

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on May 7, 2019

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

April 2, 2019
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Mercer, Commissioners Jain, Kline, McEachran, Piper

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Ma, Oxrieder

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Christy Stangland, Patrick Foran, Department of Parks and Community Services; Jess Canedo, Anthony Gill, Department of Economic Development

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Mercer who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Kline, who participated via telephone, and Commissioners Ma and Oxrieder, both of whom were excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 5, 2019

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Piper. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McEachran and the motion carried unanimously.

4. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None

6. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Piper said he has been in touch with Lutheran Community Services which has agreed to have a representative speak to the Commission on May 21 on the topic of child welfare. He said he was still working to secure someone from DCYF.

Commissioner Jain shared that she would be attending the Census 2020 meeting on April 4 at Redmond City Hall. She said that along with Commissioner McEachran she would also be attending the Parks and Community Services Board meeting on April 9. She added that she recently watched a documentary called *Seattle is Dying* in which a business woman indicated she had moved her business to Bellevue specifically because of the homelessness and addiction problems in Seattle. The woman noted that Bellevue has better systems and safety measures in place.

Commissioner McEachran said he attended the recent auction fundraiser for Imagine Housing, the 26th in their history. He said there was a good turnout and the event netted a little over \$280,000. They are anticipating the dedication of 30 Bellevue in April. He said he had also seen *Seattle is Dying* and was waiting for a sequel highlighting the fact that healing is taking place in the Puget Sound area and that Bellevue is playing a role in that.

Human Services Manager Alex O'Reilly invited Department of Parks and Community Services director Patrick Foran to address the Commission prior to his retirement at the end of April.

Commissioner McEachran said some years ago he spoke with Sherry Grindeland, who was at the time the Chair of the Parks and Community Services Board, who used glowing words in talking about Mr. Foran. What she highlighted was the level of support the Parks & Community Services Board received from Mr. Foran. He said after being appointed as a Commissioner he learned that Mr. Foran remarkably supports those he serves with and leads. He said Mr. Foran's strength lies in his humanity and the fact that he is not an autocrat or a bureaucrat.

Chair Mercer thanked Mr. Foran for his support of the Commission over the years. She said he has always provided sound direction across the board. She said Mr. Foran will be very difficult to replace.

Commissioner Kline said she and Mr. Foran got involved with the city at about the same time. She said every time she sees the continuum of services graphic she thinks of him and always will. She thanked him for his years of service to the city.

Mr. Foran said Bellevue is known as a city in a park, a platform created by his predecessor. He said because that focus was already in place at the time he came on board with the city, he would focus more on the human services and community services side of the department's work. From the earliest days, the city has supported

human services, but the evolution of the Council's thinking has gone from "it's nice to know we have it" to "it's an absolutely critical function of the city." The Council clearly looks to the Commission for guidance as to where the city's human services dollars should go. The continuum of services model actually came from former Human Services Manager Emily Leslie as a way of graphically showing how all of the pieces fit. The graphic has actively been used over the years to show how human services touches so many people in so many different ways. He said he hopes people will continue to focus on the continuum after his departure from the city.

Continuing, Mr. Foran said the prominence of human services and the focus it generates is equal to the Commission's talent and abilities. In every iteration, those who have served on the Commission have been top notch. The work of the Commission continues to increase but at the heart of it all is highlighting the value of human services for everyone who lives and works in Bellevue.

Ms. O'Reilly reported that Chair Mercer was reappointed to the Commission at the Council meeting on April 1. She also noted that Catherine Jordan was also appointed to serve on the Commission and will be coming on board in June. She stated that Commissioner Oxrieder chose not to be reappointed to the Commission; she will finish out her term but will need to be replaced.

Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano reported that the 2018 CAPER report was submitted on time on March 29. She said she was still waiting to hear what the city's entitlement amount for 2019 will be. HUD has until April 15 to release that information.

