

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING

MINUTES

June 5, 2025. 8:30a -10:30a

MEMBERS' PRESENT: Elaine White, Eleanor Lee, Bhavana Pahwa, Shana Aucsmith, Hannah Kimball, Lisa Corcoran, Lori Reinvik, Beth Hanley, Kari Marino, Julie Hart, Abigail Brown,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Anne Rittenhouse, Barbara Carey, Beverly Heyden, Andrea Kline, Adam Clark-resigned,

STAFF PRESENT: Dan Lassiter -Community Services Supervisor
Christy Stangland- HS Planner
Shelley Brittingham – Assist Director – PCS

GUESTS: John Depalma – care provider company
Alex Tsimmerman

PRESENTER(S): **Cheri Perazzali**-President, HLAA Washington State Association (HLAA-WA) Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA).
Traci Adair (she/her), OAHA Policy and Community Engagement
King County – Discussion of Age Friendly State, County and City project.

RECORDING SECRETARY: Daniel Lassiter, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL: The meeting was called to order by vice-chair Elaine White.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Alex Tsimmerman - expressed time of BNOA meetings too early in the morning; Mayor Robinson acting like a xxxx xxx and cutting speeches at city council; IRS taxes those making less than \$50,000 and they should not do so.

Presenters: Cheri Perazzali-President, HLAA Washington State Association (HLAA-WA) Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA). Speaking of hearing loss program.

Traci Adair (she/her), OAHA Policy and Community Engagement King County – Discussion of Age Friendly State, County and City project.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 2025 minutes were approved with spelling update to Tsimmerman's last name.

Presentation:

Cheri Perazzali – Hearing Association Discussion

Cheri spoke of her life-long hearing loss experience and indicated that many people experience more hearing loss as they age and that people tend to ignore the loss of their hearing. Hearing loss tends to sneak up on a person.

Understanding the scope of hearing loss:

- 1 in 3 ages 65 – 75 live with hearing loss.
- 1 in 2, ages 75 and older live with hearing loss.
- 4 in 5, age 80+ live with hearing loss.

The emotional toll of hearing loss is:

Stigma leads to shame, embarrassment and lowered self-esteem. Also, fear leads to limited social interactions, losing relationships and lack of personal safety. A person experiences fatigue due to the effort to communicate. It takes an average of seven years to get people to seek help with their hearing loss. Research indicates that hearing loss decreases brain use. Hearing loss can be misdiagnosed as dementia and if not treated can actually lead to dementia.

The good news concerning hearing loss is:

There is new research on the power of hearing health including statistics showing a decrease in depression through learning about your hearing loss and taking action.

Washington State leads in hearing-friendly laws,

New technologies have been and continue to be developed to aid hearing loss such as T-coils and Hearing Loops.

The Potential bad news is:

There are cuts to Medicaid/Medicare.

Cuts to research funding.

Tariffs on hearing aids and devices.

What does helping seniors with hearing loss look like:

Treatment – Encourage senior to see a hearing professional as people tend to deny the need to have their hearing checked.

Track and treat progressive hearing loss; Protect mental and physical health' maintain interests and lifestyle; check out the financial assistance page on the HLAA-WA website; some Medicare Advantage programs help defer costs.

Support – Encourage senior to seek peer support such as emotional component to hearing loss; peer-to-peer support; find practical tips for living with hearing loss; support for families and individuals living with hearing loss; seek information about assistive technologies.

Access – Encourage senior to explore technologies. These include open captions, assistive listening devices, speech-to-text applications and assistive listening systems.

A most people tend to ignore the hearing loss issue they may be facing; it can help to normalize hearing loss to help seniors. It is important to talk, plan and model accessibility concerning hearing loss.

What is the focus of Hearing Loss Association of America(HLAA)?

- Advocacy, support, outreach, and information sharing.
- Some information channels include bi-weekly E-news, hearingloss-wa.org and social media.
- A hearing loss support group, “HOPE- Hearing Other People’s Experiences, meets the first Wednesday of every month at 4p meeting on Zoom.
- The HLAAW is working to create senior-friendly communities which will create hearing-friendly communities. This is being done by engaging with city governments, encouraging effective communications training, providing senior resources and support and striving to provide universal access.

HLAAW-Washington newsletter can be subscribed to at: www.hearingloss-wa.org

End of presentation.

Traci Adair (she/her), OAHA Policy and Community Engagement King County – Discussion of Age Friendly State, County and City project.

Tracie is working on behalf of King County to discover conversation cities are having about taking on the Older Adult Friendly Initiative put forth by AARP and declared by Governor Inslee for Washington State in 2024.

BNOA members pointed out that Kirkland Senior Advocacy is in the process of asking Kirkland Council to move forward with the initiative.

Traci has been going to cities asking: :Is this a good idea for King County to engage in to show that the county is a great place for older adults to live. The cost to pursue this program varies as each city or region has different domains that they will work on, (the program has 5 domains) but all domains do not need to be identified as priorities.

BNOA will be talking about the age-friendly initiative at the Advocacy meeting and Abigail has met with parks leaders in discussion about the program. Currently Renton WA and La Puente CA plans are being studied to get an idea of the workload and possible direction for future action.

BNOA indicated they would keep good communication with King County in progress with the project.

Human Services Report – Christy Stangland

Christy reports that the loss of federal funding is closing programs in Human Services that were started with Covid. These programs were known to end soon, and the effect is felt mostly in the transportation department and Human Services home repair programs. Replacement funding discussions are taking place now.

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

Advocacy Committee- Abigail

June's meeting was missed due to illnesses. A make-up will be attempted.

Outreach Committee Report – Shana

The BFM has no one registered on Aug 7. The decision is to cancel BNOA tabling for that day.

The June meeting has been moved to June 18th at 8:30.

Housing and Transportation – Elaine

See committee minutes for information.

Other Business

- Adam Clark has had to withdraw from the BNOA for business reasons.
- Ad hoc – Annual Department meeting
- The team is reviewing a better way to plug information about older adults into the departments, instead of trying it through an annual meeting. The team presented the idea of creating 2–3-minute older adult statements, approved by BNOA and PCS management that can be stated at commission and network meetings of the City of Bellevue, where a better presence of older adults can be established. The group will meet once more to discuss these statements and report at July's meeting.
- The City Council World Elder Abuse Awareness Day Proclamation will be on June 10th with Shana receiving the document and providing comments about local cases of older adult abuse and reporting information for public knowledge.

- An information repository status. Abigail and Lisa have developed the site but need more information from Dan.

Next meeting July 3rd. Presenters: Sophia Fall and Colin Munson – COB Community Development speaking on the Sustainable Building update.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30