

**CITY OF BELLEVUE
COMMUNITIES OF COLOR COORDINATING (CCC) TEAM
Meeting Minutes**

March 12, 2024
5:30 p.m

Conference Room 1E-110
Bellevue City Hall

ATTENDEES:

Monik Martinez, Chair
Jeri Tiernan, Vice Chair (Remote)
Joel Leiva-Rodriguez
Kananu Mason (Remote)
Dr. Randy Nunez (Remote)
Ricardo Perezchica (Remote)
Royce Yuen

ABSENT:

Ruhi Gadde
Ryan Qualls
Lalita Uppala

STAFF:

Dr. Marcus Johnson, Diversity, Inclusion and Outreach
Administrator, City Manager's Office
Justin Chan, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Administrator (Remote)

BDAN LIAISON:

Jim Lauinger

MINUTES WRITER:

Kelly Wilson, City Clerk's Office

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:44 p.m. by Chair Martinez.

2. ROLL CALL/PUBLIC COMMENT

Attendees are listed above.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Leiva-Rodriguez moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Yuen seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: None.

5. APPROVAL OF UPDATED BYLAWS

Chair Martinez recalled the presentation in January from the City Attorney regarding recommended changes to the bylaws to be consistent with the City Council, Boards and Commissions. The changes primarily addressed public comment during meetings and how to handle meeting disruptions.

Mr. Leiva-Rodriguez moved to approve the updated bylaws. Mr. Yuen seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

6. STAFF UPDATES

(a) DAT

Dr. Johnson said every department is using the budget equity tool and training is ongoing. He said the equity data atlas was released as well, which will help to identify how resources are being allocated citywide.

Dr. Johnson said there has been a tremendous response from the community regarding cross-cultural programming and the new grant program. He said approximately \$700,000 in grant funding has been requested, which demonstrates the demand for the arts and cultural activities and performances.

Dr. Johnson said the Diversity Advantage Plan 2.0 update is tentatively set to be released this summer. The City Council recently updated its priorities and strategic target areas, which largely reflect diversity, equity and inclusion priorities and objectives.

Mr. Lauinger announced that he would be moving out of state soon. However, he would like to continue to follow the CCC Team's ongoing efforts. Dr. Johnson said Mr. Lauinger's move is a loss for Bellevue and that Mr. Lauringer also serves on the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network (BDAN) group.

7. CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Responding to Ms. Martinez, Mr. Leiva-Rodriguez said he interviewed for a position on the Planning Commission. While he was not selected, he was excited to be one of five selected to be interviewed. He said the process helped him to better understand the Planning Commission's values.

Joshua Barr, consultant to the CCC Team during the community dialogues, briefly joined the meeting.

8. WORK GROUP UPDATES

(a) Community Dialogue Recommendations

Ms. Martinez recapped that one of the key topics for recommendations is affordable housing for generations to come. She and others have been exploring tools used in other cities to preserve and create affordable housing, including mandatory inclusionary zoning, fee in lieu incentives, mentorship programs for BIPOC developers, community land trusts and home ownership assistance programs.

Ms. Martinez said she and staff met with affordable housing staff earlier in the week. She noted that the City Council is interested in additional information and analysis about the impacts of affordable housing on the overall community. She suggested that the CCC Team recommend a feasibility study to be completed by a specific date to address the tools identified above. Mr. Lauinger encouraged research into practices in the cities of Kirkland and Redmond.

Mr. Barr said it was a great idea to ask for a study by a certain date. He described the CCC Team's role as continuing to push the rock up the hill, despite varying levels of support to be expected when the recommendations are submitted to the Council. He said it is important to learn about Councilmembers' positions/motivations, including resistance, to certain ideas. He suggested focusing on moving any resistance to neutral and not necessarily feeling like the CCC Team needs to secure strong support from everyone for every initiative.

Ms. Martinez concurred and said the CCC Team should develop a strategy that ties its recommendations back to the input received through the community dialogues.

Ms. Martinez noted the community interest in rental protections. She said a number of cities have implemented policies and programs that could help to inform recommendations for Bellevue.

Responding to Mr. Barr, Dr. Johnson said there are two new City Councilmembers and the Council has been discussing updates to their priorities and strategic target areas.

Ms. Martinez presented a comparison of renter protections in different cities. She said the City of Bellevue has no local policies and therefore follows the state's policies and regulations. She expressed concern regarding late fees, requiring a Social Security number to rent housing, the ability to adjust rent due dates for individuals on fixed incomes receiving monthly income, and other deceptive and unfair practices.

