

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

May 3, 2011
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Beighle, Commissioners Hoople, Plaskon, Stout, Yantis

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Bruels

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Kimberly Walker, Terry Smith, Helena Stephens, Jeannie Anderson, Brandi Dorsett, Sicilia Martinez-Vasques, Department of Parks and Community Services; Councilmember John Chelminiak

GUEST SPEAKERS: Megan Kennedy, Sammy Grow, B-Glad; Brent Christie, Jubilee Reach

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

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

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. April 5, 2011

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Aviv Caspi, Alex Tang, Kayla Ramsey and Alexis Torres-Dawson, all with the Bellevue Youth Council, introduced themselves to the Commissioners.

Ms. Ramsey informed the Commission of the 21st Annual Community Leadership Awards ceremony scheduled for May 17 in City Council Chambers. She said nearly 80 nominations have been received. Mr. Caspi said the awards will recognize youths from around the city for a variety of reasons ranging from athletics to leadership and community service. Mr. Tang said Attorney General Rob McKenna will open the award ceremony, and a representative from America's Promise will attend from Washington, D.C.

The Commissioners were invited to attend the black tie event and to present some of the awards.

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Hoople said he had attended several King County Council budget meetings since the last Commission meeting. He said he provided testimony to the King County Council Budget and Fiscal Management Committee on behalf of the Veterans and Human Services Levy Oversight Committees. The Budget Committee passed the levy on to the full King County Council and included an inflation factor. He said on May 2 he attended the Committee of the Whole which voted unanimously to place the levy on the August 16 ballot.

Commissioner Hoople said he also participated in the briefing on the levy provided to the City Council on April 25.

Councilmember Chelminiak said there was some desire on the part of the Council to weigh in on the levy once it is on the ballot.

Councilmember Chelminiak reported that he attended the recent Mental Illness and Drug Dependency (MIDD) Oversight Committee meeting at which a presentation was made as to how well the Family Treatment Court is working. The University of Washington did a study that looked at four or five years worth of results. They found that in cases involving the Family Treatment Court children were 70 percent more likely to be reunited with their parents. They also found the system is equally effective with people of color.

Councilmember Chelminiak said he also attended two sessions of the Committee to End Homelessness charrette that was held in Tukwila. He said the focus was where things stand five years into the ten-year plan. Everyone agreed it will take more than ten years, but there was agreement to push on toward the audacious goal. He said the panel discussion he attended was primarily focused on whether or not there is political will to move forward. The former mayor for the city of Denver was present to talk about the goal he set to reduce chronic homelessness by 60 percent, a goal which was achieved. There is still a debate regarding shelter versus permanent housing and which should come first. Many shelter users were present at the meeting as well and advocated for shelter programs.

Councilmember Chelminiak said he also accepted the Green Globe award given by King County to the city of Bellevue for the work on the transfer of development rights program in the Bel-Red corridor.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie announced that Chair Beighle and Commissioner Plaskon were both reappointed to a second term by the City Council. Five candidates have submitted applications to fill the two open positions.

Ms. Leslie reported that she attended the Youth Eastside Services fundraising breakfast. She said it was very well attended.

6. DISCUSSION

A. B-Glad Video Presentation

Megan Kennedy said she has been working for Youth Eastside Services since 2004, which was also the year she began leading a group called B-Glad which meets weekly at the Firehouse Teen Center in Redmond. The youth members identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender, queer and questioning. In 2008 a collaboration of artists, service providers and others began work on developing a training tool to bring to conferences, schools and parent groups about LGBTQ youth. While often difficult to talk about, gender and sexuality is very important to talk about because the LGBTQ youth have disproportionate risk factors for depression, isolation, suicide, drug and alcohol use. The film that was produced was intended to be used locally as a training tool, but it has been screened internationally.

Sammy Grow said he grew up in Bellevue and attended Bellevue schools. He said he was a part of Bellevue Youth Theatre, and while at Sammamish High School participated in the diversity club and forums. He said his participation with B-Glad through YES has been a very positive experience; he said it has helped him accept who he is and to improve his public speaking.

The Commissioners were shown the B-Glad film.

Ms. Kennedy said the B-Glad program has become a product that can be sold to sustain itself outside of YES. It continues to be a program young people can be involved in as educators and activists.

Commissioner Stout asked what reactions the film has generated from parent groups, not just parents of LGBTQ youth. Ms. Kennedy said the most challenging training experience occurred in Tampa, Florida, with some faith-based foster care agencies. The audience found themselves engaged and asking the difficult questions. Other faith-based communities are now asking for the training as well.

