

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING
MINUTES

July 7, 2022, North Bellevue Community Center via Virtual – Zoom.

8:30am – 10:30am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Abigail Brown, Anne Rittenhouse, Beverly Heyden, Catherine Wong, Desiree Leigh, Diana Thompson, Gazel Tan, Hannah Kimball, Janet Jelleff, Julie Hart, Kira Hackett, Mary Fredeen, Paul Bradley

MEMBERS ABSENT: Phyllis Smilen, Barbara Carey, Janet Jelleff, Hannah Kimball,

STAFF PRESENT: Dan Lassiter, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

GUESTS: Terri Cleveland, Woodlands at Forbes Lake Senior Affordable Apartments

PRESENTER(S): Blayne Amson, City of Bellevue ADA Title VI/Civil Rights Program Administrator

Khadija Sadat, City of Bellevue Utilities Program Administrator

RECORDING SECRETARY: Betty Lee, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL: The meeting was called to order by Abigail Brown and the roll call taken.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June minutes approved.

PRESENTATION: *Blayne Amson, City of Bellevue ADA Title VI/Civil Rights Program Administrator*

ADA Self Evaluation Transition Plan Year-End Report

Blayne will be presenting today about the American Disability Act Self Evaluation Transition Plan and the updates the City of Bellevue has taken. The BNOA first heard of this plan through a focus group in 2019 and gave input and guidance. Some inputs made it into the plan and implemented some of the changes. Today we will be looking at what the city-wide plan is and the work that the city has done to implement it. It was signed by the City Manager in January of 2019 and workplans built in 2020.

This plan looks at the Title II of the ADA which pertains to the infrastructure citizens see such as curb cuts, ramps, programing for participating in local, state, and federal jurisdictions.

The Federal government requested government agencies to complete a self-evaluation and transition plan and provide regular updates to that plan. The City of Bellevue essentially created an entire new plan based on some of the principles and feedback from the community.

The City's ADA Core Team which has staff from various departments across the city works with Blayne to ensure that the work of ADA compliance is happening throughout each department. Blayne oversees the ADA Self Evaluation master spreadsheet which contains every project throughout the city that relates to the plan and the team ensures they're able to complete the project and tracks the work.

The City of Bellevue also has a Diversity Advantage Initiative which takes a concerted effort to center disability in the conversation of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The team asks of the city to include their compliance-based efforts in the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan is broken up into different sections that are required by federal government to include.

1. Effective Communications - The City facilitates accessibility and effective communication with individuals in a variety of ways, including:
 - a. Closed captioning deployed for Bellevue Television content; open captions placed on produced video content when needed
 - b. Notice of the availability of alternate formats is placed on all printed materials, event announcements contain contacts to facilitate modification requests
 - c. Improved accessibility for forms during public council meetings
2. Accessible Meetings and Events.
 - a. All public meeting room tables are now at an accessible height
 - b. Hearing loops and hearing assistance systems
 - c. Universally designed meetings, trainings, and events
 - d. Covid 19 and virtual meeting accessibility
3. City Website and Online Services.
 - a. Many processes to check for accessibility have been automated and check points are in place to ensure public-facing city sites have increased accessibility

- b. The Digital Government Team has been trained in digital and print accessibility—training expanding to other ITD staff
 - i. Many IT staff have been trained in Ableism, Allyship, Disability Justice and Universal Design to better understand the link to equity
 - c. Standards for creating accessible public facing digital and print materials has been folded into the style guide.
- 4. City Policies and Practices
 - a. Staff in all departments have the opportunity to learn about reasonable modification
 - b. A lens of both compliance as well as ableism is often applied when developing or changing policies and processes
 - c. Connections to the community of people with disabilities have been strengthened to ensure decision making is informed and collaborative
- 5. Emergency Management
 - a. Community connections during COVID-19
 - b. Shelter Management Plan
 - i. Supplies/equipment for those with disabilities in emergency shelters
 - c. All OEM staff trained in identifying ableism
- 6. Public Safety and Law Enforcement
 - a. Police training requirements were evaluated
 - b. Police advisory council discussions underway
 - c. Physical and programmatic barriers within Probation have been identified and removed
 - d. Disability equity training is underway for Police and Fire
- 7. Recreation Choices for People with Disabilities
 - a. Inclusion Process
 - i. Recreation division staff training
 - ii. Increased participation into general recreation
 - b. Diabetes Management Plan
 - c. Adaptive recreation
- 8. City Facilities
 - a. Wheelchair charging stations
 - b. Annual checking of several ADA compliance structural and workplace access
 - c. Project design is always centering access and Universal Design
- 9. Public Right-of-Way
 - a. Accessible Sidewalks
 - i. 18560 Linear feet
 - b. Accessible Curb Ramps
 - i. 102 Curb ramps installed and upgraded
 - c. Accessible Pedestrian Signals
 - i. Progressing on our goal of having all pedestrian signals accessible
 - d. Outreach and In reach

