

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION  
MINUTES

January 21, 2010  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Bruels, Plaskon

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Cynthia Sessoms, Department of Parks and Community Services; Gwen Rousseau, Department of Planning and Community Development

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chair Huenefeld Gese who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

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

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 5, 2010

Chair Huenefeld Gese called attention to the fourth paragraph from the bottom of page 3 and asked to have the second sentence revised to read "The count should be done in all of the usual places, but if they choose to add other locations, those numbers should be kept separate from the numbers derived from new places."

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

## 5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Hoople reported that he attended the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day festivities at Crossroads on January 16.

Commissioner Beighle said she attended the recent One Night Count meeting at which training was provided. She said at the event staff presented the map of places to conduct the count as informed by the police department.

Commissioner Beighle said on January 18 she attended the PTSA Focus Day event which promotes basic education. Governor Gregoire gave a speech in which she supported early learning programs.

Commissioner Hoople said he attended the Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee (EHAC) meeting. Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly noted that prior to the meeting several staffers from the King County Housing Authority explained how their different programs work. During the discussion it came out that there is a glitch in the system in which preference is given to people who are homeless. Funding for many of the units located on the Eastside and operated by Sophia Way and the Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council Congregations for the Homeless will be going away in the next few years, and because the folks involved in the Eastside programs are not considered homeless by virtue of being in a supported housing program, they will not be allowed a preference on the King County Housing Authority list until and unless they once again become homeless. The suggestion was made for the issue to be raised with the Committee to End Homelessness.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie said she attended the recent meeting of the King County Alliance for Human Services. She said the group is tracking several bills in the legislature that have to do with new revenue tools for King County. A presentation was made by the director of the Budget Policy Institute focused on messaging and how to convince people to do the right thing during difficult budgeting times.

## 6. DISCUSSION

### A. Bellevue's Changing Demographics and 2010 Census

City Demographer Gwen Rousseau said the city's demographic data is drawn from the American Communities Survey which has replaced the census long form. The survey draws from a sample population. In the past, every decade a long form would be sent out to about one in six households; that has been supplanted by the American Communities survey, which is a survey that is sent out to about 250,000 households across the nation every month. While the information returned is more timely, it no longer offers a snapshot of a specific point in time; the information paints more a picture of a time period. The information comes in three forms: annual estimates, three-year estimates, and five-year estimates. The sample size for the

annual estimate is relatively small and relates only to cities with populations of 65,000 or more; in Washington state there are only 11 cities that meet that threshold. After three years the data is sufficient to provide estimates for cities with populations as low as 20,000, of which there are about 58 in Washington state. The five-year estimates will be far more specific in that they will rely on much more data; they will dig down to the census tract and neighborhood levels. The first five-year estimates are anticipated for release in December 2011.

Ms. Rousseau shared with the Commission the three-year data that was collected between 2006 and 2008. She stressed that the data were all collected prior to the current recession.

Ms. Rousseau noted that with 120,000 residents, Bellevue is currently the fifth largest city in the state. Most of the city's historic growth has come through annexation. In 1990 about 50 percent of the population growth was due to annexation, but since 2000 only about 25 percent of the growth has been tied to annexation. The growth rate in 1990 was about 2.37 percent, but since 2000 it has been just over one percent. The projected growth rate into the future is pegged as just under one percent. The population of the city is expected to increase to 138,500 by 2020, and 148,400 by 2030. Almost half of the new growth is expected to occur in the downtown; another third is expected to occur in the Bel-Red corridor.

Bellevue has slightly larger proportions of younger working adults, and also older adults. Workforce adults ages 20 to 64 make up the largest proportion of Bellevue's population. Seattle's school age population is much smaller than Bellevue's. Since 2005 Bellevue has had more males than females.

Bellevue has the eleventh highest median age of Washington's large places at 40.0. That figure is up from 38.2 in 2000. Mercer Island ranks the highest in the state with a median age of 47.0, and Pullman the lowest at 22.0.

Ms. Rousseau noted that the percentages of preschool and school-aged children have remained constant since 1990. In contrast, one of the fastest growing segments of the Bellevue population is older adults; in 1990 older adults made up 10.5 percent, 13.5 percent in 2000, and currently they make up 14.5 percent. The census bureau predicts that by 2045 the percentage of older adults in the nation will nearly triple and account for about 20 percent of the population.

