

**BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING
RETREAT MINUTES**

May 7, 2015
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Room 1E-121

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Aznoff, Ethan Crawford, Jullie Gray, Jeanne Grote, Beverly Heyden, Hannah Kimball, Bill Merriman, Eileen Rasnack, Berta Seltzer, Diana Thompson, Mary Watkins

MEMBERS ABSENT: Bill Cahill, Howard Katz, Arnold Kern, Bob Megargel, Janet Zielasko

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Dan Lassiter, Camron Parker & Mark Manuel, Parks & Community Services Department

GUESTS: Harisa Paco, Julie Gray's guest, UW student

RECORDING SECRETARY: Teri Ekstrom

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by Chair Rasnack. Roll was taken and all members were present with the exception of Bill Cahill, Howard Katz, Arnold Kern, Bob Megargel, and Janet Zielasko.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 2, 2015

There was a motion to approve the minutes as written. The motion was seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

DIVERSITY INITIATIVE [PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION]

Camron Parker, City of Bellevue Parks & Community Services Department, was introduced to the group. He has been working on the Diversity Initiative the last two years. He passed out a summary of the Diversity Advantage Plan and also a copy of the resolution that the City Council passed at the end of last year that adopted the Diversity Advantage Plan and it lays out why the city has engaged in this work.

We are starting implementation of the Diversity Plan this year. When the City Council asked us in 2011 to start this work it was because diversity in Bellevue has been steadily increasing in many ways (i.e., race, ethnicity, age, many with a disability, etc.).

The purpose of the diversity initiative is to understand Bellevue's diversity, define the City's leadership role, empower the community, improve outreach and effectiveness of public services, and to leverage the Diversity Advantage.

How can we use this diversity to our advantage? One of first steps in our implementation for the initiative was to hire diversity staff to work on the Diversity Plan initiatives. Mark Manuel is one of the new diversity staff. He was Director of Diversity at Overlake School and has also done non-profit social services work before just coming to the City of Bellevue this week. He said we can think of diversity as "difference". We really take a wider view of how we view diversity. Diversity refers to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, abilities, age, religions, genders, sexual orientation, and other diversity-related factors. In having a 17 year old daughter I have learned some of the generational differences . . . her generation has instant access to information, music, people, camera, etc. As parents we have to think about how this changes everything.

Culture is how we do things and these things are passed on from generation to generation. It is constantly changing. The gender roles have changed also. "Cultural competency" . . . there is no one defined way of doing things . . . "an accumulation of experiences, skills and abilities that allows us to be more affective in our differences". It is important as an organization to be flexible and responsive to the changing needs. We cannot continue to operate in the same way to serve the population when the population is changing. We have to understand that there are differences around correcting unfairness. In equity vs. equitable access it plays out in many ways. There are 84 languages spoken in Bellevue School District and maybe we need translation services and other services available.

Mr. Parker showed census data and the growing population of single person households and increased population speaking languages other than English. The census data shows that a lot of the increasing total population is from the increased number of people that are foreign-born. The ethnic breakdown of those in Bellevue shows there is no majority any more in terms to race and ethnicity. A large population of those in Bellevue are 65 and older. How do we serve these groups? The average city of Bellevue employee has worked for the city for 14 years, are male, and white. How do average city of Bellevue employees serve the growing diverse population in Bellevue? We can provide employee training to city employees to provide them the tools and teach them how to serve this growing diverse population.

The six initiative focus areas in the Diversity Plan are: Human Services, Public Safety, Education, Economic Development, and Civic Engagement with a Cultural Competence base under each focus area. The Plan has a set of commitments that the City Council has bought into. The first set are focused on the internal organization – what we want to do internally as an agency to provide programs that are responsive and accessible. To keep growing as a culturally competent organization the city of Bellevue will enact and uphold equitable policies and practices, train and hire culturally competent staff, and provide programs that are responsive and accessible to all. The external (community) initiative commitments are to provide safe and welcoming living and working environments, collectively correct systemic inequities, respectfully engage cross-culturally in community life, and express diversity through arts and

culture. To keep growing as a culturally competent economy, the Bellevue community must attract a diverse workforce to live here and work in local businesses, empower entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds to start and grow businesses, provide community services that facilitate and support small business start-ups and operations, and make available culturally-specific goods and services sought by the diverse cultures living in Bellevue.

Some of the Diversity Plan highlights are: cultural competence training for community leaders and strategies to increase diverse participation on boards, commission and advisory committees; establish city-wide standards for accessibility to public meetings and programs, including translation and interpretation services; invest in more public gathering spaces throughout Bellevue; support programs that provide employment opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment – ability, age, language; and, protect and improve transit services.

