

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

March 20, 2012
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-108

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Bruels, Commissioners Plaskon, Yantis

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Beighle, Habib, Perelman, Stout

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Department of Parks and Community Services; John Chelminiak, Kevin Wallace, City Council

GUESTS: Steve Daschle, John Enslein, Lynn Fleshman, Jason Dick, Kerry Smith, Connie Stansberry, Valerie Bays, Miles Mitchell, Brooke Buckingham, Redmond; Rowan Hinds, Joseph Podorsek, Roy Extract, Leo Finnegan, Irene Reynolds, Molly Mullen, Paul Winterstein, Kristi Hofer, Maggie Baker, Steve Gierke, Issaquah; Santiago Ramos, Jo Ann Geer, Karen Turner, Shannon Morse, Jamie Belouskas, Barbara McGrath, Sharon Anderson, Kirkland; Carol Wood, Doug Whalen, David Okimoto, United Way

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting began without a quorum at 6:37 p.m. Chair Bruels presided. Commissioners Plaskon and Yantis were present, and Commissioners Beighle, Habib, Perelman and Stout were all excused.

Councilmember Chelminiak welcomed the Human Services Commissions/Advisory Committees from the cities of Kirkland, Issaquah, and Redmond to Bellevue City Hall. He said he served from 2009 to 2011 as the City Council liaison to the Bellevue Human Services Commission; that position is now held by Councilmember Wallace. He said he knows as an elected official the work done by advisory boards and commissions is relied on. The work done is viewed as the work of citizens who are helping their elected officials to make informed decisions.

Councilmember Chelminiak said at the Bellevue City Council meeting on March 19, the allocations to be made to the ARCH program were reviewed. He said the funds will be used for projects within Bellevue and within other Eastside cities. Human service needs extend beyond mere jurisdictional borders, and to truly address the issues takes working together.

Councilmember Wallace thanked Councilmember Chelminiak for the dedication he showed in his role as liaison to the Commission. He said he was personally excited to be taking over the responsibility given his personal interest in human services.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners Beighle, Habib, Perelman, and Stout.

Everyone present was invited to introduce themselves to the group.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 23, 2012

Action to approve the minutes was not taken because a quorum was not present.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Doug Hoople, 10637 SE 22nd Street, spoke as chair of the King County Veterans Levy Oversight Board. He noted that the original levy recently expired and a new levy was approved. A full review was conducted regarding the first levy to determine what worked and what did not work. One of the positive things on the veterans side was the levy brought about increased flexibility that allows for serving members of the National Guard reserves. Another good thing is the outreach done to bring services to veterans in rural areas. It has been substantiated that the housing first approach is very important. There are challenges that remain, including the fact that the Veterans Administration is still difficult to work with, particularly in the area of discharge status, which can limit service eligibility.

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS – None

6. DISCUSSION

A. Joint Meeting of Cities' Human Services Commissions/Advisory Committees – Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland and Redmond

i. Report on Needs Update

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly explained that the Needs Update, the city's document that paints a picture of human services needs in the community, is updated every two years. She noted that the report is available both in hardcopy and on the city's webpage. In every chapter, good things that are happening are highlighted alongside of the identified needs. Examples of the good things included in the most recent update of the document include the renewal of the King County Veterans and Human Services Levy, Eastside Pathways, and increased collaborations between faith-based organizations and the human services community.

The Needs Update is used by the Human Services Commission to guide their recommendations for the allocation of city and Community Development Block Grant dollars. The information is also used by human service agencies and faith communities for planning purposes and activities. The Human Services Commission is heavily involved in the planning process leading up to updating the Needs Update and participates in a lot of the activities undertaken to obtain the data used in the report; the Commission is also updated regularly as the report is drafted.

Ms. O'Reilly said some points stood out after the final draft of the most recent Needs Update was completed, and they were shared with the City Council in February 2012. How to best serve children and youth who are adversely affected by the poor economy was one item on the list. While technically the recession is over, there are still many families on the Eastside and throughout the county who are struggling from the effects of the economic downturn. Basic safety net services, such as food and emergency financial assistance, remain in high demand. Many prevention services are themselves at risk given that in periods of high need such services can be neglected. The full impact of returning veterans has not yet been felt, and many of those needs will not necessarily be addressed by the Veterans Administration or the King County Veterans Program, particularly the needs of spouses and families.

