

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING

MINUTES

March 6, 2025. 8:30a -10:30a

MEMBERS' PRESENT: Anne Rittenhouse, Abigail Brown, Bhavana Pahwa, Shana Aucsmith, Beverly Heyden, Andrea Kline, Elaine White, Eleanor Lee, Kari Marino, Lisa Corcoran, Hannah Kimball, Adam Clark, Julie Hart, Beth Hanley, Lori Reinvik,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Barbara Carey

STAFF PRESENT: Dan Lassiter -Community Services Supervisor
Christy Stangland- HS Planner

GUESTS: Lydia Straub-Community Homes

PRESENTER(S): Emilia Truax – AmeriCorps Member, COB Fire: **General Hazards and Emergency Preparedness.**

RECORDING SECRETARY: Daniel Lassiter, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL: The meeting was called to order by Anne Rittenhouse.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Lydia stated the reason for attending was to hear about older adult issues being discussed and to relate it to older adults living with disabilities.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: *February* minutes were approved.

Presentation: General Hazards and Emergency Preparedness.

Understanding Local Hazards:

Hazard:

A Hazard is the potential for harm or a potential threat

Disaster:

A disaster is a direct or indirect impact of a hazard that causes significant harm to a community or society.

Bellevue's Hazards

Hazards have been divided into three categories to better understand and prepare for their potential impacts.

Technological:

- Structure Fires
- Power Outages
- Structure Outages
- Structural Failures (dam)
- Cyberattacks (becoming more of a problem)

Natural:

- Earthquakes
- Severe Weather
- Volcanic Eruptions
- Landslides
- Floods
- Wildfires
- Infectious Diseases

Human-Caused:

- Hazmat
- Terrorism
- Civil Disturbance

Bellevue's most common disasters

While Bellevue faces numerous hazards there are three hazards that frequently become disasters in our area.

Severe Weather:

Severe weather can be windstorms, heat waves, snowstorms, droughts and so on. A severe weather event happens almost every year in Washington state: the bomb cyclone, ice storm, major heat wave

- How many of you have experienced a severe weather event that wasn't the bomb cyclone?

Power Outages:

Power outages are most associated with weather related disasters, however there are many ways one can occur like equipment failure, cyber-attacks, accidents and so on. If a power outage persists over a long period of time, it can pose its own disaster, by disrupting food supplies and people's access to communication and medical care.

Structural Fires:

There are an estimated 300,000 home fires a year in the United States. While a single home fire isn't necessarily a disaster for the greater community, an apartment fire could require emergency shelters to be opened and disaster services to be provided.

We are going to further breakdown Severe weather into extreme cold and extreme heat

Extreme Cold

In the PNW the cold weather season begins in October and can extend all the way into May, with the coldest months being January and February. The extreme cold and winter storms that can occur during these months can increase the risk of:

- Car accidents
- Carbon monoxide poisoning
- Power outages
- Hypothermia
 - Occurs when your body temperature drops below 95 degrees F
 - Can set in at 60 degrees F for older adults as their bodies have a harder time regulating temperature
 - 50 degrees F for young to middle aged
 - can increase the risk of heart attack and liver damage
- Frostbite
 - Risk begins at 5 degrees or below F, the lower the temperature the faster it can occur
 - It can occur on any body part but most commonly on extremities like nose, fingers, ears, and toes
- Over Exertion
 - Can increase risk for hypothermia and heart attack

To prevent these potential health risks, it is recommended to reduce time outside and travel. If traveling outside has sturdy footwear and warm clothing, covering head hands and feet well can reduce heat loss.

Mobility devices:

If you have limited mobility traveling in the snow and ice can be especially hazardous.

- Staying inside during winter storms is the best course of action but if you need to travel it is important to plan your routes ahead of time. Use Bellevue's traffic camera map to see what roadways are being serviced.
- Use your community and set up a support system. This team should be community members who are within walking distance of you such as neighbors' coworkers, and family. Before a disaster get these individuals familiar with your routine and needs.

This way if you are stranded in snow or need help, they will know and be ready to assist you.