The first Diversity Plan was established in 1993 and diversity has recently come back into the spotlight for the City Council since diversity is a theme in the Council Vision, the Comprehensive Plan Update and Economic Development Strategy. City staff have started participating in cultural competence training. Through programs such as Cultural Conversations, Bellevue Essentials and the Police Citizen Academy we are trying to reach out and engage with citizens to let them know what the city is doing for them. In each of those programs, the staff have added this layer of cultural competency to reach out and connect with those in the community that have been difficult to connect with.

Kevin Henry has recently retired and he has been replaced by Mark Manuel (Community Outreach) and the City Council has also added two new additional diversity positions. One additional position is internally focused to help city programs achieve cultural competence and a third staff that is focused on the city's compliance efforts around accessibility. We also just recently received the 2015 National League of Cities Diversity Award.

We would like to see how the BNOA and the Bellevue Diversity Initiative can support each other? Ms. Thompson said that the BNOA currently is totally Caucasian. We have tried to reach out to different diversities in the community when there are openings on the BNOA and have not been successful in achieving a more diverse group. Mr. Parker said this topic has come up with every board and commission in the city. It is of a lot of interest in the city to get some assistance with this issue. The Bellevue Essentials program has been trying to find people to add some diversity to the groups. Mr. Manuel said that making those connections with communities is so important. How do we connect and bring people together. There are some possibilities of connecting BNOA to these communities.

Mr. Crawford said their neighborhood has drastically changed. It went from an almost all Caucasian population to the majority being Asian. We have tried in our neighborhood to connect but some of these groups stay within themselves and don't want to branch out with others. Any help with this would be great. Mr. Manuel said that cultural competency works both ways. People gravitate to what is familiar. There are ways that we can engage, such as with the Cultural Conversations. Ms. Kimball asked how systemic inequities and other factors are evaluated (such as in the school system)? Kids go through the same school system but because

of other factors some do well and others not so well. How are these inequities being addressed? Mr. Parker said that these factors are very complicated, challenging, and hard to address. Ms. O'Reilly said that Eastside Pathways is an initiative that the Bellevue School District started because of this particular issue. It might be good to have their executive director come and talk with the group.

Ms. Grote said Janet Zielasko has done the Bellevue Essentials, and she herself has done the CERT training, and the police academy training. All of these trainings have been eye opening. The class has been totally diversified and she would recommend them to members. They have been a great experience with people from other cultures.

Ms. Seltzer asked if we can be successful with the current generation, or do we need to wait? Mr. Manuel said we have not been able to solve this and this has been a challenge. You have to be comfortable in a situation before people will get involved. There are lots of factors in solid parent engagement and a lot of factors need to be involved. It is a real struggle to navigate the system when you are new to our system and it is very daunting. Ms. Rasnack talked about a mentor program for parents in her kids' school to help other parents through the school system.

We need to ask groups to come and present to the BNOA so they can get to know our group. We do have Wrap-Around-Services through the Bellevue Parks & Community Services that provide school connection support and work a lot with parents in the schools. They turn the school building into a community service. As they become more comfortable with the schools they can find certain services or find where to find the services they need. Ms. Thompson said maybe we should have our BNOA meetings in different locations or be at a location when you know a diverse population group will be meeting.

Ms. Heyden indicated that North Bellevue Community Center is very diverse and they serve quite a variety of populations there.

Chair Rasnack thanked Mr. Parker & Mr. Manuel for their presentation.

BREAK

Chair Rasnack introduced Shelley Brittingham who in turn introduced Dan Lassiter as the new North Bellevue Community Center manager. He previously was manager at Highland Community Center for 19 years and he brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the job. During the interim he will be providing some staffing support for Highland Community Center until they hire a new manager.

Dan Lassiter said he will be getting around to meet everyone. He is looking forward to managing the North Bellevue Community Center and working with the BNOA.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Memory care (reported by Mr. Crawford)

The Ahlzheimer's café (Tutta Bella) will have the first workshop on the 26th. This will happen every 4th Tuesday of every month. They are looking for resources. Mr. Azhoff has been working with the owner of Tutta Bella. Dan Azhoff will have a press release in the Bellevue, Kirkland, Newcastle papers telling about the Ahlzheimer's café's. He will also do some follow-up feature stories in regard to it. There are brochures available for everyone to pick up and spread the word. Our committee is still meeting the third Tuesday of the month and feel free to join us because we would love any other involvement.

Ms. Thompson thanked Mr. Azhoff for all of the articles that he has been doing for our BNOA issues.

Transportation/Housing Committee (reported by Ms. Grote)

The meeting last week we had Det. Amanda Jensen gave us tips on working with calling 9-1-1, working with alarm companies, fraud and identity theft. Her focus is on neighborhood watch and setting them up.