The Bellevue Human Services Commission worked with the City Council to obtain a special allocation for 2011-2012 earmarked for recession impact funding. The \$112,000 was in addition to the regular allocation from the city's general fund were to address compelling needs in the community resulting from the recession. Some of the dollars were spent on additional childcare scholarships so their parents could go to work. Some of the money was used to increase the number of hours the Spanish-speaking cultural navigator provided services at the Crossroads Mini City Hall. An agency was contracted to use a portion of the funds to provide emergency financial assistance.

Ms. O'Reilly said data for the Needs Update is drawn from a variety of sources, including surveys, focus groups, key informant interviews, various printed reports, and census data. Bellevue is fortunate to have a demographer who looks at all of the census data and provides regular updates with regard to changes and trends. The most recent trends include an increase in the population of older adults; increasing

needs on the part of disabled persons of all ages in the community; and continued ethnic diversity. In the Bellevue School District, non-white students currently make up more than half of the student population. Nearly one-third of Bellevue's residents are foreign born.

Several issues Bellevue is facing are being faced by other communities on the Eastside and in King County. Unemployment and under-employment are certainly high on the list and has been increasing since the recession began. Also prevalent is the fact that many of the jobs available in the post-recession economy pay lower wages, and many do not offer health benefits. In Bellevue, a family consisting of one adult and two young children must earn about \$27 per hour in order to make ends meet in terms of rent, food and basic necessities, but the minimum wage is a far cry from that.

Healthcare, including dental and mental health, continues to be an issue. Local agencies report that there has been a steady rise in the number of uninsured adults seeking care from local low-income clinics and public health. The telephone and online surveys done for the Needs Update saw a significant uptick in the number of people reporting being able to afford medical insurance as a major problem. The need for more mental health counseling and crisis intervention services has also been highlighted; many who participated in the key informant interviews, as well as providers, said they are seeing higher stress levels among families and children.

Another area that has been in the news as a result of work done by Communities Count in King County is the issue of food security. Their statistics are compelling. Bellevue staff have been tracking several indicators relative to the need for food, one of which is enrollment in the free and reduced lunch program. Over the last six years there has been a marked increase in the number of children in the program in the Bellevue School District; in 2011 almost 23 percent of the student population was eligible, though not all enrolled because of the stigma involved. There has been a general increase in food bank usage; between January 2009 and January 2010 Hopelink registered a 20 percent increase, and though things have leveled off since, their numbers are still high. The state food stamp program data showed that usage in Bellevue increased about 90 percent between 2007 and 2010.

Affordable housing is a major issue and one that is identified in the community every time a study is done. Housing costs in east King County tend to average higher than other areas in the county, both for buying and renting. In 2011 affordable housing was identified as the top problem.

Another compelling fact in the Bellevue School District is that homeless students using McKinney-Vento funds more than doubled in the 2007-2008 school year. Program staff from the Bellevue School District report they are still seeing more families who are staying in homelessness longer because of the lack of available housing, and families who are constantly on the edge of becoming homeless.

The Needs Update includes sections on specific populations, most notably immigrants and refugees, persons with disabilities, school-aged children and youth, and older adults. The trends for each population are spelled out in the report, some of which are prevalent for each of the groups.

Ms. O'Reilly said certain issues will be monitored a little more closely in the next couple of years. Human trafficking has been in the news lately, including locally in east King County. There also is a need for low-cost or free legal assistance, particularly with regard to bankruptcy and foreclosure. Transportation needs continue to be high in terms of accessing human services. Initiation of the tolls on SR-520 are impacting low-income residents, particularly those who obtain medical and other services in Seattle. The reduction in bus routes have affected many in the local community, specifically those who are fully dependent on buses to get to work or to the services they need. The growing number of older adults highlights the needs for different mobility options. There have also been increased reports of domestic violence survivors and their families remaining in unsafe conditions due to a lack of financial resources, and that trend will be closely tracked.

Ms. O'Reilly commented that the next funding cycle is under way. The request for proposals went live on March 15. There are 17 cities in north, south and east King County that are part of the allocations consortium. During the spring and summer months the Bellevue Human Services Commission will be busy reviewing the applications received and developing a package of funding recommendations to be forwarded to the City Council for approval in the fall.

ii. Report from United Way

David Okimoto, Senior Vice President of United Way, thanked everyone who volunteers to serve on human services advisory boards and commissions. He said the work can only be deemed to be a labor of love. He said the area is facing huge challenges, and that is the reason the State of Human Services document was drafted. The needs are going up and the resources are going down, and everyone needs to get a lot smarter about how to deal with those trends. The federal and state governments are not going to step in with bailouts; local jurisdictions are going to have to band together and lead the way out.