Human Services Planner Christy Stangland reported that on April 1 she along with Ms. O'Reilly and Mr. Foran presented information to the Council regarding the Needs Update. Feedback from the Councilmembers was provided and it was noted their desire was to focus on the areas of refugees and immigrants, substance abuse, mental health, transportation and homelessness. With regard to the latter, their stated desire was to have more data around homelessness to better inform the city's planning processes.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Housing, Community Development and Human Services Needs

Chair Mercer stated that the public hearing provided residents and human services agency staff the opportunity to tell the Commission about housing and human services needs and issues observed in the community. She said the information received would be used to guide the Commission during the allocation of the city's anticipated 2020 federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) award, and to determine the strategies and objectives to be included in the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development.

Ms. Catalano said the public hearing was the first of two annual hearings required by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of the city's management of the CDBG program. The required Consolidated Plan identifies the overall objectives and strategies that will guide the city's CDBG investments for the five-year period of 2020-2024. The Annual Action Plan for each consolidated plan year outlines the specific projects to be undertaken to carry out those strategies. There will be additional opportunities for public input on the new Consolidated Plan later in the year.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Piper. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jain and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Linda Benson with Sophia Way thanked the Commission for its service, time and passion. She also thanked the city and the pool of Eastside cities for the increase in funding during the current biennium. The changing human impact of homelessness is becoming increasingly evident on a daily basis at Sophia Way. The depth of need is a growing phenomenon. Thirty-two percent of the women served at the emergency shelter by the end of 2018 demonstrated a profound mental illness; that number has since increased to 68 percent. Other disturbing trends paint an even clearer picture of the breakdown of the social and community support systems. Over the past two fiscal years the number of unduplicated women has doubled from 700 to more than 1400. Twenty-six percent are over the age of 55, and more than half are over the age of 61. Half are women of color, which is a disproportionate reflection of the population. Sixty-nine percent report a disability and many are unemployable due to their condition. Fifty-percent have zero income. The number of women Sophia Way can serve in all of its programs is rapidly closing in on maximum capacity. The vast majority of the clients are dealing not just with a job loss or rental increase barriers, but multiple complex barriers as a result of living unhoused for so many years. In addition to increasing mental health issues, many of the women being served are trying to cope by self medicating with drugs and alcohol. More women who start with fewer barriers are unable to pull out of homelessness and are becoming part of the next generation of chronic homeless women. Fewer women will be able to exit homelessness during the next biennium without supportive housing. For Sophia Way, there is an increased focus on immediate survival and crisis intervention. The staff are having fewer conversations with clients about housing pathways due to the level of trauma of those being served. Also being seen is a return to homelessness after women have been housed, and there has been an increase in shelter swapping in which women move from one shelter program to another. Sophia Way has learned to grow and adapt to the changing needs. Private contributions in support of programs have doubled, but the growth in need exceeds the growth in resources. Ground is being broken on a new shelter, with support from the city, that will house women 24/7 and given them access to safety and professional support. Funding is needed for on-site mental health therapy support. The level of expertise on staff is being increased, and the infrastructure is being created for an in-house training program based on trauma-informed care, motivational interviewing and harm reduction.

Mr. David Bowling with Congregations for the Homeless said it is clear that the more everyone works together, the better the outcomes will be. He said he loves living and working in a city where conversations about what people on the margins need are happening at all levels. Exciting things are happening. He thanked the time and investment the Commission puts into thinking about people who need support in the community. Congregations for the Homeless is seeing its highest levels ever at the emergency temporary shelter, which currently operates for six months out of the year. He noted that 2018 was a high-water mark that is clearly going to be exceeded in 2019. There are up to 112 people staying in the shelter every night, which exceeds the capacity of 100. In past years where unusually high numbers of persons stayed overnight, the next night would see fewer in the shelter; that is no longer the case, largely due to the fact that all of the shelters are full. There are as many as ten men per night just sitting at a table because there is no bed available. There is a clear need for more case management. The year-round shelter has pretty good case management support that has over the last nine years enjoyed a 60 to 70 percent success rate of men leaving homelessness for stable and independent housing, and case management support has been key to that. The emergency shelter does not have any case management support. The agency would love to see specialized case management support even as it tries to increase therapeutic counseling for the men who are coming through with different levels of trauma. The one mental health therapist working on site is doing excellent work but is overwhelmed with the needs. On-site addiction support staff would also be welcomed. Homelessness has increased dramatically over the last five years or so and the top contributors are the increasing cost of housing and incomes not rising at the same rate. The city is to be commended for its efforts to develop an affordable housing plan and hopefully in the coming years more of those strategies will be implemented.