Bellevue is in the top third of Washington places with the highest racial diversity. The city has the fourteenth percentage of residents who are white alone. One of the largest minority populations is the Asian population; Bellevue's percentage of Asians is highest of all of Washington's large places at nearly 25 percent. Bellevue ranks 69<sup>th</sup> in the nation for its percentage of Asians, and if California and Hawaii were removed Bellevue would rank eighth in the nation. Most large places nationwide boast higher percentages of Hispanic and African-Americans than Bellevue does.

Since 1990 the Asian population has increased from ten percent to 17 percent in 2000 to nearly 25 percent currently. The number of white alone residents has decreased from 86 percent to 74 percent in 2000 and to 68 percent currently. The white only population enjoys a higher percentage of older adults than other races do in the city, though there are some 9000 Asian older adults in the city.

Bellevue has the highest percentage of foreign-born residents of Washington's large places, with 30.9 percent of its residents foreign-born. Of those born on foreign soil, the highest percentage is from Asian countries, which includes India. The Asian Chinese population in Bellevue has increased by 300 percent, but the Asian Indian population has increased by 900 percent.

Ms. Rousseau said Bellevue is number six in Washington state for the percentage of its residents that speak a language other than English in the home at about one-third of the population. Thirteen percent of Bellevue's residents report that they speak English less than very well. Of the homes that speak a language other than English in the home, the highest percentage speak Chinese, followed by Spanish, Korean, Russian, Hindi and Japanese.

Bellevue's distribution of household types is typical of Washington's large places. The one thing that has changed is that single-person households has passed married couples without children to become the largest percentage. If the projection that the number of older adults will increase proves true, there will likely be a corresponding increase in the percentage of single-person households.

Bellevue had one of the lowest percentages of residents with a disability of Washington's largest places. Unfortunately, the question changed slightly in 2008 making it impossible to compile the data for the three-year period.

Ms. Rousseau commented that Bellevue has always been known for its good schools, and said it naturally follows that Bellevue has one of the highest percentages of residents with bachelors degrees or higher education at 59 percent. The percentage has steadily increased from 46 percent in 1990 and 54 percent in 2000. There are only five other of Washington's large places that have a higher percentage: Mercer Island is at the top of the list at almost 75 percent.

Most of Bellevue's workforce population are in the management, professional and related occupations. The city ranks seventh highest in that category at about 58 percent.

Ms. Rousseau suggested that on its face the data regarding the unemployment rate for Bellevue appears to be encouraging given that it is trending downward. However, that must be offset by the fact that the size of the labor force is also decreasing.

Almost 30 percent of Bellevue's workforce residents commute by means other than driving alone. Bellevue has the fifth highest percentage of residents who work at

home at 6.8 percent, up from four percent in 1990 and five percent in 2000; many of those were previously in management, professional and related occupations. Bellevue has the ninth highest percentage of residents who walk to work; Pullman leads the pack, and Seattle is in second position.

In terms of public transportation, Bellevue has the twelfth highest percentage, and that percentage was up two percent since 2000. The number of people who drive alone has decreased almost seven percent since 1990, and four percent since 2000. Interestingly, not very many Bellevue residents choose to carpool; Bellevue has the fourth lowest percentage in that category. Older adults are twice as likely to not even own a vehicle than the rest of the population.

Commissioner Stout said it would be interesting to know what percentage of the older residents who no longer drive choose not to have a car, and what percentage are no longer able to drive for one reason or another.

Ms. Rousseau noted that Bellevue has the thirteenth highest median household income, the eleventh highest family income, and the fifth highest percentage of families with incomes of \$200,000 or more. Sammamish ranked highest in median household income at \$130,000; the lowest was Pullman at only \$26,600. There are disparities in median household income by race when compared against whites; Asians and Native Americans have slightly higher median incomes, whereas Hispanics and African-Americans average only about 60 percent of the average median income for white households.

Ms. Rousseau observed that the poverty rates in Bellevue have remained below the national averages. However, since 2000 Bellevue has seen a significant increase in the number of residents living below the poverty level; the figure stood at 5.6 percent in 1990, 5.7 percent in 2000, and 6.9 percent in 2006-2008. Those figures are likely higher under the impacts of the recession. The federal poverty level is an income of less than \$21,400 for a family of four.