Mr. Okimoto said about a year ago United Way of King County convened a group of representatives from cities, King County government and the city of Seattle. They discussed the fact that human services are primarily funded by government, and they noted that it would be very difficult for the private sector or the faith communities to reach the same level. In relative terms, government funds 90 percent and philanthropy picks up the remaining ten percent. The economy has a direct impact on the state's budget, which is where the lion's share of funding for the provision of services to the poor and disabled comes from. At the time the group met, the projections coming down from the state was that there would be a \$4 billion shortfall. The state's biennial budget reaches the \$30 billion mark, half of which is protected for

K-12 education. That means the \$4 billion had to be taken from only \$15 billion, which in round numbers is a cut of one quarter. If levied across the board, that would mean a 25 percent reduction in human services funding.

The State of Human Services document describes the budget cuts as they were identified at the time the group was meeting. The specific cuts to healthcare, refugee and immigrant populations, employment and training services, and all other areas are highlighted in the report, along with some possible implications. The intent was to document the facts and to make the community aware of them.

Mr. Okimoto said in his 40 years working in human services he has never seen anything like the current situation in terms of the recession, how it has affected people, and how it has affected the ability of institutions to respond. Overall, the document describes a cut of something on the order of 20 percent from state government support for poor and disabled people. What is troubling is that the federal government has not really started to implement cuts yet, but they will have to make cuts and that is coming next. The recession has triggered tremendous job losses, and for those who still have jobs they have seen reductions to certain of their benefits, including retirement and healthcare. The increased numbers relative to foreclosures have contributed to housing instability and homelessness.

The issues highlighted in the Needs Update for Bellevue are not unique to the Eastside; the same kinds of things are being seen in all of King County and to a large degree across the state. The cuts made at the state level have disproportionately affected children, people of color, low-income families, and the most vulnerable. The state program that funds affordable housing for the homeless has been cut by 75 percent. The GAU or Disability Lifeline Program, which provides monthly cash assistance for those who are temporarily disabled, has been eliminated; access to medical care for the group is still available but could be eliminated. Enrollment for low-income persons using the Basic Health Plan has been restricted. Dental services for low-income people were eliminated. Low-income families have also lost their subsidized childcare. The reductions in support are very serious.

The legislature is continuing to grapple with the particulars of the next state budget. It needs to cut about \$1 billion more. There are three budget versions being discussed, one by the Governor, one by the House and one by the Senate. The Senate budget would among other things eliminate medical assistance for people who are unable to work; would eliminate vouchers that help people with disabilities maintain housing and purchase basic care items; would reduce the TANF program, both in terms of cash assistance and time limit; would eliminate food assistance for thousands of legal immigrant children; and would eliminate drug and alcohol treatment services for 14,000 recovering addicts. The other two budgets also have items of concern to many. Continued monitoring is needed, as are continued efforts to keep people informed.

Mr. Okimoto suggested that the need to prioritize is paramount. The workgroup recognized that fact from the start. Doing so collectively will be the best approach. What is needed is a sense of what role local governments should play relative to addressing human service needs, and how that relates to the county, the state, the federal government, and agencies like United Way. Certainly every jurisdiction and organization needs to do a better job of administering the limited dollars they have. The joint application process is very large step in that direction. Joint funding may be the logical next step, along with joint monitoring and reporting. Local jurisdictions have nearly complete control over local funds in terms of how to allocate them. The collaborative housing program ARCH makes a great deal of sense and serves as a good model.

United Way, in partnership with the King County and Seattle housing authorities, has constructed 1500 units of permanent housing for chronically homeless individuals supported with wraparound social and health services. There is a single application and a single process, and steps are being made toward a single monitoring and reporting approach.

Mr. Okimoto said services are provided based on particular problems; those with mental health problems must go through one door, those with drug and alcohol problems must go through a different door, and those with other problems must go through other doors. The level of service each person receives is in many instances left to the luck of the draw. While it would take a lot of work, a collaborative approach could be devised in which those in need would simply have to go through a single door to get what they need.

The Eastside Pathways model is based on work done in Cincinnati, Ohio, and is being implemented locally by the Community Center for Educational Results. The model relies on first determining what small set of problems are to be worked on, such as making sure every young child is ready for kindergarten. To that end everyone in the community, all the agencies, all the parents, the library, and the recreation centers should be in agreement that school readiness will be given top focus. That is the collective impact model.