Ms. Karina Wiggins, senior director of homeless youth services for Friends of Youth, thanked the Commission for its ongoing support of the agency and its work of serving young people experiencing homelessness on the Eastside. Friends of Youth is the only agency specifically focused on serving that demographic, and the only agency serving young adults who are heads of households with young families. The agency is seeing trends similar to those previously outlined, including ongoing mental health and substance use issues. She said the agency would love to be able to provide more mental health support, particularly within its housing programs. There is currently a mental health specialist and a substance use disorder counselor within the shelter and drop-in facility in Redmond, but there is an increased need for young people to have that same level of service when they enter housing. There is also an increased need in terms of capital funding for the transitional living programs, many of which have been in the communities for a long time, in order to house more young families. Many of the agency's case managers could use enhanced support given the increase in the number of youth presenting with mental health and substance use issues. The case managers are having to spend longer periods of time with each client.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Piper. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jain and the motion carried unanimously.

8. INFORMATION FOR THE COMMISSION

A. Economic Development Division

Ms. O'Reilly introduced Chief Economic Development Officer Jess Canedo, who said he runs the city's Culture and Economic Development division serving both businesses and arts and culture organizations, and Anthony Gill, an economic development analyst for the city.

Mr. Canedo said the job of his division is to help promote the intersection of business, resident and visitor needs in support of a strong quality of life. The taxes paid by the business community goes to provide services that support the businesses and the broader community. Having an economically strong business community means resources and amenities like restaurants, stores, health services and so forth are available to residents and employees. Businesses can be involved in public projects and in public events. In the 80s the business community was instrumental in helping to fund and purchase the site of Downtown Park, and recently the business community through Rotary was heavily involved in the development of the playground at that park, which complements the city's investment in completing the circle.

The city's economic development program has evolved significantly since 2014. The plan currently in place was approved by the Council in June 2014 and includes both indirect and direct strategies. Indirect strategies are foundational things the city provides such as roadway, parks and public safety infrastructure, while direct strategies include business services, providing grants to the arts and culture community, and the public/private partnership program. The 2014 program represented a hard reset for the city with more of an emphasis on business services and measurable outcomes for the community. In 2017 the broader community development department went through a reorganization and the economic development division absorbed the arts program in a clear recognition of how important the arts and culture community is to economic development.

The direct strategies are focused around three primary areas: business recruitment to attract new companies to Bellevue, like Amazon and Cruze; the retention and expansion of existing companies; and startups and small business and making sure the city is providing pathways to economic empowerment and the necessary resources and tools.

Mr. Gill said the business retention and expansion program has four primary elements. The first is the business survey conducted every other year that is aimed at gaining a sense of how the business community is feeling about their experience in Bellevue, what issues they are having, and what the city should be doing for them. The second involves a series of focus groups with businesses and business leaders

around the notion of developing connections between people at different companies who are serving similar roles. The third element involves one-on-one meetings with companies, and the fourth involves concierge-style services to assist businesses in addressing issues they might have with the city. The business recruitment program operates in partnership with the cities of Redmond and Kirkland through what is called the Innovation Triangle. It markets the area as a great place to do business, particularly for technology companies, and through the partnership there are a number of recruitment activities and meetings with companies interested in locating in the area. Staff also attends trade shows with the aim of attracting new businesses to the city. The startups and small business program operates through a robust partnership developed with Redmond, Kirkland, Issaquah and Renton. It includes a series of workshops at King County Library System branches across the Eastside that are free to all. The program also includes concierge-style services and sponsors a couple of events throughout the year.

