

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING  
REGULAR MEETING  
MINUTES

August 7, 2014  
8:30 a.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Room 1E-120

MEMBERS PRESENT: Dan Aznoff, Ethan Crawford, Jullie Gray, Jeanne Grote, Beverly Heyden, Howard Katz, Bob Megargel, Susan Posten, Eileen Rasnack, Berta Seltzer, Diana Thompson, Mary Watkins, Janet Zielasko

MEMBERS ABSENT: Peg Jones, Hannah Kimball, Bill Merriman, Chris Strand and Terri Wilson

STAFF PRESENT: Bo Du, Department of Parks & Community Services

OTHERS PRESENT: Hank Myers, Eastside Friends of Seniors and Redmond City Councilmember; George Twiss, VP Senior Services

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 Peg Jones, Hannah Kimball, Bill Merriman, Chris Strand and Terri Wilson.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS**

Mr. Hank Myers stated that the Eastside Friends of Senior Annual Luncheon is on Sep 26<sup>th</sup> at Newcastle Golf Club. Margaret Larsen will be the key note speaker and Jeff Renner will be the MC.

Ms. Thompson asked Mr. Myers to give an update on Smart911, which allows people to voluntarily register and link their emergency information and medical history to home and cell phone numbers, which allow medics to access their information before they arrive. Mr. Myers said he talked with people from Smart911 last week. On the Eastside, the public dispatch center (NORCOMM) has technical problems integrating this program because the software brands are incompatible. Currently, it is a low priority for NORCOMM, so residents might need to speak at City Council to get this up and going on the Eastside. Ms. Rasnack said that the Advocacy Committee can look into this issue.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 3, 2014**

A motion was made to accept the minutes as written and the motion was seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

## **Universal Design [PRESENTATION & DISCUSSION]**

Chair Rasnack welcomed Tom Minty from the Universal Design Committee (UDC).

Universal design is difficult to explain. It seems practical for living and aging and should be done all along, but it is more than design elements. It involves an economical element that needs to be examined. The demographics for aging adults are surging. Between 2010 and 2050, the world population is predicted to increase by 2 billion and of that 1.3 billion are older adults. Universal design means sustainability, not just esthetic or practical, but essential to meeting the challenge ahead.

The UDC finally got a couple of elements of universal design included in the Evergreen Standards, which the State of Washington uses for building public facilities, so it is a good starting point and there is a lot of support for it.

Currently, builders of public housing are short-sighted. Instead of building them cheaply, as is currently done, public housing needs to be built right so that the housing can adapt to ever changing trends and lifestyles. Universal Design can sustain these changes and save money in the long-run.

Boomers have defined American culture. For the first time in human history, the 65+ population will outnumber the under 5 age group. The consequences of this are the out of control health care costs. Healthcare expenditures in the US are at 17.6% GDP and at the current rate of growth it will be 21.4% in 2020, 28% by 2030, and 34% by 2040. Thirteen percent of the population (65+) account for 27% of all doctor visits, 38% of all hospital stays, 45% of all in-hospital days of care. The average cost for assisted living was over \$57,000 (2014 care costs, Seattle area), nursing home with a semi-private room is \$100,663, and 57% is paid by the government. Health care costs increase the closer people get to death.

The recession has had a large impact on the funds that people have available: obliterated \$8 trillion in home equity; high cost for private-pay has hurt nursing homes admissions, while costs rise and subsidies are reduced by 11%; \$20 per Medicaid patient per day (\$6.3 billion in 2011) is lost; more nursing homes are closing down and new ones are not being built.

Family size is shifting from large to small, there is fewer children per family on average, and members are more dispersed from one another. Seventy-eight million adults receiving long-term care depend solely on family. An estimated 39.8 million Americans are providing care for family members.

Aging in place is an economical and sensible concept. Eighty-three percent of seniors want to live in their homes, but only 8% of the homes are suitable for aging in place. If older adults could live in their homes another 10-15 years with part-time care, modifying their home could save \$500,000. Move-out costs are high; assisted living cost in 2014 is \$57,000 (\$4,750/mo.), semi-private nursing home is \$100,633 (\$8,386/mo.). Modification costs for aging in place can

be high, assume modifications of \$150,000, HELOC mortgage at 5% (\$625/mo.). A lot of people have to move out of their homes not because of health but for housing reasons.

The role of universal design is not a set of features, but has seven principles with which to evaluate the environment: 1) equitable – providing equal access and opportunity, 2) flexibility – accommodating multiple uses and users, 3) simple and intuitive – charts and signs that easily communicate, 4) perceptible information – bumps at the curb cut provide tactile clues, 5) tolerance for error – functions like the “undo” button on your computer, 6) low physical effort – features that accommodate the small, frail and those with poor balance, and 7) size and space for approach and use – easy and unencumbered transit.

