CITY OF BELLEVUE

BELLEVUE DIVERSITY ADVISORY NETWORK

MEETING MINUTES

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| September 26, 2017 | Bellevue City Hall |
| 6:00 p.m. | Room 1E-112 |

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Whitehead, Anthony Austin, Paulo Perez, Mareth Flores, Eloisa Tran, Jennifer Karls, Justin Daigneault, Tom Brewer, Haruka Kojima, Alaric Bien, Jingdong Yu, Margie Ye, Aisha Kabani, Mohamed Bakr

MEMBERS ABSENT: Beabe Akpojovwo, Andrew Kelly, Aleksandra Poseukova, Chinar Bopshetty, Rita Badh, Maria Batayola, Edilberto Flores

STAFF PRESENT: Mark Manuel, Mike McCormick-Huentelman, Brad Miyake

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Austin called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

A. Roll Call of Members

Chair Austin called the roll and then welcomed City Manager Brad Miyake and invited him to address the group.

Mr. Miyake said he has been in regular contact with Mark Manuel, Diversity Outreach and Engagement Administrator, in order to keep updated in regard to the great work being done by the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network. He said he appreciates the leadership and the hard work being invested by the group. The commitment on the part of the Network members to addressing diversity will ultimately make Bellevue a better city.

Mr. Miyake pointed out that there is much going on in the city currently. He said two incumbent Councilmembers are up for reelection and there are two open seats to be filled. Diversity was raised at a recent candidate forum hosted by the Bellevue Downtown Association and it was good to see all of the candidates are supportive of diversity. During the election season things heat up on the political front in terms of the issues brought before the Council. The Council is currently deliberately and thoughtfully working through the homeless shelter issue. Affordable housing is another big issue, both for Bellevue and the region. Out in the neighborhoods, the major concern is growth in terms of development, traffic congestion, and even diversity, which is not embraced by everyone. Bellevue’s fastest growing neighborhood is the downtown and more growth there is on the way given the number of projects in the pipeline.

Ms. Whitehead said the term “affordable housing” is starting to sound like nothing more than a phrase. She allowed that the Puget Sound area is the hottest real estate market in the country. She noted that many seniors who have been part of the fabric of the community for so long can no longer afford to stay in the area. She asked how those issues are being addressed. Mr. Miyake said there is currently a focus on retaining some of the affordable housing that is in place. The city has adopted affordable housing strategies that involve a number of different elements. Increasing the amount of money contributed toward affordable housing is one element, and that is done primarily through A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH), an organization that leverages funding from several Eastside jurisdictions for the purpose of preserving existing affordable housing and creating new affordable housing. Of course in talking about affordable housing, it is necessary to clarify to whom the housing is affordable. The market will often adjust to accommodate housing affordable to those earning 80 percent of area median income, but for those lower on the scale, those making 30 percent to 60 percent of the area median income, different approaches are needed. In that category, additional funding in various forms is needed, including tax credits and incentives to developers.

Ms. Whitehead asked for a status report on the issue of homelessness and the homeless shelter. Mr. Miyake said there is no disagreement among the Councilmembers that a shelter is needed. The question is where it should be located. There has been criticism with regard to process transparency relative to the Eastgate site, but things have been greatly opened up. The shelter issue has morphed and has gone in various directions. The Eastgate site was originally the preferred site but it met with a great deal of pushback from the community. A number of parties were involved, including Imagine Housing, a developer of affordable housing; Congregations for the Homeless, which operates the current winter shelter for men and the homeless day center; King County, who owns the land proposed to be the site of the homeless shelter; and the city, which has the permitting and land use authority. The city has followed through on its part by revising the Land Use Code to allow the use. Any package that gets put together will be worked out by the various parties. One Councilmember has suggested siting the shelter at Sound Transit’s operations and maintenance base site, the vision for which has been transit-oriented development. The issues are continuing to be discussed at the Council level and at the partners level.

### Neighborhood and Community Outreach Manager Mike McCormick-Huentelman said the shelter issue is complicated given that it has many moving parts. He said there are five or more conversations on homelessness that are ongoing, each if which the Council will need to navigate with the community. One of the conversations is the where question. Another is the land use that permits homeless shelters in the city. The interim ordinance approved by the Council allows the use through a conditional use permit, but the process to be used to permit permanent shelters in the future remains an open question. There are conversations about homelessness that center on people living in their cars and their RVs. There is a conversation to be had around panhandling generally in the city, and there is a much larger conversation around what the Eastside’s approach to homelessness should be. In the middle of the homelessness conversations, the Council has also woven in the topic of safe injection sites and dealing with the opioid crisis.