Mr. Canedo said “Bellevue Welcomes the World” is the City Council’s vision statement and lies at the heart of how economic development works in Bellevue. Bellevue’s competitive advantage is rooted in diversity fueled by arts and creative learning, all of which is propelled by future-focused technologies. Bellevue is promoted as a creative and technology innovation hub and a center of excellence. The fact that 40 percent of Bellevue residents were born outside the United States, coupled with the fact that many residents speak a language other than English in the home, plays largely into how Bellevue is competitive from a workforce and talent perspective. Having a future-oriented focus plays well for both large and small companies that want to be at the forefront of developing new things for the market and solving society’s challenges. For all those reasons, Bellevue serves as a bridge between the United States and global markets.

Bellevue is a global center for technology development and its specializations are in enterprise software and gaming. The city is home to about 50 large corporate headquarters and more than a hundred international firms have chosen to open offices in Bellevue attracted by highly educated workers, by the city’s future-focus and commitment to innovating and building solutions, and by the beautiful natural environment.

A study of the creative side of things called the Creative Edge was wrapped up in 2018. The study determined that Bellevue is exceptionally well placed in the United States for knowledge workers, creative persons and artists. The city is the sixth largest hub for creative learning in the country on a per capita basis. Bellevue’s competitors in that vein are Sunnyvale, California, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and Alexandria and Arlington, Virginia, all of which are prominent names for creativity and innovation.

It is the city’s talent and exceptionally well-educated workforce that is driving the economy forward. More than 60 percent of Bellevue residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher, and 23 percent have a STEM degree. In the categories of business,

science and arts; computer and math; and engineering and science, Bellevue holds a solid lead in comparison to competitor cities in terms of the percentage of residents employed in those specific fields.

Mr. Canedo said the business survey is conducted in the off year from the budget and it is used to inform the city in regard to how businesses feel about service delivery. Unsurprisingly, the only thing between 2015 and 2017 that had a statistically significant decline in terms of satisfaction was the availability of affordable housing for employees. Otherwise businesses are generally pleased with the way the city is providing services. The city receives high marks relative to an overall sense of safety, cleanliness, the quality of the built environment, the quality of police services, access to education, the availability of qualified employees, and particularly to businesses in the downtown access to public transportation. The next business survey will be deployed in April and the results will be reported to the Council in the third quarter of the year.

Mr. Canedo said new focus groups were recently launched that are topic, neighborhood or industry oriented. The first new group was focused on the downtown, transportation and real estate. The attendees were a who's who of downtown employers, including Amazon, Apptio, eBay, Microsoft and others. The group was co-sponsored by the Bellevue Downtown Association. It was found that Bellevue's businesses generally feel the city has a strong value proposition and provides exceptionally good return in terms of the availability of talent and accessibility to business offices. When asked what they would like to see more of, affordable child care was mentioned along with more food options, particularly local and independent restaurants, and access to programmed and activated public spaces, particularly in the downtown and Bel-Red environments. The employers indicated they would like to see improvements to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure across the city, and improved access to transit options, including intra-Eastside services and options connecting Bellevue with south Pierce County.

Mr. Gill said Startup425 is the Eastside partnership with the cities of Bellevue, Redmond, Kirkland, Issaquah and Renton. The five cities came together in light of the fact that many people were asking for workshops on starting a business covering topics like marketing and business planning. The first Startup425 Foundations workshops were piloted two years ago in Bellevue City Hall and served as an introduction to starting a business. Most of the workshops are offered free of charge in various King County Library System libraries. There have been specialized workshops focused on small business finance and selling products internationally. One-on-one mentoring is offered in partnership with the small business development center. A small business advisor is funded by the city in partnership with One Redmond and the individual offers specialized assistance for mid-stage businesses. There are also several online resources available that have proven to be very popular.