Aging home stocks impact health. Housing repairs and energy costs can increase when seniors can least afford them. Health can impact seniors’ housing and their housing can impact their health. Barriers foster isolation and isolation fosters illness. Most housing developments built in the last 50 years exclude anything but single family residences. Land-use policies need to change to accommodate intelligent urban planning.

Universal design does not only mean accessibility – universal design is intended to accommodate the greatest number of users, not to accommodate one group at the expense of another. It is more of a life-span design to accommodate changing lives.

Universal design involves elements on both sides of the front door – intelligent urban design needs to provide for and/or replace old home concepts that do not include community inclusion. Old home models separate services from residences. Universal design should provide alternatives to conventional housing and care facilities, promote walkability, have accessible transportation, and be in proximity of services and shops that promote active living. Failing health is not always the real culprit that prevents people from living independently. Instead it is more often because living spaces and daily strategies fail to change along with people. The co-housing concept is great because cost of care goes down in these situations.

Saving money and self-care are important and on-going necessities. Seventy percent of retirees will be out of money in the first 10 years. Self-care must be made a real priority. There needs to be a way to stem Alzheimer’s disease. Fifty-six percent of adults that are single today have always been single and plan on being single, which makes relying on family for care tough. This changes the demographics quite a bit. New housing construction should account for this change in demographics, to build more intelligent homes that don’t have to be modified.

Mr. Megargel commented of the shortage of caregivers, which will get more difficult as people age. Mr. Crawford commented that there are building codes that could be amended to address issues, such as height of electrical plugs. Other comments included: in-home care is a family affair and Washington State is a very expensive state to retire in.

Ms. Thompson asked what is being done in the Seattle area to encourage universal design. Mr. Minty replied that currently nothing is being done, so the issue needs to be brought to the forefront so that builders can see who their clients are, what they want, and start incorporating it in buildings.

BREAK – new group photo taken in the lobby

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **Outreach Committee (reported by Jeanne Grote)**

BNOA had a table at Crossroads Farmers Market last Tuesday, Aug 5<sup>th</sup>. The location was good, near the hub of the market with LifeSpring. There were a lot of new residents asking for city information and lots of interest in the Vials of Life.

There will be an ORCA event at North Bellevue Community Center on Aug 22<sup>nd</sup> to help people learn how to get and load their ORCA cards. Bellevue Farmers Market is on Sep 11<sup>th</sup>.

Other committee activities included updating the resource sheets and BNOA PowerPoint presentation. Ms. Thompson mentioned "Fall Prevention Awareness Day" on Sep 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Aznoff will be writing an article on fall prevention for the Bellevue Reporter. There was discussion on the travel ambassador program and Alzheimer's Support group, which was held at Overlake Hospital. A committee member will contact Overlake to see if staff can do something related at North Bellevue Community Center.

Ms. Watkins mentioned Alzheimer's Cafes in Seattle and how it was needed on the eastside. They are great places for patients, caregivers and family members to have the chance to visit in a comfortable environment.

The committee also met with Kevin Henry, Cultural Diversity Coordinator, who gave an update on the Bellevue's Diversity Program.

There is a salsa contest on Aug 19<sup>th</sup> and a "Best Apple Pie" making contest on Sep 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **Transportation/Housing Committee (reported by Jeanne Grote)**

The ORCA event at North Bellevue Community Center is on Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Subregional Mobility Committee meeting is on Sep 10<sup>th</sup>. Janet Lewine gave a presentation on housing affordability guidelines. Ms. Thompson asked if the ARCH website on senior housing will be updated for the year, to which Ms. Du said that some pages need to be updated by the people at ARCH first before the webpage assignments go out to the group.

### **Advocacy Committee (reported by Diana Thompson)**

The Legislative Forum by Aging and Disability Service (ADS) will be held on Sep 29<sup>th</sup> at North Bellevue Community Center at 12:45pm. There will be dessert and coffee and main presenter Dennis Mahar, the Agency Director of Lewis, Mason & Thurston County. The role of the Advocacy Committee has not been fully defined. ADS would like to schedule a local speaker who can tell why all of these services are so useful, so anyone who knows of someone who has been using services for senior and is a good speaker should let Ms. Thompson know. Mr. Aznoff said he might have a good contact.

Chris Strand is working on a one page handout on medical observation. Carolyn Kelso from the Kirkland Senior Council is looking for upcoming events and places where she can hand these information flyers out and spread the word on this important issue. Ms. Strand and Ms. Kelso make up the medical observation committee and they have set up a meeting with Rep. Judy Clibborn in September to talk about a possible Washington statute requiring that hospital patients be told that they are on medical observation. Currently, it is difficult to know who is on medical observation at the hospital.

