

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING
MINUTES

Aug 4, 2022, North Bellevue Community Center via Virtual – Zoom.

8:30am – 10:30am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Abigail Brown, Anne Rittenhouse, Barbara Carey, Beverly Heyden, Diana Thompson, Gazel Tan, Hannah Kimball, Julie Hart, Kira Hackett, Mary Fredeen, Phyllis Smilen

MEMBERS ABSENT: Catherine Wong, Desiree Leigh, Paul Bradley,

STAFF PRESENT: Dan Lassiter, Bellevue Parks & Community Services
Christy Stangland, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

GUESTS: None

PRESENTER(S): None

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: July minutes approved.

BNOA ISSUE DISCUSSIONS:

1. Listing BNOA members on the BNOA web page.
 - Members discussed options of recognizing those members that are deceased and those who contributed to BNOA since it's beginning in 2006.
 - Add section on BNOA website of previous members.
 - Add an "in memoriam" section of those who passed away and were valued members of the organization.
 - Follow Bellevue Essential's model of an alumni club to communicate information to BNOA alumni.
 - Recognize new members and those who's term has ended.

- ❖ Motion moved to add former members to the BNOA website to recognize their contributions over the years, voted and passed.
 - Dan will put a list together and will reach out to Hannah and Beverly to assist in finalizing the list.

2. BNOA's decision on what is a "senior"

- Typically, 65 and above is considered a senior, AARP's definition of senior starts at 50, Older American Act is 60.
 - What is the official start of being a senior for Bellevue Network on Aging? Do we go with what's recognized by the census while our target audience is younger?
 - Question from Gazel – what are we using this definition for in conjunction with BNOA?
 - It was commented that creating a definition for what age BNOA considers seniors to be may not be necessary as when BNOA makes statements and decisions on various issues such as income disparity, housing rents or burdened individuals with fixed income, the definition of senior is already associated with them and BNOA needs to coincide with the existing definition.
 - Dan points out that around 2004-~2006, a survey went out and the City of Bellevue changed from a senior center to a general community center that includes older adult activities because people didn't want to identify themselves as seniors.
 - Christy believes this conversation came up when BNOA was trying to figure out how to gather data since different agencies consider different ages for seniors. Christy doesn't see this as the need to define the age of seniors but more as defining what age to consider as sub committees analyze data.
 - Phyllis doesn't believe BNOA needs to define the age of seniors but offer resources for all older adults to access as needed.
 - Hannah points out that when data is gathered, we're bound to what the definition of senior is by different agencies, not what BNOA decides it is. As for marketing or appealing to a broader range, older adults or network on aging gives us the umbrella and we can provide outreach materials and activities to any segment without defining age.
- ❖ Motion moved to *not* define the age of seniors but to use the term "older adults" as our targeted audience. Voted and passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approval of the updated proposed legislative agenda:

PROPOSED 2022 FEDERAL LEGISLATION AGENDA

1. Support increased funding for the Older Americans Act, a program that funds critical services, which promote the health and independence of older adults.
2. Increase the Long-Term-Solvency of Social Security by eliminating and/or raising the Income Cap on Social Security.

3. Expand Medicare to cover dental, vision, and hearing and enact legislation which will reduce the price of Prescribed Medication.

4. Advocate for legislation, which will amend the Social Security Act to count a period of receipt of outpatient observation services in a hospital toward satisfying the 3-day inpatient hospital stay requirement for coverage of skilled nursing facility services under Medicare.

5. Oppose the Trust Act introduced by Senator Romney, which could cut back Medicare and Social Security Benefits.

For your information: Some Information on the above five items as of August 1

1. The Older Americans Act is an important source of funding for services for seniors such as elder fall prevention, preventive health, home-delivered nutrition services, protection of vulnerable older Americans (42 federal Senators on May 26 signed a letter urging increasing funding for 2023) The House has passed a bill with increases.

2. Right now only income through \$147,000 is taxed for social security. At this time there are a number of bills in Congress which would modify social security funding. The Sanders bill, Senate bill 4365, would tax all income over \$250,000, increase monthly benefits by \$200 per month, and boost cost of living adjustments by switching to what is stated to be a more accurate measure of inflation. Jayapals bill H.R. 5723 is much more conservative than Sander's bill, changes the index for cost of living raises and applies payroll taxes to income above \$400,000. The two bills mentioned above are very different. An April 2022 article stated there were eight new bills impacting social security bills in Congress. Three Bills have been introduced since then. See also: <https://www.ssa.gov/OACT/solvency/> which summarizes some social security bills. (Remember bills introduced before 2021 are dead)

3. Lowering to some extent the price of drugs and the amount that persons on Medicare need to pay for drugs now appears possible to achieve. Here is a July 2022 article.