- ❖ *“The City of Bellevue affirms that while the ADA has significantly changed the lives of people with disabilities, we must continue to strive for equal access and opportunity.”*
Bellevue City Council Proclamation July 26, 2021

- ❖ Question: Do you have to ask for looping to be turned on at city hall during council meetings?

Answer: Looping should always be on. If not, ask at Service First to have it turned on or reach out to Charmaine after hours.

Q: Anne is concerned about overgrown vegetation and older adults with walkers not being able to use those sidewalks. Who can be contacted to notify this?

A: High tech option: App “My Bellevue” has an “ADA Request” button that can easily upload photos and requests to deal with various issues around the city. You’re also welcomed to email, call, send a letter, whatever method works for you.

Q: BNOA has been trying to find a Universal Design to help people who have early stages of Alzheimer’s recognize restroom symbols that may be more easily identifiable. Could COB possibly come up with options and bring ideas to BNOA?

A: Blayne can commit to running it by a space planner for suggestions.

However, there are standards of requirements that the city is required to use so a new symbol may or may not be viable to use across the city.

- ❖ Abigail would like to strongly suggest more publicity for the contents of this presentation and all the great accessible aspects of Bellevue.
- ❖ The City of Bellevue has a deep love and commitment to accessibility. Please feel free to reach out to Blayne with any ADA issues you see around the community.
bamson@bellevuewa.gov

PRESENTATION: *Khadija Sadat, City of Bellevue Utility Rate Relief Program.*

- ❖ Four utility bill assistance programs are offered through the city of Bellevue to qualifying low-income residents and residents facing financial hardship.
 1. Emergency Assistance Program: If you pay a Bellevue utility bill directly and are not eligible for the Utility Rate Discount Program, you may qualify for a 100 percent discount on a basic level of service (2022 benefit not to exceed \$313 per bill) for up to two bills (four months) of utility service charges* if you are experiencing a one-time financial shock that interferes with your household’s ability to cover basic needs. There are no age or disability requirements. Certain residency and income requirements must be met. This assistance is available to customer once every three years. Please call 425-452-5285 to request an application.
 - Low-income, meeting the household income* guideline below; AND

- Living at the address receiving services in 2022 and be named on the City of Bellevue Utilities account. Applicant's primary residence must be within the service area of City of Bellevue Utilities; AND
 - Experiencing a "financial shock" which is defined as a recent, unexpected event or expense that threatens financial stability. This expense or event must interfere with the ability of the household to cover necessary basic needs expenses, such as housing, utilities, food, health, and/or other necessary expenses; AND
 - Not currently participating in the Utility Rate Relief Program.
2. Utility Rate Discount Program: If you pay a Bellevue utility bill, you may qualify for a discount on your utility bills. This program is open Feb. 1, 2022, through Oct. 28, 2022. Applicants must be:
- Low-income seniors, 62 years of age or older in 2022, (OR)
 - Low-income permanently disabled persons receiving disability benefits from a government program such as the Social Security Administration and/or Veteran's Administration in 2022; AND
 - Living at the address receiving services in 2022. Applicant's primary residence must be within the service area of City of Bellevue Utilities.
 - Must meet the household income guidelines.
3. Utility Rate Rebate: If your utility costs have been paid through rent or other third party, you may qualify for a rebate check on utility costs. This program is open April 1, 2022, through Oct. 28, 2022.
- Low-income seniors, 62 years of age or older during 2021; (OR)
 - Low-income permanently disabled persons receiving disability benefits from a government program such as Social Security and/or Veteran's Admin. in 2021; AND
 - Living at the address receiving services in 2021. Address MUST be within the service area of City of Bellevue Utilities.
 - Must meet the household income guidelines.
4. Utility Tax Relief: This program provides utility occupation tax relief to low-income households within the Bellevue service area in the form of a rebate check from utility occupation taxes paid to the City which will be issued in December 2021. This program has closed for the year and will reopen Oct. 1, 2022.
- To be eligible, you must have lived inside the Bellevue service area for at least one calendar month in 2021, have contributed to the payment of city utility services, and qualify as low-income.
 - To be considered low-income, your total annual combined household income for 2020 must not have exceeded the income limits.

