

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on April 21, 2015

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

March 17, 2015
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson McEachran, Commissioners Bruels, Kline, Villar

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners Beighle, Perelman, Plaskon

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Camron Parker, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Penny Lara, Seattle/King County Public Health; Luke Lamon, Sound Transit

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Chair McEachran who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners Beighle, Perelman and Plaskon, all of whom were excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 3, 2015

Commissioner Villar called attention to the first page of the minutes and noted that both in the list of Commissioners present and the call to order "Chair Perelman" should be changed to "Chair McEachran." She also referred to the last paragraph on page 4 and suggested adding language indicating that after additional review the Commission confirmed that the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club application had met the 51 percent requirement.

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Bruels. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kline and it carried unanimously.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Villar reported that along with Commissioners Bruels and Kline she participated in a site visit of International Community Health Services (ICHS). She said it was good to see how well organized they are and how clean their facilities are. It was learned that they have two tenants inherited as part of purchasing the property; as those leases expire, the intent is for the organization to expand its services.

Commissioner Kline confirmed that both tenants are looking for space they can move to. She added that ICHS intimated they would like to open a branch in one of the Bellevue School District schools in the future. She said subsequent to the site visit she emailed information to the folks at Sammamish which has a health services program.

Commissioner Bruels said it was good to see such a nice new facility. He noted that they do not have a lot in terms of formal partnerships but they do a lot of cross referrals and some work with Jubilee Reach and the school districts. Their model seeks to integrate behavioral health services with health services and to that end each day begins with a morning huddle of the psychologists, case workers and medical practitioners to review and care plan for the slate of patients to be seen for the day. He added that health clinics continue to need help even though the Affordable Care Act is in play. Reimbursement rates for Medicaid continue to be extremely low and the amount of money coming in for the number of people they are seeing is not fully covering all the overhead. Even as the number of persons eligible for Medicaid rises, many providers are not taking Medicaid patients, so specialty care is becoming a big issue. ICHS and other clinics are also still seeing a lot of patients who are uninsured for various reasons.

Chair McEachran said he attended the Celebration of Youth for Friends of Youth on March 13. Over 500 attended and over \$180,000 was raised at the event. He said he also would be attending the upcoming Imagine Housing auction.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie said on March 16 she attended an all-day Committee to End Homelessness strategic planning session focused on the details of the proposed strategic plan.

6. DISCUSSION

A. King County Low-Income Fare Program: ORCA LIFT

Penny Lara with the Seattle/King County Department of Public Health, reported that the goal of the department under the Affordable Care Act was to see 19,000 King County residents. As of February, more than 200,000 had been enrolled. The Department and King County Metro saw the opportunity for a good partnership given

the networks already established by the Department. It makes sense to have a one-stop shop for the residents, so when they apply for social services, they are also enrolled in the ORCA LIFT program. Transportation fares were recently increased but the King County executive and the King County Council wanted to make sure low-income residents would continue to have access to transportation, so the ORCA LIFT program was implemented. The reduced fare program costs clients \$1.50 for one or two zones any time of day; the regular fare is \$2.75. The reduced rate only applies on Metro, Kitsap Transit, Sound Transit Link light rail and the Seattle street cars.

Implementation of the program began on March 1 and many of those who have applied are using a combination of older transportation modes. It has been a learning experience for the Department to learn about the different fares and passes. Families and individuals earning under 200 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for the program. That means someone earning about \$12 per hour qualifies. Persons must apply in person so their identity and income data can be confirmed. Immigration status is not a factor. The cards look just like the regular ORCA cards. The program is funded for two years.

Ms. Lara said a successful event was recently conducted in partnership with Casa Latina in Seattle. The agency screened their own members and verified their identities and incomes. In two hours 75 were signed up for ORCA LIFT cards. Casa Latina provides day labor employment.

Ms. Lara said the program has a presence at Crossroads Shopping Center every Monday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. A Spanish-speaking person is there who is fully trained on both the Affordable Care Act and ORCA LIFT. The program also has a presence at Eastgate Public Health every day Monday through Friday. Stevenson elementary school reached out to the program and on March 30 the program will be promoted there.