If you use a mobility device, it's up-keep during winter weather is important to keep it functional and safe.

-If you use a wheelchair

- Have a water-proof cover you can use to keep electronic mobility devices protected during rain or snow
- Carry a brush to wipe off snow or ice buildup along tires.

-If you use a walker or cane

- Consider getting ice grips
- Wear sturdy footwear outside to improve traction

Community warming centers

-Bellevue libraries

-Bellevue community centers

All these locations are subject to change as during major weather events facilities can become damaged or inaccessible.

Power Outages

As mentioned before, power outages can be caused by many different disasters and can exasperate their impacts.

Refrigeration:

Move as much food as possible to the freezer and keep the door shut unless necessary. **A full freezer can keep food safe for 48 hours**

The fridge can keep food safe for 4 hours so keep food that you will consume within that time frame in the fridge and put the rest in the freezer.

Carbon monoxide poisoning:

Risk of carbon monoxide poisoning increases during power outages due to inoperable carbon monoxide detectors and people bringing in outside devices to heat and cook in their homes.

Medical devices:

If you have electrical medical devices that are life sustaining, be prepared for a power outage. Before a power outage can occur

- Know how long your device can operate without being connected to a power source
- Label all medical devices with your name and contact information as well as an out of state contact in case you are separated from your device
- Have medical device manuals in an accessible location in case someone else needs to operate it for you
- Make sure the devices are fully charged, have extra batteries, or have a portable charging pack

Community charging stations:

Bellevue's ADA team has installed six public charging stations for wheelchairs and other devices. The charging stations have 24-volt standard chargers as well as USB cables. Before going to a charging station be sure to check if a public charging station is operation before going. During or after a disaster a charging station could be damaged or hazardous to travel too so be careful and research ahead of time.

The charging stations are located at

- Bellevue city hall
- Crossroads community center
- Highland community center
- North Bellevue community center
- South Bellevue community center
- Northwest art center

Structure fires:**Main Causes:**

The top three causes of house fires are cooking, Heating, and Electrical

Prevention:

Easy ways to prevent a house fire from starting are having operational fire extinguishers and smoke detectors.

Fire extinguishers

- Familiarize yourself with your fire extinguisher locations
- Check them regularly to make sure they have pressure and are undamaged
- Check the expiration date and replace it if it expires (they last about 10 years, but depend on the type)

Smoke detectors

- Regularly check that your smoke detectors are operational
- Make sure the batteries are fresh

Preparedness:

In case of a house fire, it is important to be prepared, a few ways to be is to have your important documents backed up and have home fire insurance.

Document back up

- Keep your important documents in a fireproof container
- Having electronic back ups
- Having copies at trusted person's home

Insurance

- Having home fire insurance can make recovery easier by helping with the cost of rebuilding and replacing items that were destroyed by the fire

Personal emergency preparedness:

Personal emergency preparedness is the foundation of a disaster resilient community.

Communication plan

Having an emergency communication plan can help you stay in contact and reunite with loved ones, as well as stay informed on emergency alerts, and call for help if needed. You can start this plan by listing emergency contacts

- Include and out of state contact with someone outside of the disaster zone (written on paper and on mobile device)
- Using text messages is better than calling
- Share your plan with your family and emergency contacts
- Virtual reunification point (trusted out of state family member, group chat)
- Practice makes perfect
- Keep plan updated for changes in phone numbers and contacts

Action plan

An emergency action plan is a plan for what you will do when certain disasters strike. Should include

- Areas of refuge and safe sheltering locations withing your home or complex
- Two safe meeting locations in and outside of your community
- Multiple evacuation routes that lead to your predetermined meeting locations

Emergency preparedness kit:

An emergency preparedness kit should accommodate you and household members and should have enough supplies for at least two weeks. You should continuously check and update items in your kit as needs change and items expire.

Items:

- Non-perishable food and water
- First aid kit
- Important documents
 - Insurance
 - Identification
 - Passport
 - Id
 - Medical equipment
- Medications (30 days)
- Hygiene products
- Comfort items
 - Tools such as Flashlights, batteries, emergency blanket, whistle.