****BREAK****

During the break the Commission celebrated Commissioner Hoople's tenure on the Commission. On behalf of the City Council, the City Manager and the Human Services Commission, Councilmember Chelminiak presented Commissioner Hoople with a certificate commemorating his services to the city. He said people's lives have been changed for the better because of Commissioner Hoople's service on behalf of the city and on behalf of veterans.

Commissioner Hoople said it has been an honor and a privilege to serve on the Commission. The Council responds well to the work the Commission does, which in part is a testament to the great staff.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Update on Bellevue's Wraparound Program

Helena Stephens introduced Wraparound Services coordinators Jeannie Anderson, Lake Hills Elementary; Brandi Dorsett, Odle Middle School; and Cecelia Martinez-Vasquez, Stevenson Elementary.

Ms. Stephens said the Wraparound Services Programs works with the school district and at school sites but also focuses on the neighborhoods that surround the schools. The collaborative effort is jointly operated by the city of Bellevue, the Bellevue School District and United Way of King County. United Way contributes funding but also provides expertise in the form of evaluation services, brings outside non-profits to the table, and provides connections throughout the community. The leadership team consists of elected officials, city department heads, and representatives from the Bellevue Schools Foundation. The leadership team is responsible for making policy decisions and with setting direction for how the program provides services and expands into the community at large.

In 2004 the city questioned the degree to which services were being delivered effectively and efficiently. After talking to more than 400 people, interviewing more than 20 non-profit agencies and conducting several focus groups, it was clear that the services offered were wonderful but were not always timely and effectively put into place when needed. Since 2005 work has been under way to change that approach. The determination was made that by having wraparound services coordinators in the schools two basic purposes could be served, namely assisting the schools in allowing teachers stay on track with academics, and providing a framework in which social service issues that families and students often have could be addressed. A pilot program was started in 2005 at Lake Hills Elementary. An evaluation of the program was conducted in 2007. That same year data gathering began with respect to Odle Middle School where the program was launched in 2009. In 2011 the program was launched at Stevenson Elementary. The three schools in which the program is currently operating were selected in consultation with the school district.

There are currently more than 84 different languages spoken in the Bellevue School District. The Wraparound Services Program serves nearly 2000 students at the three schools. Collectively, 44 percent of the students at the three schools qualify for the free or reduced price lunch program; by school, 70 percent of the students at Lake Hills, 50 percent of the students at Stevenson, and 45 percent of the students at Odle qualify for the program.

Ms. Stephens said the vision of the program is to create thriving learning communities in the schools, and vibrant neighborhoods in the city, and the mission is to engage all residents in the process of transforming the schools. Everyone is invited to the table and encouraged to focus on implementing a policy of change. Attention is always given to making changes in the way services are provided in order to be more effective. New partnerships are formed around the notion of working together to achieve specific outcomes.

The degree to which preschool children are prepared for school is vitally important. Once they get to school age, the focus turns to how well they achieve grade level math and reading proficiency. Socialization is stressed, which involves making the children understand that the school is a place where they are welcome. Families are encouraged to be involved in the education of their children and to see the schools as a welcoming place and a place where they can gain access to the services they need, including services in the community. Neighbors and residents who are otherwise not connected with the schools are encouraged to make the schools a part of their lives.

Ms. Dorsett said in the beginning stages of the Wraparound Program, the leadership team came up with five program focus areas: academics, social and health services, recreation, family education and involvement at events, and volunteering and partnering within the community. The five areas are all interwoven.

Ms. Anderson said the first thing done when the program is brought to a school is to conduct a needs assessment. The process involves focus groups, surveys, and meetings with the teachers, community service providers, parents and students. The program is then tailored to meet the needs. An RFP process is used to contract with an after-school service provider. The community is engaged through partnerships to make sure there is a coordinated approach to the provision of services.

Ms. Stephens said achieving systemic is the primary challenge. Sustainability is also of paramount importance. It is important to develop models that are best suited to the community to be served.

Ms. Anderson said the critical issues that rose to the top as a result of the needs assessment at Lake Hills were the before- and after-school care, the lack of neighborhood involvement, the need for transportation, connections within the diverse community, and health services and basic needs. Programs have been implemented in association with community service providers to address those

issues. Ms. Dorset said the same data gathering process was implemented at Odle and the results were used to tailor a program for that school. The issues highlighted were the need for academic and homework help, mentoring, family support and counseling, translation and interpretation services, and social skills development.

Ms. Stephens said the program received a grant in the amount of \$375,000 from the federal government; it was used particularly for the Stevenson school program. The program has clearly been effective but there is still a lot of work to be done.