It is not just the Department that is implementing ORCA LIFT. There are eight partner agencies throughout King County, all of which have different target populations.

Ms. O'Reilly said she has talked with Metro staff about getting other Eastside agencies involved as partners in the program.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Villar, Ms. Lara said the program brochure is currently only available in English and Spanish. Work is under way to translate it into all eight mandated languages. The information is available online in the eight languages already.

Chair McEachran asked how many people have signed up for the ORCA LIFT card. Ms. Lara said since the March 1 start date for the program, more than 3500 King County residents have been enrolled. No media advertising has been done as yet

other than some posters on buses. The program is working with Imagine Housing and will have enrollment events at each one of their sites starting March 23. The program was also be present at Hopelink on a few Saturdays recently.

Ms. O'Reilly said in talking with Sound Transit about the program she learned that one reason for the program not being available for all of their modes is the fact that Sound Transit operates regionally. It would be necessary for them to do a fare system change in both Pierce and Snohomish counties, and those counties have decided not to become involved at the present time.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Update on Sound Transit - East Link Stations

Luke Lamont with the Sound Transit Design, Engineering and Construction Management Group said the East Link Line will touch the cities of Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue and Redmond. East Link is an extension of the existing light rail system that runs from downtown Seattle to SeaTac International Airport. The work to expand the system is part of ST-2, a voter-approved funding package from 2008. In addition to the work to bring the line to the Eastside, Sound Transit is expanding from Westlake up to Capitol Hill and down to Husky Stadium, and south from SeaTac to Angle Lake in the city of SeaTac. Additional extensions are planned to the north of the University of Washington that will continue on to Roosevelt and Northgate in 2021, and on to Lynnwood in 2023. An ST-3 package may be before the voters as early as 2016 to continue expanding the system.

The 14-mile East Link segment will have ten stations and a projected ridership of 50,000 per day by 2030. The station on the Seattle end will be located on I-90 between Rainier Avenue South and 23rd Avenue South. The line will continue east across I-90 on what is currently the center roadway. A station will be located on Mercer Island next to the existing park and ride. From there it will continue east across the East Channel Bridge to the first of six Bellevue stations at the existing South Bellevue park and ride. In addition to a station at that location, the project will include a five-story parking garage that will triple the current parking capacity. The alignment continues from there north along Bellevue Way and onto 112th Avenue NE. The second station will be at 112th Avenue NE and Main Street adjacent to the Surrey Downs neighborhood. From there the line will enter a tunnel and head north under 110th Avenue NE to City Hall where it will come out of the tunnel and into another station before continuing east across I-405 to a station near the hospital and behind Whole Foods. The line will continue from there towards the future Spring District development to a station at 130th Avenue NE and then on to Redmond.

The project has been in the design phase for the past eight years. The work is very near final design which is where all the planning work and environmental reviews have been completed and the design is moved from 30 percent to 100 percent, at which point a contractor is brought on board and the work of construction begins.

Ground will be broken in Bellevue in early 2016. Some utility work will actually kick off in 2015. Construction will continue through 2021 and once that work is done anywhere from six to nine months will be spent testing the system.

Mr. Lamon shared with the Commissioners the layout of the South Bellevue station. He explained that a wide multipurpose path will be added along the alignment from I-90 to Main Street. All facilities will be ADA compliant and will incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) elements to improve safety. Visual and auditory cues will be incorporated into the train platforms.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Villar, Mr. Lamon said the signage group works within the specific station jurisdictions in deciding which languages to include on signage. Usually the top two or three languages are selected, including Braille. All printed materials, however, have the standard language block, and on-call interpreter services are available for anyone who calls.