There was a hearing on medical observation on Jul 30<sup>th</sup> that included several good speakers (two senators, a researcher, a Yale physician, and a client). There are 220 hospitals in the United States doing experimental or pilot programs that eliminate the three day rule to see whether and how much money is saved by forgoing the rule. Ms. Seltzer mentioned that there is going to be another hearing on medical observation coming up and she will forward the information to Ms. Thompson.

On Jul 7<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Thompson represented BNOA at City Council and presented on hearing accessibility. Ms. Thompson spoke with the Interim Director of the Bellevue Art Museum about the Fry Art Museum's Alzheimer's program. The Interim Director said that the Bellevue Art Museum would be going through their budget process in September. Ms. Thompson didn't know who she should follow up with at the Bellevue Art Museum and stated that she doesn't know what the program entails at the Fry Museum. It might be better to talk with the Fry Museum first to see what their program is about before connecting with the Bellevue Art Museum on getting a similar program. Ms. Gray said she has a connection at the Fry Art Museum that she could give to Ms. Thompson, but wondered whether the Fry would look at it as competition or as collaboration since they are trying to expand their program.

The Alzheimer's program and the cafés could be possible future presentations. BNOA needs to advocate for these services on the eastside. The Alzheimer's Association seems to be interested in expanding onto the eastside. They are aware of the needs and issues on the eastside, so discussion on collaboration would be beneficial for all.

The hearing accessibility package has survived the City's early budget cuts.

Senior housing is an issue on the eastside. Kirkland currently has one senior housing facility, with another in the plans, but now there are people trying to convince decision makers that it should not be built. Kathy Iverson will be getting more information on this.

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP REPORTS**

**Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative** - no meeting

**Eastside Human Services Forum** – no report

**Time Bank** – no meeting

**Aging & Disability Services Advisory Council** – no report

### **Washington State Senior Citizens Lobby (Ms. Thompson reporting)**

There were two great speakers on legal representation for people with low income. In 2013, the joint Legislative Executive Committee that focuses on issues dealing with seniors and people with disabilities was passed and formed, which had BNOA support. After the final report in December 2014, the committee will disband. WA State Senior Citizens Lobby would like it to continue in one of two ways: 1) the way it is now with members from the Senate, the House, and the Executive Committee or 2) having standing committees in the House and the Senate, respectively, on aging and disability issues.

### **STAFF REPORT/UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS (Ms. Du reporting)**

The recruitment for new members is currently under way. A press release, which included the BNOA website, flyer and application, was sent out. Please help spread the word and refer anyone that might be a good fit to Ms. Du, the online application, any of the community centers or Service First Desk for information and application. The due date is Oct 3.

There will be 4-5 vacancies for the upcoming year. It would be great to add some diversity to the network to better represent Bellevue. Ms. Du will check on getting articles into the Bellevue Reporter and/or the Neighborhood News.

A nominating committee of 3-4 members will meet to review applications after Oct 3, conduct interviews and make a recommendation to be presented at the November meeting. Nominating committee ideally should not have members who are up for renewal. Ms. Thompson, Ms. Heyden, Mr. Megargel, and Mr. Katz volunteered to serve on the nominating committee. New members will be invited to the meeting at the end of the year in December and start their membership at the retreat in January.

Ms. Du posed a question on whether or not the number of liaison members should be capped because there are five liaison members currently. There is no cap in the bi-laws. Members agreed that liaison status is a way for members who cannot attend meetings on a regular basis to add their valuable knowledge and input and could be an opportunity to fill any future voting-position vacancy. Liaison members cannot vote. Current regular members stated that there should not be a cap.

There is a resource fair sponsored by Chinese Information and Service Center at the North Bellevue Community Center on September 4<sup>th</sup>, which is also the day of the next BNOA meeting. Ms. Du will make sure there is a table for BNOA.

Senior Services of Seattle will be the presenter at the meeting next month, on September 4.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Katz stated that, besides the Kirkland Senior Council, BNOA has failed to get other communities to collaborate regionally. Ms. Grote mentioned that Mercer Island senior advisory

group disbanded and is now a part of their Youth and Family Services advisory board. Ms. Du reported that there is an advisory board at the Redmond Senior Center, but that group is not interested in expanding city-wide and does not wish to collaborate regionally at this time.

Senior perks: free entry into the Pacific Science Center on September 8<sup>th</sup> with an AARP card. Mariner tickets can be ordered online on August 27.

## **ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 am.