The data that came out of the work done by David Hawkins around communities that care is also very important. The idea, though smaller, has met with great results in communities around the country and internationally, though it has never caught on locally. The collective model is at the heart of the approach.

Volunteers are also a valuable asset for some programs. Local governments and agencies need to seek out ways to get people involved. In order to do that, the volunteers will need to be supported through what is called volunteer management which seeks to harness both energies and skills available in the local populace. Another approach that has great promise would be to provide a volunteer mentor for every child in need of one; that would make a significant difference on juvenile crime.

Family support centers offer a good model to follow, as does the Eastside Time Bank program.

Mr. Okimoto said economic recovery will not be so much about rebuilding as it will be about resetting. He believes that human services collectively needs to reset how it does things to match the new realities. That will require figuring out how to do things much smarter and much better.

Mr. Podorsek asked if the county is legally obligated to provide human services. Mr. Okimoto said they are not, nor is the state strictly speaking. The state constitution requires the state to provide for K-12 education, and there is some language about care for the poor and infirm.

Mr. Mitchell asked what process is undertaken to set priorities. Mr. Okimoto said documents like the Needs Update highlight the needs, but determining that one need is more pressing than another can be challenging. He said one place to start would be Maslow's hierarchy. Another approach is to decide what would be the smartest way to spend the available funds, maybe to make up a cut in one area, or to allocate funds in ways that will leverage them. Focusing on specific areas, such as children or the elderly, can also be a good approach.

iii. Information Sharing for 2013-2014 Funding Processes

Chair Bruels asked for comments regarding the funding priorities and focus areas for the individual jurisdictions for the 2013-2014 funding cycle, and for discussion of the aspects of the application review process that have been found to be helpful.

Karen Turner said the funding priorities for the City of Kirkland center on food to eat and shelter; supportive relationships with families, neighborhoods and communities; safe haven from violence and abuse; healthcare; and education. During the last funding cycle the approach used was that each of the five categories were assigned a percentage. The applications were reviewed, and the final allocations were in accord with the percentages. Eleven new agencies were funded in the most recent funding cycle, and a few agencies saw their funding allocations decreased. In all, 57 programs were funded. Percentages for the 2013-2014 funding cycle have not yet been determined.

Santiago Ramos, also with Kirkland, said agencies are invited to address the Commission in a public hearing format to give real stories and a better understanding of how budget cuts affect those they serve.

Commissioner Yantis asked what Kirkland's total funding is for human services, and Ms. Turner said during the last cycle it was around \$600,000.

Mr. Ramos said he has some specific priorities in mind for the upcoming funding cycle, with food and shelter heading the list. The ideas of all the Commissioners will be discussed in reaching consensus as to what will be best.

Steve Daschle with Redmond said the previous funding cycle was the first for what at the time was the new Redmond Human Services Commission. He said the process utilized was similar to that highlighted by Kirkland in that program were rated on a five-point scale. In the end 44 programs offered by some 20 agencies were funded with the available \$660,000. Currently the commission is in the process of discussing how to change its approach. The likely outcome will be a hybrid between the shotgun approach and being more narrowly focused. A certain amount will be set aside to fund a strategic initiative aimed at an as yet unidentified area that is not currently being addressed. It could be that the funds will be used to fill a gap not covered by any program, or it could be something entirely new. The program selected will feed into the strategic plan of striking a balance between putting fires out and focusing on prevention.

Steve Gierke said the City of Issaquah takes a different approach. While the city cares deeply about the needs of its citizens, it is a smaller city and has only about \$230,000 to allocate to human services. The Commissioners enjoy far less staff support and personally volunteer some 60 hours of time each grant cycle, not counting time spent at commission meetings. Applicants are discouraged from engaging in the shotgun approach in making application for funds from the city; they are asked to pick programs that best serve Issaquah residents. The Commission gives particular weight to what it calls the continuum of care. The evaluation system involves assigning percentage points to each part of the application and letting applicants know what they are before they apply; the approach is aimed at achieving better applications emphasizing outcomes and outputs.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie said Bellevue allocates about \$2.7 million in each funding cycle to some 88 individual programs. During the last funding round the commission received more than 100 applications. Typically the agencies participating in the joint application process all apply to Bellevue. The Commission in January and February worked to develop focus areas for the 2013-1014 funding round. By policy Bellevue funds the continuum of human services, so dollars are consciously spread around and not focused in any particular area. However, given the realities facing the city, the primary focus areas for the next funding cycle are prevention/intervention programs serving residents most affected by the continuing impacts of the economic recession, including but not limited to basic needs and services that directly affect employment, and services that are threatened by significant funding reductions from other sources. Within that scope, the Commission will take into consideration past contract performance, cost effectiveness, leveraging of Bellevue funds, alignment with regional initiatives, cultural competence, and partnerships.