Emergency Pet Preparedness:

If you have a pet, it is important to prepare them for an emergency as a prepared pet can ease stress in an already stressful situation. Some steps you can take to prepare your pet for emergencies are to build an emergency kit for your pet and familiarize yourself with your pet sheltering protocols for emergency shelters.

Pet Emergency Kit:

Just like for a human's emergency kit the items in your pet kit should be able to last at least two weeks. What you put in your pet's kit largely depends on what type of animal you have; a cat needs different items than a dog. The recommended items to begin your kit are:

- non-perishable foods, this can be dry kibble or canned wet food
- Water
- Vaccination records
 - Have vax tags on collar (rabies)
- Identification
 - Collar
- Proof of ownership
- Medications
- Leash and halter
- Kennel or carrier
- bedding
- Waste disposal method

During a disaster there is a high possibility of your pet being separated from you. To prepare for this situation it is recommended you have them microchipped in case they are separated from you they can be easily identified. Having your pet fully vaccinated is also important so it can avoid getting sick while out of your care.

Emergency Sheltering:

Different jurisdictions have different rules when it comes to pets and emergency shelter. In Bellevue only service animals are allowed in human emergency shelters. Pets in a pet specific shelter that is located near human shelters. It will be the owner's responsibility to check in, feed, and care for their pet while it is in the shelter.

For entry into a pet emergency shelter, it is vital that vaccination records are available to prevent the spread of illnesses within the shelter.

Having proof of ownership can keep people from falsely claiming your pet.

Get Involved

- Bellevue's Office of Emergency Management
- Bellevue C.E.R. T
- Bellevue Communications Support
- Alert King County-available in 28 languages but must register prior to an emergency.

End of presentation.

Human Services Report – Christy Stangland

Christy spoke of the next Human Services Needs update which will be completed by an Outside Agency, Zello International. Focus groups will be set up and BNOA will be invited to participate and help represent older adults in Bellevue.

Christy indicated that federal funding grants will continue to be given out now as the money must be spent by December and there is no determination on the exact amount does not reach Bellevue until June. Recipients have been told if the federal funding does not follow through then their award will immediately end.

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

Advocacy Committee- Abigail

The federal agenda has not been completed as the legislature is in session but has determined what they are focusing on for older adults. More time will allow for the development of a better agenda.

Outreach Committee Report – Shana

Farmers Market tabling help is being sought from BNOA members. The time has now been extended by 30minutes to end at 7:30p. Set up must be fully completed by 2:45p.

The Older Adult Bellevue Market has been changed to September 18th.

The BFM will provide BNOA the tent and will set it up and tear it down. Weights, distribution materials, and a table will be needed for these market days.

The lecture on Advance Directives presented by Maureen Kures R.N. sponsored by BNOA, KCVSHSL, and City of Bellevue will be held on April 29th, 10:30a-11:30 at North Bellevue Community Center. The flyer will be available via Dan soon.

Housing and Transportation – Anne

See committee minutes for information.

Other Business

DOL will be attending the April presentation. Please send questions in advance to Anne so she can forward to the speaker.

Ad hoc Older Adult Meeting with COB Departments:

Elaine has been working on a project that gathers printed information on department projects concerning older adults to have in one display case.

The team has not met currently but the members include: Hannah, Abigail, and Beth. They plan on holding a meeting in a week.

A Tech talk has been offered by an individual, but the BNOA members would like to talk with the person and vet qualifications. Adam and Eleanor have agreed to meet with the person.

Dan indicated names of BNOA to receive the proclamations in May and June are needed. No one came forward at this time.

Members requested a talk from Bellevue Police on Cyber Crimes.

The Ad hoc group organizes follow-up activity and prepares for the next City of Bellevue older adult discussion will meet after the monthly BNOA meeting. Current members: Hannah, Elaine, Abigail.

An information repository has been developed in the city and Dan will work with the records dept, IT and BNOA to learn how each member can use it. April will be the month that a representative will come to speak at BNOA on the subject.

Dan is still working with the City of Bellevue on the repository data collection for BNOA easy access.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25