

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on April 15, 2014

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

March 18, 2014
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Jessamyn Findlay, Camron Parker, Department of Parks and Community Services; Janet Lewine, Planning and Community Development

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Commissioner McEachran who presided until the arrival of Chair Perelman.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Chair Perelman, who arrived at 6:33 p.m., and Commissioner Plaskon, who arrived at 6:37 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 20, 2014

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Beighle. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Yantis and it carried unanimously.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mary Ellen Stone, King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KCSARC) executive director, said KCSARC and Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress (HCSATS) have successfully absorbed clients previously served by

the Children's Response Center. The result is that more Bellevue residents are getting a broader and more robust array of services related to a sexual assault. Both organizations are providing therapy to children, teens and adults; KCSARC is providing services at Evergreen Hospital, and HCSATS is providing services in the Together Center. KCSARC has seen a 274 percent increase in legal advocacy service hours over the previous year, and a 46 percent increase in general advocacy. KCSARC is beyond the 50 mark towards meeting its 2014 contract goals after the first 10 weeks of the year. Costs for services are approximately 20 percent greater than originally estimated for services offered on the Eastside, so the agency will be talking with its funding partners about how to address the increase in basic services and the costs. She offered her appreciation to the staff for providing assistance in the revised contracting process.

Commissioner Stout asked Ms. Stone to comment on the recent reports that the greater Seattle area is statistically out of alignment with the rest of the country relative to sex trafficking. Ms. Stone said she has been hearing that data for a long time. The area does have a disproportionately high number of runaway youth and it can be assumed that that enters into the problem. The state's geographic location may also be a determining factor.

Ms. Gigi Meinig with Aging and Disability Services provided the Commissioners with written information regarding pedestrian safety and walkable communities for all ages. She also highlighted the Northwest Universal Design Council and suggested more information could be obtained from that source.

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Stout reported that she and Human Services Manager Emily Leslie attended the recent ARCH housing workshop which primarily was a presentation by ARCH staff to the mayors and councilmembers from the participating cities, as well as Planning Commissioners and others.

Ms. Leslie said one focus of the workshop was an attempt to get consensus with regard to areas ARCH should work on. There was a general consensus reached about how to deal with accessory dwelling units, shelter programs, and some other issues.

Associate Planner Janet Lewine with the Planning and Community Development said there was consensus that ARCH should explore funding for a permanent winter shelter, and a fund for transit-oriented development land banking for affordable housing.

Commissioner McEachran said he attended the Friends of Youth fundraiser that netted over \$150,000. Commissioner Beighle and Emily Leslie said they attended the event as well.

Commissioner Plaskon said SB 6126 concerning representation of children in dependency matters passed the legislature and has been sent to the governor to be signed. In its final iteration, the funding package was reduced and attorneys will be available only to children who have been in foster care for six months.

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said a full legislative update is planned for a future Commission meeting.

Ms. Leslie said the staff have been attending many fundraising events as well. She said she attended the Friends of Youth, Youth Eastside Services, YWCA and AtWork! events, as well as the University of Washington School of Social Work scholarship breakfast.

Ms. Leslie informed the Commissioners that the Eastside Human Services Forum would be hosting a breakfast meeting of all the Eastside mayors on March 19. The focus will be on bringing everyone up to speed on the work of the Forum and the adopted work program. The winter shelter will also be addressed.

Ms. O'Reilly let the Commission know that Proposition 1, if approved by the voters, will institute a low-income fare for those at 200 percent of the poverty level. She said more information could be found at www.movekingcountynow.org. Mayor Councilmember Balducci and Councilmember Stokes both have endorsed the proposition.

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano informed the Commissioners that the application website would go live on March 19.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Overview of Bellevue Fire C.A.R.E.S.

Ms. O'Reilly introduced Natasha Grossman, Bellevue Fire C.A.R.E.S. coordinator. Ms. Grossman said the program originated in Spokane and focuses on the idea of addressing the true needs of those who frequently call 9-1-1 for non-emergency situations. The Spokane program has been in place for eight years and has anywhere between eight and twelve MSW practicum students at any given time. The students assist people who need help beyond the emergent care provided by the fire department by connecting them with physical, mental and environmental resources in the community. The program also partners with the police department and receives referrals from them.

Ms. Grossman said the fire department responds to 9-1-1 calls and addresses any imminent and emergent needs, but often they are called regularly to the same address. When that happens, the person is referred to the C.A.R.E.S. program. C.A.R.E.S. then goes out and conducts an assessment by meeting with the client to find out what is happening in their lives and what their needs are. The clients are

then connected with available services in the community. The list of needs ranges from fall assistance and prevention, the need to have a lifeline button to push in case of emergency, and the need for a caregiver to have assistance. A number of referrals are made by the C.A.R.E.S. staff to Adult Protective Services. The program has encountered both chronically homeless and chronically mentally ill persons. Most 9-1-1 calls are medical calls, and documentation from Spokane shows that the average call exceeds \$750. One local woman called 9-1-1 some 350 times in a three-week period; while not common, the cost of those calls added up quickly. There has been a 70 percent reduction in repeat calls since the C.A.R.E.S. program went into effect.