As part of the Startup425 foundations workshop, an outcome survey was conducted and the results were exciting. In 2018 a total of 47 workshops were held across the Eastside supporting almost 500 unique participants. The workshops contributed to at least 65 new business starts, and businesses with between 250 and 650 full-time jobs were supported. The people who are attending the workshops mirror the diversity of the Eastside. The majority identify as persons of color. Sixty percent identify as women. About 25 percent are early career age, another 25 percent are late career age, and 50 percent are mid-career professionals. About 75 percent of the respondents have at least a bachelor's degree, and 25 percent make \$50,000 per year or less. The attendees come from all different sizes and types of businesses. The largest share come from the technology industry but they also come from the technology hardware, professional services, retail, arts/education/recreation and management/consulting sectors.

Mr. Gill allowed that there are a number of unique challenges to be solved according to the research. One in five workshop attendees started their business two or more years before attending the program, which is really designed for folks who have not yet started a business. Only 14 percent of the attendees reported starting a business after attending the workshops, which is fairly low. Specialized workshops are needed to support specific industries. An advisory committee of individuals has been pulled together to inform the development process for Startup425. The city of Kirkland will be leading the effort to develop a new strategic plan for the partnership.

Mr. Canedo said going forward the culture and economic development team will focus on building connections across disciplines and across partners. For example, the arts program is working with regional funders and non-profits to create more capacity building programs and opportunities, and to provide more mentoring, so that the organizations can be more self sustaining. Bellwether, which used to be the city's biennial sculpture exhibition, is now an annual event. A public/private partnership program is being ramped up that on the front end will be focused on redevelopment opportunities associated with East Link; it has a strong emphasis on making sure pathways are being explored to delivering more affordable housing in transit-oriented development areas. Additionally, the team is doing more to sponsor community events that provide access to professional network development for people of all backgrounds.

The team is also continuing to collaborate with its regional partners on the understanding that economic development is not a zero sum game for Bellevue. The entire region should gain from the prosperity boom. As Bellevue continues to develop as a premium community, transportation and affordable housing will continue to be big issues for businesses and employees. Currently, about 80 percent of those who work in Bellevue do not live in Bellevue, which means that more than 120,000 people commute into the city on a daily basis and need affordable and reliable transportation options. In conjunction with partners across the region, there is focus on making sure small businesses and aspiring small business entrepreneurs have access to resources such as workforce education and training. The approach

the team is taking is focused on build, measure, learn so that as programs are created they will be tested and refined to meet the maximum goal for the community. A deep dive will be taken during 2019 into the arts and culture space to better deal with the impacts of rental price increases and redevelopment and to assist the organizations in continuing to call Bellevue home.

Commissioner McEachran said he was fully unaware of the work of the economic development team until he served on the Wilburton CAC and the affordable housing technical advisory group. He commented that some of the data carves down the neighborhoods in a way that makes it appear what is being sought are high-end residents. The struggle is always around how to do attainable housing in a mixed economy. The math is that 177,000 plus come into Bellevue on a daily basis, 34,000 Bellevue residents live and work in the city, and 46,000 residents leave for jobs in other jurisdictions. Housing costs are a prime factor for why workers commute into Bellevue. Eighty percent of the faculty and staff of Bellevue College cannot afford to live in the city. Issaquah has similar if not more profound issues given that according to census data only about 1600 residents both live and are employed in that city. Those are red flags. Intentionality brings innovation but it should also bring improvisation in addressing the housing issue.

