

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

March 28, 2013
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-108

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Yantis, Commissioners Bruels, Beighle, Perelman, Plaskon, Stout

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner McEachran

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, City of Bellevue;

REDMOND

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Karen Neusle, Kellen Baker, Steve Daschle, Lynn Fleshman

REDMOND

STAFF PRESENT: Brook Buckingham, Alaric Bien

KIRKLAND

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Jan Cunningham, Karen Turner, Santiago Ramos, Jo Ann Geer

KIRKLAND

STAFF PRESENT: Sharon Anderson, Michael Cogle

ISSAQUAH

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Joseph Podorsek, Bill Ramos, Leo Finnegan, Maggie Baker

ISSAQUAH

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa Zurhorst, Mark Hinthorne, City of Issaquah

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bellevue Councilmembers Kevin Wallace, John Chelminiak

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 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 McEachran who was excused.

3. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

4. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Councilmember Wallace reported that the City Council is continuing to focus on light rail issues.

Commissioner Stout said she had the pleasure of visiting Kindering Center recently to participate in a community conversation. She said a number of comments and suggestions were made that will be helpful in updating the needs assessment.

5. DISCUSSION

A. Joint Meeting of Human Services Commissions/Advisory Boards - Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland and Redmond

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said the human services staff from the City of Bellevue have been producing the Needs Update since the mid-1980s. Information is gathered for the document and it is produced the year before the funding allocation decisions are made. The intent is to give the Commission, community members, non-profit organizations and the City Council solid data regarding needs, trends, gaps and barriers being faced by those in the community. The current Needs Update data collection process has been under way since January 2013 and the draft will be completed in November and the final report will be released in early 2014 both in hard copy and electronically online.

Ms. O'Reilly provided the Commissioners with copies of the Needs Update schedule as well as a summary of the types of data collected and where it is gathered from. She noted that much of the quantitative data is drawn from a telephone and online survey, the latest version of which sampled 600 Bellevue residents. The online element of the survey has become increasingly important as people use cell phones predominantly over land lines; it has helped to better reflect the actual population of Bellevue. In late April or early May invitations to participate in an online survey will be sent out to all human services providers; the agencies always have a high participation rate. The data collection process also includes a number of key informant interviews and community conversations, both of which help to fill in gaps that the telephone and online survey may leave behind. The faith communities are also invited to participate in the data collection process by sharing information, and consumers of human services are also surveyed in person. New to the lineup is a survey of businesses.

Ms. O'Reilly said the telephone and online survey are targeted to Bellevue residents only, but many of the community conversations involve people from all over the Eastside, so the data collected is not fully Bellevue-centric. King County, state and national data are also collected and used in updating the report.

Commissioner Plaskon asked if the staff and commissioners from Kirkland, Redmond and Issaquah are aware of and rely on the Needs Update produced by Bellevue. Commissioner Baker from Issaquah said her organization is very familiar with the document. She added that the American Community Survey points out how close the Bellevue and Issaquah communities are in so many areas, which makes the Needs Update relevant to the demographics of Issaquah.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie made available a summary of regional human services initiatives, many of which have funding implications for the various cities, and talked briefly about each one, beginning with the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness. She said the County initiative is spearheaded by a broad based group that includes Bellevue Councilmember John Chelminiak, Colleen Kelly from Redmond and herself. The Ten Year Plan has brought about a lot of changes. One of the biggest accomplishments has been the emphasis on the development of permanent affordable housing; some 5000 new units have been funded to date, which is very close to the overall goal. Piloted on the Eastside, the Landlord Liaison program connects shelter agencies with local landlords and assists in getting clients into vacant units. The Family Housing Connection is a new coordinated entry system for homeless families operated under the lead of Catholic Community Services. A new plan was recently released that is focused on addressing the needs of homeless youth and young adults; Friends of Youth is the lead Eastside agency for the plan. The Single Adult Shelter Task Force met for a year and a half and recommended expanding shelter capacity for single adults outside of the city of Seattle. A system change that is currently under discussion by the Committee to End Homelessness and family housing providers seeks to move away from the provision of transitional housing to moving people more rapidly into permanent housing.