One of the first persons worked with under the C.A.R.E.S. program was a chronically homeless man. The program was able to get him into chemical dependency treatment and into transitional housing. He is now in a home and is giving back to the community by volunteering for some of the organizations that originally served him. In 2011 the C.A.R.E.S. program has 27 cases. That number increased to 37 in 2012, and to 70 in 2013. To date, the program has had 171 cases and the increase can be tied in part to having more steady staffing.

Commissioner Stout asked how many MSW students are currently working with the program, one from Eastern Washington University and one from the University of Southern California. Ms. Grossman said currently there are two but the School of Social Work at the University of Washington has been told the program can use four students.

Ms. Grossman said the C.A.R.E.S. program is ideally positioned to report vulnerable adults. Firefighters often are called to care facilities where they find that referrals need to be made to DSHS or Adult Protective Services.

In addition to working with fire and the police to increase the number of referrals to the program, steps are being taken to work with community providers to develop coordinated care plans.

Ms. Grossman said her position is funded through August with grant dollars, and discretionary funds are available to supplement the program through December. Additional grant dollars are being pursued, and the plan is to put a proposal in for the C.A.R.E.S. program in the city's budget.

Ms. O'Reilly noted that a firefighter in uniform will often go along on the C.A.R.E.S. visit and their presence is often a factor in the person opening their door. That is just another advantage of the partnership.

Ms. Grossman said Spokane has a program called Hot Spotters. That program is not run by the C.A.R.E.S. program but C.A.R.E.S. participates in it. The program schedules regular meetings with hospital, fire department and police department personnel, and care providers to put together care plans for clients who are dealt with

frequently. A grant proposal has been submitted to looking at putting together a similar program in Bellevue.

Commissioner Bruels suggested to Ms. Grossman that she should make contact with Dan Floyd with the King County Department of Community and Human Services, and Ann Allen at Harborview Medical Center, both of whom are associated with the King County High Utilizer Group.

Ms. O'Reilly said she and intern Jessamyn Findlay have had meetings with Ms. Grossman and her interns to share resources in the community.

Commissioner McEachran suggested word of the program should be gotten out to the faith communities.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Comprehensive Plan Update: Human Services Element Draft Policies

Associate Planner Janet Lewine thanked Commissioner Yantis for attending the last two Planning Commission discussions on the Housing Element. She said her presentation began with staff-identified gaps and changes needed with regard to the housing policies. The recommendations from the Human Services Commission and the Bellevue Network on Aging were shared with the Planning Commission and are being used to draft the changes the Planning Commission will see at its next meeting.

Planning Commission input was sought on five policy areas: shelters and homeless housing, mixed use neighborhoods, affordable housing, universal design, and student housing. The issue is tentatively scheduled to be before the Planning Commission next on March 26.

Commissioner Yantis called attention to issue 3, affordable housing, in the March 12 staff memo and asked about the phrase "enabled by the state." Ms. Lewine said the comment came from Planning Commissioner Ferris and refers specifically to the multifamily tax exemption, a tool the state allows cities to implement. The Council has asked for a presentation on the multifamily tax exemption.

Commissioner Beighle referred to issue 4, universal design and aging in place, in the same memo and asked what the Planning Commission was referring to in opposing added requirements that increase the cost of housing. Ms. Lewine said the intended policy direction is clear relative to educating the development community about universal design and aging in place and not imposing any regulations on private residential development. There is a lot of universal design that goes into public spaces and the city encourages that approach. She said the Planning Commission made the point during the discussion that even with the additions that add to housing cost, staying in one's own home is often the least expensive option, thus developing homes that can age with their residents can be very affordable.

Senior Planner Camron Parker called attention to a matrix which listed each policy in the Human Services Element, the proposed action along with an explanation, and the proposed new policy language. He noted that existing Policies 1, 3 and 7 talk about similar things and the proposal is to merge them into a single policy.

Ms. O'Reilly suggested that "build public awareness" in the proposed policy is not exactly the same as "facilitate and encourage broad community participation" as used in policy HS-7. Mr. Parker said it was his intention to reference the language of HS-7 by using the phrase "promoting the community's collective response."

Commissioner Bruels said human services are best when developed from the ground up rather than from the top down. He voiced the opinion that the language of policy HS-7 should be more clearly reflected in the merged policy. Mr. Parker agreed that policy HS-7 could simply be retained.

Commissioner Yantis said he could accept the proposed policy language merging policies HS-1, HS-3 and HS-7 provided the intent of policy HS-7 gets spelled out clearly in the merged policy. Chair Perelman concurred.