- ❖ How to submit applications:
 - Return your application by mail to P.O. Box 90012, Bellevue, WA 98009-9012
 - Submit your application electronically by emailing utilityrelief@bellevuewa.gov and requesting access to a secure folder where you may upload your documents. Please do not email your application.
 - Call 425-452-5285 to set up an in-person appointment.

- ❖ Many seniors in the City of Bellevue are potentially qualified but the City is not seeing the amount of participation so please spread the word and help the utility department outreach to those who can benefit from these programs.

- ❖ Question: What are the qualifications of a “household size”?
 Answer: Senior or older adult needs to be included in the household, and everyone who lives in the house is counted for the income requirement. However, emergency tax relief does not have age or disability requirements, just income requirements.
- ❖ Q: What if you are renting and rent includes water? Can you still receive a rebate?
 A: Yes, the rebate program applies to renters.
- ❖ Q: Are assets and other resources counted as income?
 A: Savings and other assets are not counted as income. Incoming current income, pensions, IRA distributions, gift contributions are all counted as income.
- ❖ Brochures are currently in English but will be translated in 7 languages soon and will get those out to the community centers. Please alert Khadija with ideas on outreaching to the community.
- ❖ Website for Utility Rate Relief & Tax Program: <https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/utilities/pay-your-utility-bill/utility-rate-and-tax-relief>

HUMAN SERVICES UPDATE: *No report today.*

COMMITTEE REPORTS: *Members were asked to read the following committee reports before the meeting for discussion:*

- ❖ Janet Jelleff is in the hospital battling an illness. BNOA will organize support for her during treatment. We will need someone to step up for Farmer’s Market duties as Janet was a huge part of organizing it. Please reach out to Abigail, Gazel or Dan to offer your time during Janet’s absence.

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORTS: *No report today as the committee has not met.*

- ❖ Diana would like to discuss the motion that was voted and passed in the last meeting: “Motion moved to add ACO REACH to the agenda, *not* to support it but for the purpose of collecting additional information to maintain awareness and distribute information with the help of the Outreach Committee” Diana would like to clarify that we don’t have an obligation to discuss it with legislators or include it in the federal legislative agenda. Paul

feels that there's enough substance to write an article on ACO REACH in the Neighborhood News and move forward with the awareness.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORTS: *Committee Report.*

1. Further discussion on Celebration of Older Adults Day, August 4.

Gazel, Hannah and Janet are working the details for Older Adults Day.

Janet is clarifying with the City of Bellevue Market Day team the number of tables for BNOA.

Dan is working on the sign for the 148th Street pedestrian bridge.

2. Outreach Committee members continue meeting on Zoom, in-person or hybrid.

The committee will continue meeting on Zoom until at least December.

3. Any further discussion of a communication through Neighborhood News (NN) of BNOA's perspective on ACO Reach.

The information that the committee has on ACO Reach is confusing. It would be premature to draft an article for Neighborhood News on ACO Reach.

4. A Neighborhood News article in August on BNOA with a submission from each committee. Paul will draft the Outreach portion.

Gazel and Hannah will draft the Housing and Transportation portion.

Dan will send us the BNOA overview portion that is part of the recruiting online posting.

5. Any further discussion of VSHS (Veterans, Seniors and Human Services) levy includes support for senior and veteran programs.

There will be a community conversation about the likely 2023 levy at the Redmond Community Center on next Tuesday, June 28 at 5:30. It will be a hybrid meeting, so one can attend the meeting on Zoom.