Bellevue matches the nation most closely in terms of income inequality. However, the city is higher than neighboring jurisdictions in King County and Washington state as a whole.

About 59 percent of Bellevue's occupied housing units are owner occupied. That figure is lower than the average for the state and the nation but higher than the figure for Seattle and Redmond. Typically, urban areas have lower owner occupancy rates. Bellevue's vacancy rates were similar to those for King County as a whole.

Ms. O'Reilly pointed out that as vacancy rates increase, rents trend downward, which is generally good news for low-income residents.

Ms. Rousseau said just over half of Bellevue's housing is comprised of single family detached units. Even so, Bellevue has the third highest percentage of structures with

20-plus units; only Seattle and Everett are higher in that category. Bellevue had the fifth highest median housing value of all the state's large places. Bellevue also had the fifth highest monthly median housing cost for owners with a mortgage of about \$2400 per month, and the seventh highest cost for owners without a mortgage at about \$660 per month. In terms of median gross rent, the city ranked tenth highest at about \$1200 per month. Currently, about 28 percent of the city's homeowners have a mortgage. Thirty percent of Bellevue's renters pay more than 35 percent of their income for housing.

Ms. Rousseau shared the news that the foreclosure rate in Bellevue has fallen since the peak in the second quarter of 2009. The number of filings, however, represent a 162 percent increase over the same time period the previous year. The 2009 rate was 280 percent higher than the 2008 rate. The city has worked on getting people in touch with mortgage counselors, but it is evident that getting help is very difficult.

Commissioner Hoople thought it might be useful to know what the individual bankruptcy rate is for the city and how it has fared over time.

Ms. Rousseau said most of the demographic data is available on the demographic webpage on the Department of Planning and Community Development's website. The site includes links to the American Factfinder site where Bellevue-specific tables can be found.

With regard to the 2010 census, Ms. Rousseau said it will be different from the American Communities information because it will be a complete count of every single person. The huge undertaking occurs only once every ten years. The census data is vitally important for a number of reasons. For one thing, it determines how many seats in the House of Representatives Washington state should have. Many grants, including Title I and Community Development Block Grant, are based on population data, so getting an accurate count is very important. The local census office is open in Bellevue at 636 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. They will be hiring about 1500 people to work the Eastside region.

Every household in the nation will receive a letter in early March in advance of the census forms being mailed out. She noted that there will be no questions about income in the census form.

The local census office will be having an open house on February 18 from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Congressman Reichert is scheduled to attend and speak along with dignitaries from the city. A complete count committee has been formed at the city level to raise awareness among the hardest-to-count populations about the importance of participating in the census.

## 7. DISCUSSION

### A. 2011-2012 Funding Strategies

Ms. Leslie reviewed with the Commissioners the materials provided to help inform the discussion.

Answering a question asked by Chair Huenefeld Gese, Ms. Leslie noted that the materials included the focus areas set by the Commission for the 2009-2010 funding cycle, which were focused primarily on specific service areas but which also included criteria such as exceeding contract performance goals and programs that leverage Bellevue dollars from other sources.

Ms. O'Reilly pointed out that many of the gaps previously identified still exist. While that is not surprising, many of the gaps have intensified because of the economy.

Chair Huenefeld Gese commented that many are focused on intervention and plugging the holes in the dike. However, prevention continues to be a very pressing need in the community. Both need to be addressed.

Commissioner Stout concurred. She added that if pieces of the critical infrastructure are allowed to weaken for one reason or another, it will take a very long time to get all the pieces back in place. She said she was also concerned about how the budget will be handled, how much the Commission will have to work with, and whether or not the Commission will have sufficient lead time. There are policies in place, but whether or not the powers that be have reviewed those policies and are disposed to maintaining the structures that are aimed at promoting services in the community is an unknown.

Commissioner Yantis said the traditional approach for the Commission in determining focus areas is to start with a review of the approaches taken in the past. The Commission has expressed a strong hesitancy in the past to change the funding for previously funded programs. It is unlikely there will be additional dollars to allocate; the funding level will probably be either flat or decreased. With that in mind, the funding strategy will need to focus primarily on what will need to be changed. If cuts must be made, the Commission should have an established procedure for differentiating between one program and the next. If the focus areas from 2009-2010 are still pertinent, the best approach would be to carry them over. Certainly partnering and leveraging should rise to the top as differentiating factors.