Commissioner Piper said everyone looks at affordable housing as being a social or human services issues, but in fact it is an economic issue. He asked how analogous cities are working to confront the issue and if it a game change in terms of where companies seek to locate. Mr. Canedo said that the price of housing locally is definitely an issue companies consider when deciding where to locate their offices. In the last few years, jobs that are slightly lower on the value chain have been shipped to other places. For example, Boeing moved its shared services operations to Dallas. Housing affordability is critically important to the city and region when it comes to successfully recruiting companies to the area, and to companies seeking to hire employees.

Chair Mercer noted that Microsoft is a big player in Bellevue and Redmond. The company has made some bold commitments towards human services and has talked with lawmakers in Olympia. He asked what kinds of leadership connections are being made with companies like Microsoft in terms of talking over local strategies. She noted that the Commission would love to do more in terms of connecting with local businesses. Mr. Canedo said one thing his team would be doing during 2019 is updating the Economic Development Plan. As part of the update, one item to be tackled will be the concept of corporate engagement. A focus group will be formed later in the year to talk about what corporate companies are already doing in the community. Alignments will be sought so companies can be plugged in to the issues they are most concerned with.

Commissioner McEachran said creative imagining is all about being future focused. He said a housing group that is close to his heart attempted to develop some attainable mixed economics housing in Redmond and had three market-rate

developers pencil out the project only to conclude they could not afford it because the land is too expensive. He said in 1997 Talmadge Wright argued that homelessness is not merely an issue for social welfare, it is first and foremost a land use issue directly connected to issues of gentrification, displacement, and the cultural imaginings of a city should look like by those who have the power to shape its development. Market-rate developers love being in Bellevue, but the city should step up with incentives for them to include attainable units in their developments. Mr. Canedo said there have been discussions with the Planning Commission and the City Council, some of which took place as part of the adoption of the affordable housing strategy.

Commissioner Kline said she was recently in Palo Alto on business. The controller of the company visited recently moved to Phoenix and commutes to Palo Alto to work, telecommuting most of the time but spending one day each week in the office. The decision to do that was based on commute times and housing costs but primarily on the lack of child care in terms of affordability and accessibility. There are many opportunities for tech workers to telecommute and the city should take steps to make it attractive for telecommuters to stay in the area. Mr. Canedo said there are staff members who are dedicated to helping solve those challenges, including how to achieve the maximum affordable housing outcomes on the redevelopment sites related to the East Link project. The city wants to see child care set as an allowable use in all instances where it can be to make sure employees have access near their places of employment and residence.

Ms. O'Reilly commented that in years past companies provided on-site child care centers. Costco at one time had a partnership with Bellevue College and in fact may still have it. She asked if any of the companies seeking to locate in Bellevue, especially the larger ones, are considering having on-site child care. Mr. Canedo said REI is a prime example which has been very intentional in developing its campus in the Spring District about providing on-site child care. They are currently working with the city's development services team to properly site the child care to make it publically accessible and usable, not just for REI employees. In the downtown area there has not been a strong corporate push for on-site child care facilities; most companies are looking for brokers to lease out ground floor spaces to child care providers. Ms. O'Reilly said it would be great if companies could be encouraged to dedicate a certain portion of their child care slots for children that are coming from moderate- to low-income families, or offer substantial scholarships. That would increase the availability of child care and would also yield a blended socioeconomic model.

Ms. O'Reilly pointed out that in addition to a need for child care, there is an increased need for elder care. Many fall into the sandwich generation who are both taking care of their small children and their aging parents. She asked if any companies have been talking about that issue. Mr. Canedo said he has not to date entertained any requests specific to elder care, but said that does not mean the issue will not come up in the future.

Ms. Catalano commented that one of the eligible activities for CDBG funding is microenterprise assistance for low- and moderate-income residents who are interested in starting a business. She asked if Startup425 would have eligible clients. Mr. Gill said with the way the program is set up, information regarding income levels is not tracked. All of the demographic data collected comes from the post-workshop surveys. He added, however, that there definitely would be some who would fall into the qualifying category. Mr. Canedo said that and similar issues will be reviewed by the small business advisory committee.