6. Author of December article on financial fraud

Janet will provide an article from the CENTS program (Consumer Education and Training Services).

Other items discussed

Gazel found some Bellevue Parks brochures at the Lewis Creek Visitors Center. The brochures would be useful for the BNOA table on Market Days.

The NN might attract more readers to the articles inside the News if there was a masthead promoting one or two of the articles. The masthead could be like the masthead on the front page of the Seattle Times. Janet will discuss this idea with Mark.

Barb will be adding two more locations for distributing the NN: Bel-Red YMCA and Kaiser Permanente Bellevue Medical Center (near Overlake Hospital).

The number of copies of NN for the Newport Way Library should change to 40.

Dan maintains files at the NBCC of all the BNOA articles for NN.

The volunteers for the July 7 Market Day are Gazel, Janet, Hannah and Mary

❖ The Outreach Committee would like to do an article on BNOA and the purpose of each committee for the August issue of Neighborhood News— Paul needs to hear from the Housing

& Transportation Committee and Advocacy Committee before July 15th. Gazel stated Hannah will write one for the Housing and Transportation Committee this weekend. Diana will write a statement for the Advocacy Committee. Dan has already provided one for the overview of BNOA.

HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION REPORTS: *Committee Report.*

- Discussion of housing issues continue on how seniors find out about affordable housing.
- What information does North Bellevue Community Center give out to older adults who ask about housing?
 - They do have the ARCH Senior Options info available; do they make referrals? Should we merge the ARCH general low-income housing options with the senior options matrix to provide a resource for BNOA outreach efforts?
 - Kirkland Senior Council resource books still available, new one is in the works.
 - Barb Loomis attended an ADU webinar sponsored by AARP, nothing new there.
 - The huge new transit-related development in Kirkland at the 85th & I-405 junction features multiple Google towers, no quarter for or mention of senior housing or parking.
 - No news updates on the EERC/EMA community transportation grant project.
 - Mike Stanger who narrated the ARCH housing tour will be coming to BNOA as guest speaker, most likely September 1.
 - Anne's compiled a comprehensive list of all articles that have appeared in Neighborhood News by BNOA.
 - Is the ARCH Senior Housing matrix still a valuable/viable tool?

Next H&T Meeting will be July 27th @ 8:30 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

- ❖ For the past couple of weeks, the “BNOA Working Group” that consists of Abigail, Kira, Gazel and Diana reviewed the Human Services Funding Requests from various agencies for the 2023-2024 budget.
 - Christy S. stated that out of 136 programs, 6 were identified as specifically for seniors. Gazel looked at those 6 agencies and the recommended funding levels for them and pulled three that Gazel believes BNOA should focus on because they specifically provided either food, transportation, or volunteer in-home services.

- There were significant reductions of funding recommendations and suggests a letter be written from BNOA to recommend that the City continues to fund these agencies as requested. Gazel drafted a letter to the Human Services Commission to recommend support for senior services providers and fully fund these programs as requested.
 - Diana suggested adding: all these programs enable seniors to stay in their homes and they will be forced to live in a group living facility without sufficient funding - Gazel will consider adding this to the letter.
 - Desiree suggesting adding everyone's names to the letter to show the numbers and there were no objections.
 - Motion moved to edit letter as discussed today and send to the Human Services Commission, voted, and passed. Gazel has received Abigail and Hannah's proxy, so it is a unanimous vote.
 - After the Human Services Commission goes through all the recommendations from staff, they finalize the numbers and make their recommendations to City Council in September. Depending on what the numbers are, another letter can be written to City Council. After that, Gazel is suggesting Diana goes to City Council if further action is needed.
- ❖ Ideas for local agenda in advocacy committee:
- Desiree is encouraging not just the Advocacy Committee but *all* BNOA members to propose what BNOA should advocate for and participate in the dialogue. Upcoming meeting is Monday the 11th at 8:45am. Gazel isn't available on Monday but will email ideas to Desiree
- ❖ Dan will look into having the Utility Relief Program present information at events at North Bellevue Community Center.
- ❖ Diana is asking if The Aging & Disabilities Committee can hold the State Forum at North Bellevue Community Center to discuss issues to put before the State Legislature next year. Dan will respond with available dates and times.

Meeting adjourned at 10:38am