Chair Bruels said during the two most recent funding cycles the Commission has divided itself into three different teams of two Commissioners each to review the applications. Each team led the discussion on the third of the applications they reviewed. He noted that the commission undertakes a two-tier approach. During the first review many applications are culled for various reasons, including not fitting with the city's funding priorities. The second review is more detailed and is where dollar amounts get decided.

Commissioner Yantis said he has been involved in human services for a number of years and did not have an answer to the question of what should be funded in order to achieve the greatest results. There are always a few applications that are simply not worthwhile, but most applications are for programs agencies have designed to meet specific needs. With less money, it will be even more important to decide what to emphasize, and he suggested that there should be a common answer, locally and across the country.

Mr. Okimoto allowed that the problem is daunting. He said United Way would welcome working with local jurisdictions to provide data and assist in seeking answers. He said there is a foundation in New York that concluded poverty is the most pressing issue. They put metrics to a variety of different interventions to determine what the return on investment was that actually reduced poverty. Ultimately it will boil down to a certain set of values and what is intended to be accomplished.

Jason Dick from Redmond commented that while every jurisdiction has its own strategic plan, it might be valuable to set a collective goal, such as addressing hunger or affordable housing. The fact is there are so many different kinds of problems, and a single brush stroke cannot possibly address them all, but having a collective approach would bring about a strategic focus. Each jurisdiction could allocate a portion of their overall funding to addressing the one issue.

Ms. Leslie pointed out that on the subregional Eastside level the Eastside Human Services Forum has focused on maintaining the human infrastructure or so-called safety net. As the safety net gets eroded by funding reductions, including from United Way, it becomes more difficult and far more expensive to resurrect the lost services. That has been a major focus of Bellevue's funding. The Commission has in the past talked about shifting money to prevention as the more cost-effective approach, but with limited funds whenever dollars are reallocated people on the other end of the continuum face service reductions.

Chair Bruels said the city cannot be in the position of backfilling funding cuts because of the sheer magnitude at the state and soon the federal levels. At the same time, however, local jurisdictions do have the responsibility of maintaining the human services infrastructure. When programs close, they do not get mothballed, the office machinery gets sold and the employees go elsewhere.

Mr. Mitchell asked jurisdictions that decide to focus on a specific goal, such as food and shelter, should partner with the organizations that provide the direct services and thereby influence the ways in which they provide those services, in other words direct how their programs run. Mr. Okimoto said to a large degree the answer lies with how many resources a jurisdiction is willing to put on the table. For much of the work United Way does, the organization is very directive. That is done through collaborations with fellow funders, be it foundations or cities. Usually directive measures are predicated on a theory of what it will take to solve a specific problem. One example is services for people who are chronically homeless. The solution is permanent housing coupled with wraparound social and health services. United Way organized and worked with the city of Seattle and the King County Housing Authority to amass the money needed to solve the problem. Any agency wanting to access United Way funding had to show they would be providing the same type of service for the same type of individual. Funders should be very clear about what their priorities are.

Councilmember Chelminiak suggested that rather than directing how an agency spends its money, funders should focus on shaping programs to much larger goals. The Eastside Pathways and collective impact concept emerged out of the education arena and the idea is that every child in the community will have the ability to have a shot at a family wage good paying job. The program is inclusive from cradle to career. With that goal, programs can be shaped to make sure the goal will be achieved. Beyond that, the entire community can become involved. The man who teaches kids how to play baseball or some other sport is really teaching kids how to grow in life. The kids being taught will have fathers at home who have just lost their jobs, or parents who are split up or divorced, and the one working with the kids become role models. In that way the work they do can be considered a human service. Having large overarching goals can help jurisdictions crawl out of the silos they are in. He said he likes the idea of the Eastside jurisdictions partnering to achieve great things.

Mr. Dick said so often the safety net issue is thought of in terms of organizations, and the fear is that the organizations that provide the services might fail. In fact funders should think more about what it is they want the organizations to do. Funding should be more about the goals to be accomplished than about specific organizations.