### Ms. Whitehead said her hope is that accountability will be folded in at the beginning, the middle and the end of the process to avoid creating a monster when no one is looking. Mr. Miyake agreed and said there are different ways to accomplish that. Permitting is at the heart of the issue of accountability. Given all the individual conversations about homelessness, the overall conversation at times gets very confusing. Part of staff’s job is to make sure that the Council and the community understand what is actually happening, not just what any one group thinks is happening, particularly in regard to policy decisions.

### 2. SPECIAL PRESENTATION: MIKE MCCORMICK-HUENTELMAN

### Mr. Manuel noted that the Network has over time received updates from various city departments. He allowed, however, that what has been missing is how all the information ties together, how the various departments work together, and how they utilize community feedback. The work of the Network will benefit from having an understanding of the larger picture as it works to refine its message.

### Mr. McCormick-Huentelman said before joining the city five years ago he worked full time in ministry and was director of urban ministries for a large Presbyterian church. He said much of his work focused on community development and working with various organizations that serve families living below the poverty line. He said he has learned that the power of community to shape outcomes for a city is striking, and what makes it all possible is relationships, assets and experiences that when brought together can tackle the thorniest of issues.

### Mr. McCormick-Huentelman said in thinking about elected representations, thoughts naturally go to the City Council. As elected representatives, Councilmembers set policy direction, approve the budget, and they hire one person in the form of the City Manager to run things. One of the key documents the Council must approve is the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan maps out the vision for the city over the next 20 years in the areas of community values, the city’s vision, policy direction, land use, growth strategies, human services and transportation. Everything the city does from a policy perspective must fit the policies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

### The Comprehensive Plan contains subarea plans that are now being called neighborhood area plans. There are 16 different neighborhood areas for planning purposes, each of which contains multiple neighborhoods. Each of the neighborhood area plans will be updated over the next seven years, allowing the opportunity to determine the priorities, values and character of each community. Every city department has its own overall plan, but each nestles under the overall Comprehensive Plan.

### The budgets on a biennial basis and sets priorities on a two-year cycle. Essentially, the Council in approving the budget determines what things it wants to see done in the next two years. The Council’s vision priority document contains seven outcome areas. The Council’s list of short-term priorities currently includes affordable housing, diversity, working with Eastside Pathways, and establishing a permanent winter shelter for homeless men. “Bellevue welcomes the world,” “diversity is our strength” and “we embrace the future while respecting our past” are phrases taken directly from the Council’s vision statement.

### Bellevue is different from Seattle in part because it has a City Manager form of government. The Mayor in Bellevue is chosen by the other Councilmembers, each of whom serves at large. The Mayor serves as the figurehead for the city by attending key functions, such as ribbon cuttings, and represents the majority will of the Council and the city as a whole. The Mayor does not choose who gets hired in the city and does not run the city’s agenda. The Mayor is equal with all of the other Councilmembers; they all have equal standing, and they all choose the City Manager to serve as the city’s CEO and runs the organization in accord with the Council’s policies and priorities.

### The leadership team, which is made up of the directors of each city department, answers to the City Manager. There are two Deputy City Managers who oversee the work of the various departments and all strategic planning. In all, the City Manager oversees the IT department, City Services, the Police Department, Planning and Community Development, the City Attorney’s Office, Parks and Community Services, Regional Affairs, Finance, the Fire Department, Utilities, Development Services and the Department of Transportation. Parks and Community Services includes parks and recreation as well as human services and probation, giving the department a wide spectrum relative to how it reaches the community. Planning and Community Development has a wide variety of workgroups, including environmental stewardship, arts and culture, economic development, neighborhoods and the Neighborhood Mediation Program.

### Mr. McCormick-Huentelman said the puzzle that is the city has a lot of pieces and is very complicated. That is why communication is vital. There are a number of Council-appointed boards and commissions, there are some City Manager-appointed boards, and there are some community advisory boards. The Council has appointed liaisons to the Council-appointed boards and commissions, and the Council can assign work to a board or commission aimed at taking the pulse of the community and bringing back a recommendation. The Human Services Commission is tasked with developing the Needs Update every two years, and with recommending how the city’s human services dollars should be allocated. The East Bellevue Community Council exists as an elected body that was established as a condition when the Lake Hills area was annexed into the city in 1960s. That body retains the ability to veto any ordinance passed by the City Council. The residents in the jurisdiction of the East Bellevue Community Council must periodically vote to keep it in existence.

### Mr. McCormick-Huentelman said all community conversations start at home. From there they build as people start to connect with others of like mind. The Council is always responsive to communities that show up and engage.