Commissioner McEachran suggested using the phrase "...engaging the community's collective response." The word "promoting" connotes asking for participation while "engaging" has more to do with creating a collaborative impact.

Commissioner Yantis suggested the word "response" as used in the merged policy could mean responding to the human services issue, which might well involve planning and engaging.

There was agreement to have staff rework the proposed merged policy language to incorporate the specifics of the three policies, and to retain policy HS-7 if the resulting merged policy language becomes too convoluted.

There was agreement to retain existing policy HS-2.

With regard to policy HS-4, Mr. Parker said the proposed rewrite is intended to provide clarity. He noted that "the continuum of human service needs" is used as a substitute for "the full spectrum of community needs."

Ms. O'Reilly called attention to the reference in policy HS-4 to "direct services" and pointed out that on occasion proposals or planning efforts come forward where it is necessary to clarify with the potential applicants that the city is looking at direct human services as opposed to funding, planning or education. She suggested retaining the phrase as used in the existing policy could help support the notion of direct human services.

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano said he did not necessarily agree. He pointed out that over the last few years the city has funded programs that have not involved direct services. Food Lifeline is a case in point. He cautioned against including language that would tie the city's hands.

There was consensus to move ahead with the new policy language for HS-4 as drafted.

There was agreement to retain existing policy HS-5.

Turning to policy HS-6, Mr. Parker said the proposed change seeks to reflect the Commission's discussion about supporting facilities that are either located in the city or which would like to locate in Bellevue. He said he substituted the word "collaboration" for "coordination" in the new wording.

There was consensus in favor of the proposed change for policy HS-6.

Mr. Parker noted that the only revision to policy HS-8 was to add "county" to the last phrase to complete the list of program providers. The Commissioners agreed with the change.

Mr. Parker proposed merging existing policies HS-9 and 10 given that both cover similar themes.

Commissioner Yantis commented that policy HS-10 was originally added to address the fact that the Bellevue School District was developing programs in the elementary schools in order to improve communities and provide a central point of community identity. He suggested the strength of the language of the policy does not come through clearly in the proposed merged policy. Mr. Parker said it would be an easy thing to capture that notion in the draft language.

With regard to policies HS-11 and HS-12, Mr. Parker noted that the Commission had previously directed staff to use more contemporary terminology and to set a higher bar on what the policies commit the city to do. He said the edit to HS-11 was relatively simple in that it adds the phrase "culturally competent service." He allowed that the revisions to HS-12 were considerably more involved and asked the Commissioners to comment on whether or not the draft language captures the notion of moving beyond a compliance level to something more aspirational.

The Commissioners offered no comments on the revision of policies HS-11 or HS-12.

With regard to policy HS-13, Commissioner Stout said one of the things the Commission needs to think about is the location of services communitywide. Removal of the concept of location from the draft policy does not leave the reader with the understanding that the city is interested in making sure services can be accessed in all areas of the city, including the downtown.

Commissioner Beighle agreed but pointed out that the city also encourages agencies to co-locate as a method of stretching resources. Commissioner Yantis agreed and asked to what degree having services distributed geographically around the city should outweigh in importance the notion of stretching resources by encouraging agencies to co-locate.

Commissioner Stout said the homeless services in the downtown are about to be lost, and some of the mental health services that have been in the downtown are also being lost. The newly formed downtown homeowners association has gone on record saying services for the homeless are needed in the downtown. There needs to be policy language calling attention to the need.

Commissioner Yantis said the interest of the Commission is in providing services to the people of Bellevue and the Eastside, and in making sure there is easy access to those services regardless of where they are located geographically. He suggested that where easy access is provided, it should not be necessary to locate services physically in the downtown. Commissioner Stout suggested that some services need to be located in the downtown. Once the new transit center goes online and Bellevue's downtown population continues to increase, the need will be even greater.

Commissioner Plaskon suggested that as new development occurs, the city should expect to see more services in the downtown. Development should not be allowed to crowd out services that are offered in the downtown.

Commissioner Stout said co-location continues to be an essential element, but something needs to be said about providing access to services throughout the community.

Commissioner Yantis commented that if the Commission wants to see services delivered at the least cost and in the most efficient way, it will be better to have agencies located outside the area that is the most expensive to development, and it would make sense to support a shuttle service to assist people in getting from where they live to where the services are provided. Ms. O'Reilly said Hopelink was asked what it would cost to use their fleet of vans to transport men from the winter shelter to the transit center in the mornings and the figure given was some \$300 per day. Clearly operating a shuttle would be cost prohibitive. Commissioner Yantis allowed that the issue cannot be resolved in the Comprehensive Plan, but the intent and the desire can be stated.

