Ms. Leslie reviewed with the Commissioners the proposed meeting schedule for the year and a list of possible agenda items. The Commissioners suggested various issues they would like to see addressed in 2011.

9. OLD BUSINESS – None

10. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Beighle said the One Night Count was set to occur during the night of January 27 and 28. She said she would be leading the Bellevue team in the downtown, and Ms. O'Reilly and Mr. Adriano will be in the Crossroads area.

Mr. Adriano said staff has met with night shift police officers to ask them where they most encounter homeless persons. He said it does not appear that their answers differed much from the previous year.

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Beighle adjourned the meeting at 8:21 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date