<https://www.managedhealthcareexecutive.com/view/medicare-drug-price-negotiation-included-in-manchin-schumer-deal>. As for coverage of dental, vision and hearing, which were included in last years Build Back Better bill which did not pass the senate I am not optimistic, except for coverage of dental related to other ailments. Biden had been trying to revive Build Back Better issues. <https://www.vox.com/23281547/build-back-better-joe-manchin-inflation-reduction-act>

4. We have advocated on this issue for many years. Please note: The three-day rule was suspended during the Pandemic, but evidently not for person's classified as "observation status" After the Pandemic the three-day rule will not apply to Medicare advantage clients or to ACO REACH clients. The two bills introduced on Observation status are H.R. 3650 and SB 2048. Del Bene supports the House bill, due to our past her contact with us on this issue.

5) Item 5 refers to Trust Act, (S 1295) introduced by Romney and related HB 1295—

Unfortunately, his bill has support from both parties. See:

<https://www.romney.senate.gov/romney-leads-bipartisan-coalition-introducing-trust-act/> AND

<https://www.romney.senate.gov/romneys-trust-act-front-and-center-at-budget-committee-hearing/> (6-9-22) SEE ALSO:

<https://indivisibleventura.org/2022/04/26/not-again-romneys-trust-act-the-gops-trojan-horse-to-cut-seniors-social-security-medicare-benefits-is-back/>

- ❖ Hannah believes it will be more appropriate to take out the reference to Romney and insert a bill number in point #5.
- ❖ Motion moved to approve the updated federal legislative agenda with the caveat that the house bill and senate bill numbers are confirmed, corrected, and nothing else changes materially. Voted and passed.
- ❖ Thank you, Diana, for all your efforts and hard work on the above agenda.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP REPORT:

- ❖ Anne attended Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative (EERC). Eastside Friends of Seniors had a nice presentation. Franz Loewenherz spoke about Bellevue's roadway and was very informative regarding car accidents and safety concerns of Bellevue streets. Top 10 causes of car accidents involve bikers and walkers, and 49% of fatalities are in that group. City has a Vision Zero goal to improve roadway safety and are planning to sign on to a letter that's going to be in support of a proposal for a federal grant to help improve problematic corridors. They are also working with Hopelink and other organizations to be included in this SS4A (Safe Streets and roads For All) implementation grant proposal letter.
 - BNOA members would like to see the age breakdown of roadway accidents.
 - Anne will send Franz a follow-up email for this info.
 - Question was asked whether Eastside Friends of Seniors is willing to offer volunteer transportation services in Bellevue?
 - They currently service Issaquah, Redmond and Sammamish and will be open to adding Bellevue if there are volunteers willing to do the work.
 - Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program | US Department of Transportation - <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/SS4A>
 - Eastside Friends of Seniors - <https://eastsidefriendsofseniors.org/>

HUMAN SERVICES UPDATE: *Christy Stangland, Bellevue Parks & Community Services*

- Thank you for all those who sent in letters to the Human Services Commission advocating funding for older adults.
- Human Services Commission will be finalizing funding recommendations in September, no definite date is set but potentially Thursday September 8th but trying to change it to Wednesday the 7th to have the best space for public comments. They will finalize funding recommendations at this meeting.
- Group of individuals went to the council meeting on July 5th and presented on the 1590 funding. They proposed and council adopted the name Housing Stability Program. Information regarding this program is available online.
 - Housing Stability Program - <https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/housing/housing-stability-program>

- Bellevue's Housing Stability Program PowerPoint - <https://bellevue.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=11033986&GUID=945D146F-1D42-4C7A-B01A-77D909FBC4F2>
 - The breakdown of the proposal and what council adopted are detailed in the PowerPoint above.
 - There's a lot of energy around developing housing, great opportunities for advocacy.
- Question for Christy: Has the commission taken any action regarding the letter the BNOA sent regarding funding recommendations?
 Answer: There were a lot of comments, but Christy isn't sure if any recommendations were changed. If anyone has a question around a specific program, Christy can take a look at that and tell you what the updated recommendation is. The recommendation amounts were finalized but there will be a public hearing to vote on the final recommendation that will go to council. Next steps would be to continue to advocate by submitting written comments to the Human Services Commissioners or present at the public hearing at the 1st meeting in September.
 - Updated funding recommendations for agencies included in the BNOA letter:
 - ✓ Meals on Wheels – 100%
 - ✓ Sound Generations Volunteer Driver program – 100%
 - ✓ Catholic Community Services Volunteer Services program – 82.9%
 - Anne would like to clarify; The Human Services Needs Update is only for the department to help dictate funding recommendations but they're under no obligation to use it in any other department.
 - ✓ Christy commented that no one is required but it is shared widely and used within planning. The mayor will often pull comments and statistics from it during presentations, but it is not an adopted plan.
 - There was a request for translation at the Human Services Commission Meetings and yes it will be provided. Please keep in mind that interpretation and translation accommodation requests will be met for the community.