Ms. O'Reilly said the city simply does not have the ability to back-source funds lost by agencies. However, in reviewing the applications the Commission might want to analyze the funding lost by agencies that would impact their ability to keep their doors open.

Commissioner Hoople said the Commission has always valued agencies that seek funding from a wide variety of sources. He suggested that in determining how the limited funds should be allowed, the Commission should seek to know if the agencies themselves are seeking to spread out their income sources to help them weather the storm in the event one source does not come through. In-kind donations are also vitally important.

Commissioner Yantis said the challenge will be to balance things out through the allocation process; shoring up one program will inevitably mean pulling funding from another program. It will be necessary to show the importance of one program over another.

Commissioner Hoople suggested the Commission should take at least one opportunity to argue for a minimum amount of funding from the City Council predicated on the base funding from the previous round without a COLA increase. The Council should also be educated as to what the Commission expects to see in terms of requests.

Commissioner Stout concurred, adding that it will be necessary to be able to explain why the Commission feels it so important to maintain the funding level. She said she is not willing to sit by and watch the system be dismantled. She said she would also like to hear from the Council a reiteration of support for the funding policies that have been in place for some time. Ms. Leslie noted that the staff are involved in the first part of the budget process in that they put together specific proposals, all of which must be tied to adopted policy. The allocations, CDBG funding and even the Needs Update are all tied to adopted policies when transmitted to the Council.

Commissioner Hoople suggested the Commission should take every opportunity to be before the Council giving them updates and information. During each of those appearances the presenter could work in a reminder about the adopted policies. He said Commissioners should also be meeting informally with Councilmembers.

Chair Huenefeld Gese agreed but said she would not want the Commission to be at the Council so often that the Council tires of hearing from the Commission. Commissioner Yantis suggested that it would not be unreasonable to appear before the Council three or four times before they act to adopt the budget.

Ms. Leslie said the overarching strategy has always been a given; it is the main policy in the Human Services Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Beighle referred to the handout from staff outlining possible funding strategies and suggested that in good years Strategy 5, investment in prevention and early intervention programs, would be a given, but given the current reactive phase, focusing on prevention would not necessarily be the way to go. Commissioner Yantis concurred, noting that it will always be a need and should not have to be specifically called out.

Commissioner Stout said she would not argue against leaving out references to prevention, but said she would fight to include early intervention.

Commissioner Yantis proposed combining Strategies 1, programs which address gaps identified in the *2009-2010 Human Services Needs Update*, 2, services that serve those residents most affected by the economic recession, and 4, emerging needs, such as programs that will be impacted by significant funding reductions from other sources, given that they have a similar sense about them. His suggestion was readily adopted.

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano recommended highlighting the notion of encouraging more partnerships, and the Commissioners concurred.

Commissioner Stout pointed out that two Councilmembers recently made some very strong statements about the role of churches and civic groups and she suggested that existing funded agencies should be encouraged to bring to the table new partnerships and collaborations, both public and private, and with the faith community.

Commissioner Yantis commented that all of the statements included on the suggested funding strategies list are issues about which the Commission cares a great deal. He suggested that he could support including most all of them in the documentation that goes out to agencies. However, the statements are entirely too broad to be useful in helping the Commission decide between one program or another. He proposed developing two lists, one to be sent out to the agencies, and another to be used internally in differentiating among applications. Ms. Leslie held that if two lists are developed, both should be shared with the agencies.

Chair Huenefeld Gese agreed that the list in general outlines what is important to the Commission. If there is to be a list for making distinctions between programs, it should include partnerships, leveraging of dollars, and programs that address the residents who have been most negatively affected by the current economic conditions. In addition, the Commission will be looking at contract performance, outcomes, and where programs fall on the continuum.

It was agreed to continue the discussion at the next Commission meeting.

## 8. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly provided the Commissioners with copies of the Governor's proposed budget showing items she had restored since the original proposal. She said she would keep the Commission posted as bills work their way through the legislature during the short session.

## 9. NEW BUSINESS – None

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Huenefeld Gese adjourned the meeting at 8:43 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