Ms. Anderson said the Lake Hills program is involved every summer with the Blueberry Festival and Open House. The event provides community service providers the opportunity to share information about their programs directly with families. The school is open and the teachers are on site, which affords families the opportunity to meet them. The dental van service is offered on a monthly basis at Jubilee Reach, which is just a block away. The monthly medical clinic is also sponsored by Jubilee Reach and provides families with opportunities to get evaluated by a doctor.

Ms. Dorset said at Odle the program includes parent education nights aimed at addressing known issues. The program's strategic partnerships with the Children's Response Center, the Youth Suicide Prevention program, the Bellevue police department and local businesses have made it possible for parents to learn about the resources that are available. A program called Discipline from the Heart partners with school counselors has been very successful. A program called Books on Wheels was piloted in the summer of 2010 and was very popular. Anti-bullying programs have been offered within the schools in conjunction with community partners.

Ms. Stephens explained that a policy change was needed in order to allow the dental program to offer more than simple assessments. It was necessary to work with the school district attorney and the city's attorney in order to change the policy. Now with parental permission, staff can walk kids over to the dental van to get dental work done. The program also serves adults at Jubilee Reach once a month.

One thing being looked at for 2011 is a three-pronged evaluation process. It will include a re-evaluation of Lake Hills, an initial evaluation at Odle, and an evaluation process associated with the federal grant process at Stevenson. There will be a continued focus on program sustainability.

Assistant Director Terry Smith said change does not happen overnight. The Wraparound Program started at just one school and has grown to include three, but it has taken time and a lot of hard work to bring the organizations and institutions together to focus their various programs and mandates on the best interests of the child, the family and the community. Collective impact is the hot term for the practice of organizations and groups coming together with a common mission. Recently a group of people have come together in Bellevue to look at next steps for insuring

academic success and connecting the elements that will help build successful children from the cradle to college. The group has representatives from the Bellevue School District, the Bellevue Schools Foundation, the city and non-profit organizations and they are focusing on ways to mobilize the community in a new ways. The work of the group will be closely tracked to see how they will fit in with the Wraparound Program and other initiatives. The existing thing is that the community is showing a willingness to step forward and chart a course for building healthy kids.

Ms. Stephens said there are currently about eight similar community initiatives underway in King County. The good news is that in the past decade the focus has changed from operating within a silo to seriously looking at community-wide models.

Jubilee Reach Executive Director Brent Christie said the organization is an advocate for the great things the city does, the great things the schools do, and the great things providers do for at-risk kids in the community. In building relationships and earning trust, the organization is able to get to the deeper needs and hold them up seeking partners to help provide support. The faith community is a prime supporter; those inside the churches are people who work for government, people who work in the schools, and business leaders, and within the church community the needs can be voiced openly. Those who choose to serve encourage others to serve.

The first program was focused on before-school activities and the notion of simply loving and affirming kids. Through the removal of barriers, students can be inspired to learn. After-school programs followed and they had the same focus. Idle youth are now engaged, they are inspired to learn, they have the benefits of mentors, and the community is engaged. Business persons come in and cook for the kids and are seeing the needs first hand. Moms drop off their kids and stay for breakfast. All of the food is donated. The programs offered currently include art, music, technology, dance and theater. Building on the Play and Learn program of SOAR, children living in isolation in their homes for fear of the culture have been brought into community with other cultures. As needs are identified, efforts are put into filling the gap. Volunteers are trained in the art of listening, and when put into practice the act often highlights issues in need of a new program.

Mr. Christie said Jubilee Reach was honored to be selected by the Wraparound Services Program to take on the after-school program at Highland Middle School. Much was said early on about the kids' involvement with gangs, and it was evident from the start. By applying discipline and love, amazing things have happened. The staff have sat down with school principals and others to hear what needed to be done in the after-school program. A staff person who himself was once a gang member started playing soccer with some of the kids and they have become a true team. The kids are dedicated to their academics, are always on time, and are well mannered. A year-round athletic program is in the works. The coaching staff will include athletic coaches, academic coaches and life coaches.

Now in its fifth year, Jubilee Reach has more than 30 programs, 1000 volunteers, and serves some 4800 people per month. It all started by listening and then stepping into the gap.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly said the community conversations are continuing to occur. She said she and Chair Beighle were slated to conduct a conversation at Asian Counseling and Referral Services with a youth group on May 4, and on May 9 would conduct a conversation with the Interagency Coordinating Council.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie informed the Commission that the May 17 meeting had been cancelled to facilitate attending the Youth Leadership Awards program. She reminded the Commissioners that the ARCH Affordable Housing Tour was scheduled for May 19 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Beighle adjourned the meeting at 9:09 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date