Ms. Leslie said she, along with Arthur Sullivan from ARCH, sits on the Funders Group that is tasked with coordinating funding for all of the initiatives. The task has been made more difficult as available funds have dwindled. Some difficult prioritizing decisions are yet to be made.

A major funding source is the Veterans and Human Services Levy, which was just recently renewed by voters for another round. The Levy provides funding for programming and services, and there is an oversight board for the veterans side as well as for the human services side. Former Bellevue Human Services Commissioner Doug Hoople chairs the Veterans Oversight Committee, and Dave Ramsay, former Kirkland City Manager, serves on the Regional Human Services Oversight Committee.

The Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) sales tax is another major funding source. The tax was enacted by the King County Council in 2007 specifically to focus on strategies that address mental illness and drug dependency. Revenues from the tax have been used to construct the new Crisis Solutions Center to which those suffering from mental illness or drug dependency can be diverted for treatment to avoid going to jail. There has also been an expansion of the mental health and family treatment courts. In the most recent report concerning the MIDD, it was noted that 16 percent of all MIDD clients come from east King County. Bellevue Councilmember John Chelminiak serves on the MIDD Oversight Board. There is a possibility that the MIDD funding will be reduced due to some complicated issues; options will soon be presented to the King County Executive for addressing the potential shortfall.

Bellevue Councilmember John Chelminiak said the anticipated shortfall for 2014 stands at \$1.4 million, but the good news is that originally the shortfall was pegged at \$7.9 million; the savings were realized in part because the crisis center did not open until August but was budgeted for the entire year.

Ms. Leslie said the King County Council in November 2013 adopted a motion calling for a plan to integrate health and human services with community based prevention in the County. The action was taken largely in response to passage of the federal Affordable Care Act. A merger of the King County Public Health and Human Services departments is being considered. Ms. Leslie said the King County Health and Human Services Transformation Panel has been formed and the Eastside is represented by Colleen Kelly, Marilyn Mason Plunket, David Downing, Terry Pottmeyer and herself. The panel is serving as an advisory group focused on ways the services could be integrated and delivered more effectively.

Commissioner Bruels said the Bellevue human services staff do a great job of keeping the Human Services Commission up to date regarding issues and initiatives and asked if the other boards and commissions had any interest in attending meetings where presentations are made about issues affecting the region. There was general agreement that receiving the information jointly would benefit every group.

Mr. Ramos suggested that it would take a concerted effort to make regular joint meetings happen. Commissioner Bruels said a good first step would be to regularly share agendas so the groups can be kept informed as to what is being discussed.

Mark Hinthorne, City of Issaquah, said the staff from the various jurisdictions have been meeting behind the scenes for the last year or so. They have agreed that where there are joint meetings they should be valuable to the board and commission members. To that end the staff saw three objectives to accomplish at each joint meeting: to allow for networking prior to the formal meeting to allow the members to get to know each other on an informal basis; to share information on a topic of mutual or regional interest; and to collaborate and share information regarding the challenges facing each group. The frequency with which the joint meetings are held

would need to be decided by the groups, and it probably would be a good idea to rotate the meeting locations.

Mr. Daschle commented that the work done by each group is not limited by jurisdictional boundaries, so it makes perfect sense to be working collaboratively. He proposed scheduling joint meeting quarterly.

Mr. Ramos suggested that no joint meeting should be scheduled during the time when the groups are deliberating funding allocations. Ms. Cunningham argued that combining presentations could save each group time. She said she particularly liked the idea of highlighting the needs and where they are the greatest, then discussing which jurisdiction will be addressing each need.

Chair Yantis said the Bellevue Human Services Commission was recently given a briefing regarding the decision process the other cities engage in. He said it was helpful information and a similar presentation made to the joint groups would be useful.

Ms. Leslie said the options discussed by the collective staffs included having the groups meet quarterly, or meet twice a year and having the chairs meet twice a year.

Ms. Anderson said she could support having the chairs meeting together provided their focus was on developing agendas and not on making decisions on behalf of the groups.

Mr. Ramos said in setting agendas the focus should be on the overall regional issues that it would make sense for the groups to work on together. That could lead to bringing together the agencies that focus on those regional issues.

Chair Yantis agreed that if there are meetings with the chairs, the focus of those meetings should be on strategies rather than decision making. He said some strategizing certainly will be needed before the groups try implementing a unilateral approach, and to that end it would make more sense to have the full groups meeting rather than just the chairs.