Chair Bruels said that argues in favor of getting smarter about supporting human services in the various communities. Government plays a huge role in providing funding, but government can also facilitate and leverage other resources, like mentors and volunteers.

iv. Update Regarding the Eastside Severe Winter Shelter

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano explained that in 2008 the Severe Weather Shelter was a City of Bellevue pilot project, but by the end of 2011 the program had shifted over to Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council. During the recent winter

the shelter was open between November and March for a total of 114 nights. With an average nightly count of 52, the shelter provided nearly 6000 bednights serving 361 unduplicated individuals. In the 2009-2010 winter season, the shelter was activated only when temperatures fell overnight to the freezing mark, but for the 2010-2011 season the shelter was open nightly, accounting for the notable increase in bednights and the number of persons served. A very large percentage of those served cited Bellevue as their last permanent address, but 27 percent of the unduplicated individuals indicated they were from Seattle.

Mr. Adriano said he and other staff met with the workgroup chaired by Sophia Way, which is a program of the Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council. The discussion was centered on moving forward, including where the shelters will be located and the continuing search for funding. He said there is an understanding that on some basic level the cities want to provide some kind of shelter for those in need, but at the broader and more philosophical level there are questions about how the program fits into what is going on across the County in terms of shelter, and the kind of impact the Eastside program is having. The level of funding that should be put into the program in order to receive the best results has not been answered.

Ms. Leslie pointed out that as part of the Committee to End Homelessness there is a task force that is dealing with the whole issue of single adult shelter countywide. The group is developing data with regard to the number of shelters, the different types of services available, and how many who utilize the shelters are moving through quickly and getting to permanent housing. Severe weather shelters will be part of the recommendations that will flow from the task force. The winter shelter has served the role of getting homeless persons connected to housing programs.

Mr. Adriano suggested that Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland and Issaquah are all probably in the same boat in terms of the shelter, homelessness and housing discussion in terms of the proportions of funding that goes for basic needs. Bellevue funds 30 programs in the goal area of food to eat and a roof overhead. The shelter provided was asked what they would do if they had \$800,000, which is about what the collective cities will allocate to the goal area in a given year. Their answer was completely different from what their application for funding states; it was focused on what they really need in order to make a big impact on homelessness, but an application for what they really need will not be submitted because of the way things are done.

Brooke Buckingham with the city of Redmond said that gets to the whole shaping discussion. She suggested the process may be too far along for the current allocation discussion. During the last funding cycle the application that came in was for the same amount even though everyone knew they needed an additional \$50,000. There is only so much that can be done to really change what agencies do and what they think they need in advance of submitting applications; once the applications are in hand it is too late.

Commissioner Yantis asked if the answer given by the Sophia Way representatives was specific to the winter shelter, or if a similar answer would be given by most any provider if asked the same question. Mr. Adriano said the focus of the discussion was housing and homelessness and suggested the answer may be different for other focus areas. Housing people costs a lot of money, so it would take a lot of money to make a big impact. There are many things they would like to do but feel that they cannot do because of how the funding processes are run. The decisions are all being made separately by the individual jurisdictions. The Eastside Homelessness Advisory Committee probably is the best place to further the conversation.

Commissioner Yantis allowed that because the current funding cycle is under way, the place to make real change will be the next funding cycle, and to that end there needs to be some forward thinking. He asked if there are movements and conversations under way that will steer the jurisdictions in that direction. Ms. Leslie said in certain areas, including homelessness, there is a lot of regional discussion under way, and specific recommendations are being handed down that ultimately will guide how shelter services are funded and delivered. There is another task force focused on refugees and immigrants, and yet another focused on youth homelessness. In order to achieve results, the various jurisdictions should align their efforts with the recommendations coming out of those groups and with the goals of the Committee to End Homelessness in general.

Mr. Dick suggested there would be benefit in, after the current funding cycle is completed, nominating one person from each of the human service commissions to have an informal conversation around what is happening and where things are going, then bringing the group's discussion back to the individual commissions as fodder for moving in a unified direction.

Commissioner Yantis suggested that what is needed is a conversation focused on doing things substantially differently. Ms. Leslie said that conversation has not happened yet. When the reality of the funding cuts hits, every local government and funding source will need to adapt. There are regular meetings at the staff level on all manner of topics. The issue of doing things substantially different could first be explored at the staff level and then moved on to the different Commissions.

Councilmember Chelminiak suggested bringing the joint group back together in January or February to discuss what got collectively funded. That could inform the conversation of what shifts are needed. Mr. Dick concurred but said it would be better to meet in September while the issues are still fresh in everyone's minds.

7. OLD BUSINESS – None
8. NEW BUSINESS – None
9. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bruels adjourned the meeting at 8:36 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date