We talked about our ARCH website and getting it updated. Janet Levinger gave us some information on recent affordable housing and she gave us notices on May 13th at Crossroads Community Center they be talking about the housing project (Crossroads Village – where Top Foods used to be) in the area. The Council approved doing affordable housing at Crossroads. On May 18 there will be a City Council meeting where they will receive comments on the proposed housing project. . . 233 multi-use units. There are a lot of changes going on in the Crossroads area. On May 26th there is the grand opening of the August Williams Place which is an affordable housing project on 204-111th Ave. NE – program at 10:00 and self-guided tours of the facility at 9:00 (57 new apartments).

On May 13th at Fire Station 22 from 7-9 pm is a Preparing for Disaster training. On May 16th from 9-noon is an Emergency Preparedness training for your pets. Our next meeting is May 18th.

Advocacy Committee (reported by Ms. Thompson)

Advocacy has been focusing on the Medicare Observation bill. It passed in the House and in the Senate it passed the Health Committee with an amendment and just sat there. We tried to get it pulled and couldn't get it pulled to get a Senate vote. It is back in the House Rules Committee. The problem is that this is a budget session and it is very unlikely that any substantive bills will be passed in the House. Everyone is concentrating on the budget right now and so we were told not to go to Olympia.

Outreach & Diversity Committee (reported by Ms. Grote)

Thanks again to Mr. Azhoff for his articles he has written. The Overlake Active Senior Fair is on May 16. Ms. Grote passed around the schedule for members to sign up to work at the table. The other upcoming event that would be great to have a table at is the Bellevue Fire Department celebrating their 50th anniversary. They are doing a walk, a fun run, competitions between fire

and police, etc. It is September 13 and Mr. Grote will send out the information. We have also done the Strawberry Festival and several Farmer's Markets and it would be nice to attend again. The library is interested in doing some outreach events with us also. Ms. Thompson thought it would be great to work with the library. We need to make reservations for some of these events so we need to decide which ones we will be attending. It depends on whether people are available and interested in attending. Mr. Crawford said that the Farmer's Market at First Presbyterian has a lot of seniors that attend and so it might be nice to go to the Thursday one since it is larger. Ms. Thompson said she thinks it is important that we hand out resources, so people know where to turn when they need them. Mr. Crawford said he is already working with the YWCA and Overlake on the memory care information and it would be great to combine and have information available at these events. Ms. Thompson and Ms. Grote will work together on their schedules to hand out information at the YWCA.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS REPORTS

Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative (reported by Ms. Grote)

You can get new ORCA cards at Crossroads Mini City Hall and in Redmond at the Together Center. There is a mobile center that will be coming to North Bellevue Community Center also. The "Benches" cookbook is available online to purchase. There is a new member we have that would like to assist veterans in riding the bus.

Eastside Human Services Forum (reported by Ms. O'Reilly)

The Eastside Human Services Forum June event will be a breakfast on June 10th from 7:30-9:30am at Mercerview Community Center.

Aging & Disability Services (reported by Ms. Heyden)

On May 1, Aging & Disability Services (ADS) had an organization meeting in getting the Eastside agencies involved together. Trying to bring people and resources together to get services/information in one place.

Timebank (reported by Ms. Grote)

Every month the Timebank has their potluck which alternates between Bellevue, Kirkland, and Redmond. This month it is at Kirkland at 6:30 and next month it will be at North Bellevue Community Center.

Washington Senior Lobby – no report.

Staff Report/Upcoming Agenda Items

Ms. O'Reilly said that Dan Lassiter will be taking on the BNOA meetings from now on. It is already scheduled at the June meeting that Dan Satterburg and Page Ulridge who will talk about Elder Abuse. In July there is a scheduled presentation with Gwen Rousseau to give a demographic update.

There were speakers that were at an Aging and Disabilities Services meeting that would be great to have present to the group. Ms. Thompson said they had three speakers. One of the speakers spoke on raising a disabled child. What do seniors do as they age and have disabled children? The contact information could be passed on to Mr. Lassiter and the group could indicate whether they would like to have him schedule them at an upcoming meeting.

Each year the BNOA members go before the Council in Older Adults Month and we also put together accomplishments over the last year to give to the City Council. It will happen on May 18 at 8:00 pm for Older Adults Month. Mr. Crawford graciously offered to accept the proclamation on behalf of the network for Older Adults Month. It would be great if other members can also attend. In June, it is Elder Abuse Month and we typically go and make comments to the Council on Elder Abuse. We typically give a 3-5 minute presentation and do a proclamation for this. Mr. Lassiter can find what day they will be doing this at the Council in June and then get back to the group with the date. Ms. Thompson said she could do it unless it was on the second Monday of June.

Ms. Thompson also indicated having a presentation on employment for older adults. Ms. O'Reilly said she could work with Mr. Lassiter on these upcoming presentation options.

New Business – no new business.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 am.