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

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORTS: *Committee report, not yet approved.*

- Proposed federal Legislative Agenda
 - a) Has Kirkland approved?
 - b) Proposed agenda will go before BNOA on August 7.
 - c) Update on issues: Manchin is now supporting giving Medicare the right to bargain for the price of medicine. Another bill relating to Social Security has been introduced in Congress.

d) Who is your Congressional representative? Anyone still in Smith's District?

e) Procedure after approval of Federal Agenda.

i) Diana to make appointments with legislators or their assistants.

ii) Members try to attend all meetings, unless you have a conflict.

iii) Will need to decide who will speak on each issue at legislator's meetings.

4. Letter to be written by Kathy, Karen and Geri on Women's Health.

5. Possible Local Issues for the Advocacy Committee to work on (Some of items below may be out of date as the majority were proposed by an advocacy member about 5 years ago.

a) Older Adult Awareness of emergency preparedness,

b) Outreach to diverse populations to find their needs,

c) Universal Design (How it applies to the housing now being constructed,

d) Business discounts for older adults and the Gold Card,

e) Employment Advocacy for older adults (A long time ago Bellevue had an employment program for seniors, run by the City of Seattle. The program was discontinued, as financial assistance was discontinued),

f) Virtual Community Development (What does that mean?),

g) More looping in Bellevue and Kirkland,

h) Housing in Kirkland and Bellevue,

i) Focus Group on insurance information,

j) Meeting the needs of seniors in hot weather,

k) More programs for persons with dementia and/or their family caregivers.

6. September meeting: September 12th (The first Monday is Labor Day.

Follow-up tasks post meeting.

1. Kathy will contact all members of the Kirkland Senior Council (KSC) to double check that members approve of the Legislative federal agenda we voted for at our July Meeting. The BNOA will discuss the agenda at the August meeting.

2. Kathy will find out whether Kirkland gives out the Seattle-King county gold Cards to seniors.

3. Jeri will contact AARP about getting a speaker to talk to our committee about the need of employment advocacy for seniors. (There are a lot of current job openings, but seniors may still be discriminated against)

4. Jeri also volunteered to find out what businesses in Kirkland offer discounts for seniors.

5. Caryn Morawek volunteered to contact Overlake and Evergreen Hospital to see if they were planning to have a full day health resource fair, as prior to the pandemic. If they are she will ask whether the Bellevue Network on Aging and Kirkland Senior Council can each have a table.

6. Members will, schedules permitting, attend virtual meetings that Diana plans to set up with federal legislators.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORTS: *Committee Report.*

Most of the meeting was devoted to discussion of the sudden passing of our dear friend Janet Jelleff, how to pick up the threads of her roles and responsibilities in outreach activities, the Bellevue Farmers Market (BFM) and Neighborhood Network (NN). We also finalized many details for Senior Day at the Bellevue Farmers Market scheduled for August 4.

- We're all set for August 4 BFM,
- Will reach out to Catherine for her help on 8/4,
- Anne R and Julie H will get the August issue of NN from Mark Heilman to NBCC for us to pick up and distribute,
- December NN article will be on fraud,
- Diana will write about Death with Dignity,
- HK will meet Dan at BFM to set up for Senior Day,
- Gazel and Hannah will reorganize and repack outreach materials at NBCC,
- NBCC-AB will write \$500 check to BFM on Monday July 25 and mail to BFM market management.

NEXT MEETING WILL BE AUGUST 18, 2022 @ 8:30 a.m.

- ❖ Barbara will keep reaching out to the Y and Gazel will see if they can connect at the market today.
- ❖ Diana – please put together dementia resources for October.

HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION REPORTS: *Committee Report.*

Property Tax

1. Have Dan invite John Wilson for BNOA general session presentation on King County Tax Relief for Seniors to address:

- Increasing income threshold,
- Perhaps decreasing the percentage,,
- Address criteria differences listed on different site pages:

- o limited deferrals age 60+/\$57,000
- o full deferrals age 60+/\$67,411 disposable income
- o exemptions age 61+/\$58,423
- o FAQ's list age 62 for exemptions and age 60 for deferrals

KC Tax Links:

- Tax Relief - King County (General)
- Senior Exemption - King County

(includes Host Event - King County and START HERE: Apply for a senior property tax exemption from KC Learn on Vimeo)

- Senior Exemption (Paper application)
- Senior Exemption (Online Application)
- Email: Exemptions.Assessments@kingcounty.gov
- Phone: 206-296-3920

2. Contact Wendy Pender (KCLS) for possibility of holding a Tax Relief event at one of our libraries. (Abigail) Wendy is currently out of office until August 15th. I left her a message. Just as well since we also need to consult with Dan on process/logistics. Nothing similar is currently scheduled. I will try to follow-up with the person covering this area in her absence.

Aging in Place

1. Contact Seattle Times for reprint guidance on Aging in Place: (Abigail)

10 renovations that promote aging in place | The Seattle Times.

FYI - Permissions and Licensing FAQs - The Seattle Times Basically, we'll need to request permissions if we want to print more than 10 copies. Sharing is unlimited if using associated sharing tools/apps (Twitter, Facebook). Sharing direct links with summary is unlimited, but not all users will necessarily have access without a subscription. (Permissions and Licensing Request (wufoo.com))

Consult with Dan on presenting a series of meetings/presentations on Aging in Place at either the NBCC or perhaps City Hall I was unable to locate past or archived information on the aging in place series noted by Gazel but have found a few other potential models with topics to consider but most are related to general guidance like fall prevention or social isolation. We would need to focus on areas and resources specific to Bellevue (e.g., Home Safety would include King County Fall Prevention Program).

- ❖ Diana wanted to ensure that the Housing and Transportation Committee is aware of the history of housing and taxation. About 3 years ago, the legislature passed a law that

decreases the amount of property taxes for seniors. Gazel acknowledged this but stated there are further questions due to astronomical rise in property values which concerns the seniors and would like to continue to follow property tax issues.

- ❖ Phyllis attended the council meeting last week; people came to council asking to receive help with capital investment program plan. Some spoke about trees for livability and the health benefits trees can provide and were petitioning to preserve tree canopies and tree density in the city of Bellevue. Listening to them speak, Phyllis pondered about what it takes to be a good speaker and the importance of speaking from the heart, not always focusing on the dollar amount needed for funding.
 - Trees4Livability.org - Bellevue Trees - Bellevue, Washington
<https://trees4livability.org/>
 - Trees for Giveaway | City of Bellevue (bellevuewa.gov)
<https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/community-development/environmental-stewardship/trees-open-space/trees>

NEW BUSINESS:

- ❖ Presentation ideas:
 - NBCC has been doing a variety of speaker presentation through the King County Veteran's grant. We need input on what you would like to hear about so it can be put together and advertised to the community.
- ❖ Recruitment prep, need at least 4 helpers to discuss what position we need, review applications, and conduct interviews.
 - Phyllis, Beverly, Abigail, Hannah volunteers.
 - Dan will send out the notice to the city before September. Interviewing and selections will be in October.
 - Hannah suggested having a little more time to reflect on the interview to fill out the interview comments instead of trying to fill it out in the moment.
 - Diana desires people from industries who have knowledge in senior issues.
 - Gazel wants to remind the interview committee that many terms will end at the end of 2023 so new members will need to be incorporated into BNOA in 2023. Hannah, Desiree, Phyllis and Gazel's terms will end in 2023.
 - Please be clear to new interviewers that we are currently operating on a remote basis and need to be comfortable working through Zoom.
 - Hannah hopes for qualities in people who are willing to step forward and take action, participate, and do research which can be time consuming.
 - Julie indicated interest in being a member, not a liaison. Dan will put an electronic vote out for all to respond.
 - Barbara indicated interest in staying on for next year.
 - A new vice chair will be voted on as well. Dan will ask for nominations and then will check with the nominees to confirm their interest, then will put out an electronic vote.

- ❖ Housing Hyde Shuttle bus at NBCC
 - Things have been moving and they're considering housing Hyde Shuttles at NBCC. Dan is working with legal to move it forward.
 - Consider how we can get people to use the service before it's in place so that it's successful once in place.

- ❖ Next meeting, Mike Stanger will be presenting from ARCH.
 - Hannah volunteers to gather and collate questions for Mike so please email Hannah within the next week or two with your questions.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40am