### The Network members were asked if there are citywide conversations that: a) the community knows nothing about, b) have something important to contribute, and c) would benefit from engaging in a greater way. The members were also asked if there are community conversations that the city knows nothing about, and if there are other communities beyond which the members are connected with or know that are organized but which are disconnected from the wider conversations. The work of government is a dynamic, ongoing, sausage making public conversation with fits and starts, ins and outs, twists and turns. In the midst of all that, by working together the community can shape the issues of the day as well as the legacy to be left for those who follow. The power of voice should never be underestimated, particularly where connected to the community and the city.

### Ms. Kabani asked if there is a limit to Bellevue’s growth. Mr. McCormick-Huentelman said growth projections look both in terms of employment and population. Bellevue’s daytime employment numbers almost double the resident population of the city. Bellevue is an economic hub in King County and works regionally with the Puget Sound Regional Council under the Growth Management Act in looking at forecasts. Much of the growth in the city is earmarked to occur in specific areas, namely in the downtown, Bel-Red, Eastgate and Factoria. The focused approach is predicated on maintaining the quality of the existing residential communities and neighborhoods. As planned, growth over the next 20 years will occur in well-thought-out patterns.

### Ms. Karls said she did not hear in the presentation any connection with the school district. Mr. McCormick-Huentelman said the city has many different partnerships. The City Manager meets regularly with the Bellevue School District superintendant. The Parks department, particularly the human services division, has a strong relationship with the school district and engages with a number of partnerships and programs. The school district is, though, its own public entity with its own governance board, and to some degree collaboration between the city and the school district takes the form of collegial collaboration.

### 1. CALL TO ORDER (continued)

### B. Adoption of the Agenda

### A motion to amend the agenda to allow only ten minutes for item 3, ten minutes for item 4, and 20 minutes for item 5 was made by Ms. Flores. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bien and the motion carried unanimously.

### C. Adoption of the Minutes

### A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Mr. Brewer. The motion was seconded by Ms. Kabani and the motion carried without dissent; Mr. Bien abstained from voting.

### 3. GRACIOUS SPACE ACTIVITY

### Mr. Manuel noted that the Network has been talking about the driving factors behind the work of the group. One area that has not been discussed, however, is the personal reasons driving each Network member to participate. He asked the members to write down in a few words their personal purpose for dedicating their time and energy to the process.

### Mr. McCormick-Huentelman took a moment to inform the Network about the Neighborhood Leadership Gathering on October 10 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in Council Chambers. He said the City Manager and the department directors would be sharing their priorities. There will also be a Q&A session as well.

### Mr. Manuel stressed the value of every voice in the room. He asked the members to read their statements to the group.

### Mr. Brewer said his purpose was to experience relationship building with a diverse community of people, and to apply his energy and influence to move the diversity advantage plan forward for the good of the city.

### Mr. Bien said his purpose was to help the city become a place where every person feels welcome and that they belong, where city services are responsive to the community’s diverse needs and interests, and where people from all walks of life are able and willing to engage social, civically and economically.

### Ms. Tran said her purpose was to provide data driven advice and metrics to the city for better accountability and clarity for the future city performance.

### Ms. Flores said her purpose was to ensure that her daughter and her peers will have the tools and opportunities to be positive, helpful and successful contributing members of society.

### Ms. Kabani said her purpose was to be a representative for her community, an advocate for her community, participate in civil activities, improve the lives of residents and visitors, be knowledgeable in what is happening in Bellevue, have her voice heard when needed, and to do good and be helpful to all.

### Mr. Daigneault said he enjoyed being part of an intentional community and being involved in problem-solving and planning for the future. He said the forum is open to discovery and observation into how to improve Bellevue, and provides an opportunity for him to learn more and get connected with the city and its resources. He said his hope is to be able to provide some perspective in his area of expertise, which is mental health, youth and families, and the LBGTQ plus community.

### Mr. Yu said in recent years he has seen more and more people coming from China and settling in Bellevue. Many have found it challenging to integrate into local communities for reasons of language and culture, but also because of thinking mentalities and social behaviors. The important thing they all have in common is that they all love living in Bellevue. The Network can help residents with different cultural backgrounds to better integrate into the Bellevue communities, and he said he wanted his contribution to help make Bellevue a better place.

### Ms. Karls said her purpose was to bear witness to inequities and to help build a more inclusive community and society.

### Ms. Kojima said as an immigrant with English as a second language she hoped to convey to the Network the conversations of her friends, and to convey to her friends the conversations of the Network. She said she hoped to be a voice for the voiceless.

### Ms. Whitehead said her purpose was to be part of building a stronger Bellevue which will support and build stronger neighborhood communities that will come together to represent a city that embraces and supports having different voices at the table.

### Ms. Ye said when she applied to be part of the Network she was thinking in terms of her daughter being raised as a new generation of race. Things will be very different five, ten or twenty years out in terms of what the city will look like. She said, however, that after almost a year of being part of the Network, she said her purpose was to support the mission of the Network and apply her skills to that end.