Commissioner McEachran noted that Bellevue College does offer child care services for its faculty and staff on regular school days. Corporate child care centers, such as those in the Spring District, charge as much as \$2000 per month.

Commissioner Jain said she has heard of Microsoft employees whose parents live with them. She said it was her understanding that there are some benefits available to Microsoft employees to care for aging parents. It would be good for companies coming into the city to provide some kind of assistance, thus directly contributing to the economic development of the city. Mr. Canedo said his team will want to have those kinds of conversations as part the corporate engagement focus group later in the year.

Chair Mercer said there is a clear interest on the part of the Commissioners in the work being done by the economic development team. She said there is a clear intersection on issues that are near and dear to the Commission, including transportation, affordable housing and child care. She asked how the Commission can help in terms of bringing voices to the table as the work moves forward to update the city's economic development plan. Mr. Canedo said all of the city's boards and commissions are wanting some input into the process, adding that his team would seek a manageable approach.

Ms. O'Reilly asked how the economic development division works with employers to encourage living wage jobs. Mr. Canedo said he is currently waiting to see who will be the next CEO of the Workforce Development Council. That is the regional body that addresses workforce talent and development. Bellevue works with that organization and will continue to do so. Ms. O'Reilly asked that the Commission be kept in the loop.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly asked for observations regarding the comments made during the public hearing.

Commissioner McEachran pointed out that human services agencies are having a hard time hiring an executive director and retaining/recruiting staff given what it costs to live in Bellevue. Additionally, though there are clear needs for mental health and drug dependency counselors, there is a lack of practitioners to provide the services

who can live on the wages offered. The Commission will likely hear during the next couple of funding cycles important questions around how to support the FTEs needed to provide supportive services. There will also likely be continued talk about how to provide attainable housing in light of what it costs to buy land. What is needed is improvisation.

Commissioner Piper said he found it surprising to hear from so many that things are not necessarily going in the right direction. He said the general perception is that things are getting better but that is not necessarily the case. The testimony from Congregations for the Homeless was compelling in regard to the success rates of case management. The Commission should be cognizant of that moving forward.

Chair Mercer said she noted the speakers were generally all exploring the idea of adding mental health services on site given the intersection of mental health and homelessness. The services need to be integrated into the case management provided rather than having to refer clients out.

Commissioner Jain asked if there is any data showing migration from Seattle by those using the shelters in Bellevue. Ms. O'Reilly allowed that there might be some, adding that the shelters do keep demographic data. Ms. Catalano said it has been mentioned by the women's shelter operator that some women have been released from hospitals and jails with nowhere to go. Such persons have needs that go beyond just homelessness. She said she did not know if the increase in the need for shelter space is tied to migration from Seattle.

Human Services Planner Christy Stangland said Sophia Way recently made a presentation to the Interfaith Social Concerns Council in which they shared data relative to where shelter residents come from. She said staff could reach out to them for that information.

Commissioner Kline asked if Sophia Way is aware that the shelter they are building in Kirkland will not be eligible for CDBG funds from Bellevue. Ms. Catalano said she has made them aware of that and the differences between capital and human services allocations.

Ms. O'Reilly reminded the Commissioners about the upcoming annual luncheon for the Alliance of Eastside Agencies. She said the human services budget would cover the attendance cost for any Commissioner wanting to go.

Ms. Stangland reminded the Commissioners that the joint meeting with area human services commissions is scheduled for April 16. She said she needed a head count for who would attend in order to make sure there will be enough food.

Ms. Stangland also informed the Commissioners that she was in the process of scheduling a tour with Friends of Youth. She said a location and date have not yet been determined.

10. NEW BUSINESS

A motion to allow Chair Mercer to participate electronically in the May 7 Commission meeting was made by Commissioner McEachran. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piper and the motion carried unanimously.

11. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Piper; the motion was seconded by Commissioner McEachran and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Mercer adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date