Mr. Lauinger suggested exploring the policies in place in unincorporated King County areas.

Ms. Martinez said another idea to consider is requiring landlords to provide copies of the tenant bill of rights with housing leases.

Ms. Martinez raised the issue of the required notice for rent increases. The City of Seattle requires 180 days notice for any rent increase. Most of the other cities and unincorporated King County require 120 days notice for a specific percentage of rent increase. Some cities require 180 days notice for higher percentage increases.

Mr. Lauinger suggested following the regulations in Kirkland and Redmond. Ms. Martinez said the City Council is known to say that they do not want to be like Seattle. She suggested that if recommendations consistent with Seattle are made, the CCC Team should be careful in how those recommendations are framed. She noted concerns in Bellevue about landlord protections as well.

Ms. Tiernan said she favored Seattle's requirement for a 180 days notice for a rent increase.

Mr. Lauinger opined that the King County and Redmond regulations are a good compromise between state regulations and the City of Seattle.

Dr. Johnson suggested it might be most effective to present options for staff to analyze and the Council to consider.

Ms. Tiernan moved to develop a policy recommendation regarding required advance notice to tenants for rent increases. Mr. Leiva-Rodriguez seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Ms. Martinez raised the issue of setting a cap on move-in costs with a maximum deposit equivalent to one month's rent and the right to pay in installments over six months (or two months of installment payments for leases shorter than six months). She said the state allows installment payments in certain situations. Responding to Ms. Martinez, Dr. Johnson suggested the committee could recommend that the City provide assistance for application fees as well.

Following additional discussion, Mr. Perezchica moved to develop a recommendation capping move-in costs. Mr. Leiva-Rodriguez seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Dr. Johnson noted that staff would research standard practices in other cities. Mr. Chan suggested that all recommendations will involve staff research and analysis.

Ms. Martinez raised the issue of placing a cap a late fees. Some jurisdictions cap the fee at \$10 while others set the maximum fee based on a percentage of the monthly rent.

Mr. Leiva-Rodriguez moved to develop a recommendation regarding a cap on late fees. Mr. Yuen seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Noting the issues of just cause and lease loopholes, Ms. Martinez suggested getting more information from staff. She said she was not well informed about the issues and implications.

Ms. Martinez noted suggestions from the community to allow tenants on a fixed income to adjust their rent due date and to prevent landlords from requiring a Social Security number to apply for rental housing. She suggested research into whether potential renters are being turned away.

Ms. Martinez said the King County Housing Authority requires that at least one occupant/member of a household have a Social Security number. She expressed concern that this

practice is discriminatory against undocumented immigrants. The committee agreed that more information would be helpful.

Chair Martinez suggested that additional research would be beneficial for the remaining items on the priority list. She recapped that there is general agreement to develop policy recommendations to address advance notice for rent increases, limits on move-in costs and maximum late fees.

Moving on, Ms. Martinez said the other two priority areas for policy recommendations are “safe spaces that welcome, encourage and inspire belonging” and “investing in community partners and providing helping hands and community aid.”

Ms. Martinez said there was a suggestion from the community to consider a sugar tax to generate revenue for affordable housing and other community services. She said more research would be needed. However, the City of Seattle’s sugar tax has generated more revenue than anticipated. The committee discussed the potential for robust pushback from certain businesses and determined that more research would be needed.

Chair Martinez asked whether committee members had reviewed the City Council web page to learn about the Council’s priorities and strategic target areas. Mr. Chan noted that every updated strategic target area has at least one priority/objective related to equity. Dr. Johnson said the Council plans to finalize its updated priorities and strategic target areas during its retreat on March 15.

(b) Strategic Planning

Ms. Martinez said the strategic planning work group has had preliminary discussions about how the CCC initiative might move forward. The initial three-year term ended at the end of 2023. She noted suggestions in the past to recommend the formation of a DEIB Commission (with B referring to Belonging), with the CCC Team having a role as a task force or bridge between government and the community.

Ms. Martinez said the DEIB Commission could help provide accountability to ensure that recommendations adopted by the City Council are carried out. She said perhaps the commission could distribute grants for DEIB-related proposals to community organizations.

Mr. Leiva-Rodriguez moved to recommend the continuation of the CCC Team and the establishment of a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Commission. Ms. Tiernan seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

9. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Martinez said the City Council is changing its regular meeting day to Tuesday beginning April 16. The meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

/kaw