Mr. Parker suggested the draft language of policy HS-13 could be revised to read "Improve access to services throughout the community...." He stated that if the Commission wants to see policy language specific to the downtown, it should be in a separate policy and possibly in the chapter of the Comprehensive Plan that deals with the downtown.

Chair Perelman voiced her support for revising policy HS-13 and highlighting the need for services in the downtown in a separate policy as proposed by Mr. Parker. She pointed out that none of the other policies call out specific locations.

Commissioner Stout reiterated her desire to have policy language calling out location, though not a specific location, and support in locating services in all parts of the city.

Commissioner Yantis allowed that the draft of policy HS-13 does not capture the importance of having easy access to services geographically. He said he would not argue in favor of including a specific reference to the downtown, but stressed the importance of making sure people are not hampered in accessing services due to their geographic location.

Mr. Parker agreed that the draft policy language focuses on several different issues, including typical ADA and systemic barriers. He suggested there should be a separate policy covering the locating of services geographically.

There was agreement to retain current policies HS-14 and 15. Mr. Parker pointed out that policies HS-15 and 16 are the only two policies that focus on specific types of services, child care and employment support respectively. He noted that the Commission previously offered clear support for retaining policy language regarding both issues. The redraft of policy HS-16, however, replaces the issue of employment support with the issue of homelessness. He allowed, however, that it would be easy to retain the current HS-16 policy and add a new policy addressing homelessness.

Referring to the draft language of policy HS-16, Commissioner McEachran said he has never been fond of the word "robust" and would prefer to see "intentional" used instead.

Commissioner Beighle questioned using the word "end" in relation to homelessness given that homelessness will always be an issue. She said she could support using the word "reduce" instead. Commissioner Stout said she would prefer to not use "end" or "reduce" and simply refer to homelessness.

There was agreement to add a new policy regarding homelessness and to revise the current policy HS-16 to read "Encourage services that support employees in maintaining or advancing their employment opportunities."

Commissioner Plaskon suggesting beginning policy HS-17 with "consider" is too weak. He proposed "Use city regulatory powers to project individual's rights and advance human service objectives, and consider community health impacts of legislation prior to formal adoption."

Commissioner Yantis said he could see no direct connection between using the city's regulatory powers to protect individual rights and considering community health

impacts of legislation. He allowed that both are important goals, but they are not necessary connected.

Commissioner Stout questioned the reference to community health and asked what definition is being used to describe it. Ms. Lewine said there is a countywide planning policy to promote community health through planning, particularly with regard to land use and transportation. Commissioner Stout said the focus on physical health rather than economic health makes a lot of sense, but as worded that is not clear.

Mr. Parker allowed that the existing policy language outlines a practice the city does not formally engage in, namely giving consideration to the human services impacts of proposed legislation. Ms. O'Reilly pointed out that in fact when the city develops its federal and state legislative policies, human services staff are asked to comment on them and talk about the potential impacts. Ms. Leslie agreed that there is a section in the legislative agenda that deals with human services, but human services is not a lens through which all proposed legislative activities are viewed.

Commissioner Yantis indicated his support for the wording of the existing policy and said he was not bothered by the fact that the city does not formally follow the policy. The Comprehensive Plan is a collection of policies that look to the future, and if the policy were to be followed the city would be better off.

There was agreement to word the policy to read "Use city regulatory powers to protect individual's rights and advance community health and human service objectives."

Commissioner Yantis suggested that on the one hand the policy seems to direct those who develop new policies to stop and consider the human service implications and ask for advice, while on the other hand it appears to say the city should use its existing regulatory powers to protect the rights of individuals and to advance human service objectives. There is a different sense to each.

Ms. O'Reilly said the fact that the Human Services Commission is being invited to large-scale transportation and land use planning efforts is evidence of the fact that the city is considering the human service implications of the actions it takes. The policy language legitimizes the approach.

There was agreement to split the concepts housed in the draft policy into two separate policies.

There was agreement to retain policy HS-18.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie reported that the vacancies on the Commission have been announced and applications are being received.

With regard to the winter shelter, Ms. Leslie said the meeting with Sound Transit on March 14 went very well. Assuming they can gain permission from the federal government, Sound Transit is willing to extend the winter shelter for men through the end of May and is open to allowing the building to be used for the shelter for the next three years depending on what ultimately they are going to do with the building. Sound Transit is also allowing Congregations for the Homeless to store the appliances and supplies in the building over the summer months at no cost. The issues some of the neighboring businesses were encountering have all been resolved by adding more staffing. As the weather has been getting warmer, the number of occupants has been going down.

In terms of the women's shelter, Ms. Leslie said attempts are under way to get some funding from United Way. The cities of Bellevue, Redmond and Kirkland have sent a unified letter to United Way in support of the funding request to keep the shelter open beyond March 31st.

9. NEW BUSINESS - None

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Perelman adjourned the meeting at 8:26 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date