### Chair Austin said he chose to join the Network because he wanted to be part of the community and bring a voice of the people who look like him to the table. He noted that in Bellevue there are more residents of Bellevue of African descent than there are African-American people. He said his mission is at the school district level to band those people together to see what their needs are, and at the city level to see the communities mesh. He said he wanted to use his professional skills on behalf of the city.

### Mr. Bakr asked for clarification between people of African descent and those who are African-American. Chair Austin explained that people of African descent are those who were born in African. African-Americans were born to parents who have been in American for years, many of whom can trace their roots back to times of slavery. Mr. Bakr noted that within his community there are many who have come from Africa who once they receive their passport call themselves African-Americans. Mr. Manuel said that illustrates the fact that there are a lot of different ways to look at things.

### Ms. Whitehead said she recently had a conversation with a man who was from in Egypt who argued that he was in fact African-American and that she was not, because he was born in Africa and she was not. She said she has four sons, the youngest of which has a Master’s Degree and a PhD from Cambridge University, which meant he lived in England for eight years. After his return to the United States, he began identifying himself as an American black man; he no longer calls himself African-American.

### Mr. Bakr said his purpose was to engage as a Muslim outside of the Islamic Center. Most immigrants who arrive in America seek to build relationships within their own culture and language. He said his intent was to build relationships among diverse groups and to work toward making the statement “Diversity is Our Strength” an action rather than just a statement.

### 5. FINDING SHARED PURPOSE

### Mr. Manuel reviewed with the Network the driving factors that influence the charge to and work of the group: the Council vision, the mission statement, the definitions, the subcommittees focused on engagement, outreach and culturally responsive government, Bellevue’s Diversity Advantage Plan, and the statement of purpose. He allowed that there had been questions raised about commonality and definitions, and he agreed that to some degree the definitions and guiding principles are malleable. That does not mean things should change at every turn. At some point there will need to be agreement on the particulars, but until that happens things can be tweaked.

### Mr. Manuel said that in order for the Network to find shared purpose, it will be necessary to be able to work in tandem with the city and comfortably in the community. The community mapping process is needed to better understand who is in the city; it will be part of the Network’s value add.

### The Culturally Responsive Government subcommittee is working with the city by having conversations with a parallel staff team whose job it is to gather information from the community or do outreach. They are getting a sense of what is currently happening and what the current processes look like. The recommendation is that through those conversations, the subcommittee should come up with a defined way of being able to articulate the Network’s value add.

### Going forward it will be critical for members of the Network to build independent relationships with those in city government. All of the projects mentioned by Mr. McCormick-Huentelman have been asking about the work of the Network. It would not be realistic to think the Network can support all of the projects, so a way will need to be found to achieve the biggest bang for the buck. The same approach will be used in the community as the community mapping work begins, with a kickoff by the outreach and community engagement staff.

### Mr. Manuel suggested that at the next meeting, the Network should think about making sure the right folks are on the right subcommittees. For example, some of the characteristics for the Culturally Responsive Government subcommittee members would be being available during the day to meet with city staff, and liking strategic planning and wrestling with difficult puzzles. As the work progresses, it will be informed by city staff and the community.

### 4. PLAYING FOR CHANGE

### Ms. Kabani thanked all those who showed up and participated. The kids table looked good and like the most fun place to be. For a first event it was fantastic. She said she would like to have had the name better reflect what the event was about. It was challenging not being able to tie the message to Playing for Change. She said she hopes the event will be improved and held again next year. The marketing efforts were good, including the Facebook page which has generated comments, and other organizations have linked to it.

### Chair Austin said there was a photo exhibit, a table for origami for kids, and a poster-making table built on the notion of everyone being neighbors regardless of where they come from. An artist was present taking comments from the community to be used in a rendering. There were also snacks available. Councilmember Lee attended, and there was music.

### Mr. Manuel said the event was a good way to connect with the community. Those who shared their email addresses will be added to the distribution list. It was disappointing to some degree that there were so few white folks, but there certainly was a nice mix of persons of color.

### Mr. Manuel said the Network needs to work toward solidifying the work of the subcommittees. He said he would like to be able to relinquish some of the controls and letting the subcommittees move the agenda forward. A discussion is needed about the details that need to be considered in developing the process, whether it be working with the city or directly with the community, and the questions that need to be answered in order to clarify what needs to be known before moving forward.

### 6. ANNOUNCEMENTS

### There was agreement to move the October meeting from the 31st to the 24th. There was also agreement to discuss the meeting time.

### 7. ADJOURNMENT

### A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Flores. The motion was seconded by Mr. Daigneault and the motion carried unanimously.

### Chair Austin adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.