Ms. Baker concurred. She said things are still in the early developmental phase and it would be better to have broad conversations before turning the focus to more specific and targeted activities.

Commissioner Stout noted that the Bellevue Human Services Commission recently hosted a panel discussion on the topic of human trafficking. She said that is an issue facing each community. Those who are working to address the issue are committed and simply cannot take the time that would be required to make a presentation to each board or commission in the various jurisdictions. It makes perfect sense for such presentations to be made jointly so each group can be kept informed. There are no walls separating human service needs in the various cities, and every attempt

should be made to be more collaborative, particularly in developing common understandings ahead of developing strategies to address common issues.

Mr. Cogle suggested that by working together collaboratively even the smaller jurisdictions will have a larger voice in terms of holding legislative bodies accountable and advocating for the less fortunate.

Ms. Baker said Redmond has a real interest in establishing a minimum standard for human services funding. She said a minimum per capita rate or a percent of the general fund have been discussed as options. She asked if the other cities have or have an interest in developing minimums for human services spending. Ms. Leslie explained that Bellevue has in place a funding formula that has worked very well in making funding more predictable. It is based on inflation plus population growth. Having a formula does not prevent the Commission from seeking additional funds where specific needs are identified.

Ms. Anderson said Kirkland has a funding plan based on per capita spending, but when presenting a funding plan to the City Council Option 1 and Option 2 alternatives are included. The options are generally based on flat funding and increased funding.

Mr. Bien said Redmond also has a per capita funding formula in place. Brooke Buckingham, Redmond staff, said the one thing that is not in place is a contingency plan. She added that there are guiding principles that all of the cities more or less share when it comes to reviewing applications. Most of them are focused around safety net programs.

Mr. Hinthorne concluded from the conversation that it would be appropriate a month or so before the next meeting to get the chairs together to talk about what should be on the agenda. The staff may have ideas to add as well. The information sharing piece could be on human trafficking, and the collaboration piece could be a discussion of funding issues that will be timely for the next cycle.

Chair Yantis said he would welcome having the staff submit a list of possible agenda issues and topics to discuss, and that could be done without having to have the chairs meet together. The other chairs concurred.

Commissioner Plaskon pointed out the need for each group to review their respective mission statements to make sure when they are meeting and making decisions jointly they are not reaching beyond their established bounds.

Chair Yantis said he also wanted to see the joint groups work on developing some short- and long-term goals.

Commissioner Stout said one goal she would like to see established is a stronger regional view.

Ms. Daschle commented that each group has fundamental choices to make relative to preserving the safety net. Reaching consensus with regard to what the net comprises would be helpful. Chair Yantis concurred and said the goal would be to find ways to be more effective collectively than can be achieved individually.

Ms. Baker said it would be helpful for the collective groups to identify what is not being done and where the gaps are, particularly those that result from the cities working at cross purposes unintentionally.

Commissioner Bruels concurred but said it would also be useful to identify the areas in which the jurisdictions are already working together.

Mr. Daschle said it would be interesting to hear how the human services systems interact and overlap with the recreation and criminal justice systems.

Asked to provide a brief update regarding the pooled contract program, Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano said it began as a way to create efficiencies for agencies and city staff. Under the program, the individual cities make recommendations to fund certain agencies or programs and then through a mutual agreement the cities allocate to a pool that is administered by Bellevue on behalf of the contributing cities. Instead of having eight individual contracts, an agency can have a single contract. Currently there are about 15 such contracts covering about 30 distinct programs. Staff from the various cities play different roles in making sure the pool is properly managed, including deliverable units per contributing city.

Ms. Leslie said when the pooled contract program pilot was started, it began with agencies that were commonly funded and that were stable in terms of funding and operating capacity. Bellevue staff administers the shared contracts, but the limit has been reached relative to what the Bellevue staff can continue to do. Mr. Adriano added that the agreement among the cities is in its last year so there may be conversations about spreading out the workload, an approach that is used by the cities in south King County.

Mr. Ramos commented that the pooled approach certainly makes sense for the smaller cities.

Commissioner Bruels said it would be helpful to know how cities in other areas of the country where jurisdictions are closely interrelated work together in addressing human services.

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

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Yantis adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date