The Commissioners were shown drawings of the East Main station. Mr. Lamon noted that a signalized pedestrian crossing will be added to the south of the station to facilitate the crossing of 112th Avenue SE. He also shared drawings of the tunnel to the north of the East Main station; the elevated Downtown station adjacent to City Hall; the crossing of I-405; the elevated Hospital station behind Whole Foods, including an ADA accessible path leading from the station to a crosswalk on 116th Avenue NE and from there connecting to the hospital; the Spring District station which has yet to be designed; and the 130th Avenue station in the Bel-Red corridor, which includes the possibility of a 300-stall parking garage or a transit-oriented development.

Ms. O'Reilly reported that Mr. Lamon has been working with the Bellevue Network on Aging and has been trying to implement suggestions related to serving the older adult population, many of whom have mobility issues.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie asked the Commissioners to share their impressions of the joint boards and commissions meeting focused on the Comprehensive Plan. She also noted that since that meeting a communication was received from the Planning Commission staff about a suggestion they received regarding including something in the Human Services Element.

Chair McEachran reported that he attended the Planning Commission's public hearing on the Planning Commission and provided testimony. With regard to the joint meeting, he said it was great to sit with other commissioners and have a cross conversation.

Commissioner Kline said it was interesting to see groups with no affiliation with human services point out the need for affordable housing.

Senior Planner Camron Parker said the staff at each table kept detailed notes of the individual conversations. Those notes will be part of the record of the process. The formal public hearing provided opportunity for people to comment, but there has also been a broader process that has allowed for submitting comments online for each chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. The comments have all been compiled and in all about five pages of comments were made about housing, specifically affordable housing. A large number of comments were also made about utilities, primarily about the Energize Eastside project. Comments regarding transportation rounded out the three top topics.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Kline, Mr. Camron said different commissions are taking different approaches to providing feedback to the Planning Commission. The Transportation Commission and the Environmental Services Commission both drafted letters to the Planning Commission. The Parks and Community Services Board reviewed the issues and decided not to draft a response. The opportunity exists for the Human Services Commission to write a letter to the Planning Commission to inform their work, and/or to the City Council as it begins its work on the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Camron said the Planning Commission may complete its work on the Comprehensive Plan as early as March 25. They covered most of their outstanding issues at their meeting on March 11, with the exception of housing which will serve as the main part of their discussion on March 25.

Commissioner Villar called attention to the sentence "The city has been an effective participant in the region's work that has largely eliminated homelessness" included on page 5 of the introduction to the Comprehensive Plan. She suggested the sentence is not factual. Mr. Parker agreed. She also pointed out that on page 21 of the Housing Element the implementation program chart references the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness which has ended. Mr. Parker said a change is already in the works to correct that.

Commissioner Villar said she reviewed the housing policies for the cities of Kirkland and Redmond and was impressed with them in terms of their tactile approach to affordable housing. Mr. Parker said staff researched the housing policies of other jurisdictions and compared them with Bellevue's policies. He said he did not know if the Planning Commission did the same but assumed they did not. Commissioner Villar said she found it interesting that both Kirkland and Redmond referred to King County policies, but the Bellevue document does not. Redmond also references supporting housing legislation at the local, state and federal levels, which Bellevue also does not include. Additionally, Redmond establishes a five-year cycle for evaluating housing, and a three- to five-year cycle for updating their strategic housing plan; prohibits any rezone that results in a reduction in residential capacity without first approving another rezone or rezones resulting in at least a replacement of the lost residential capacity elsewhere in the city; ensures new development is consistent

with citywide and applicable neighborhood goals, including sustainable site planning and affordability; addresses people being able to live and work in Redmond; and directs the city to consider granting priority in the development review process.

Chair McEachran noted that Redmond's version encourages employers to develop employer-assisted housing programs and provide technical assistance to employers wishing to obtain information on model programs.

Commissioner Kline said one solution would be to have a member of the Commission meet with the Planning Commission staff to discuss those issues. Mr. Parker said it would not hurt to ask but he pointed out there may be a timing issue in that it would need to be done before March 25.

Ms. Leslie said staff would pass along any specific suggestions, but she agreed it would need to be done sooner rather than later. She said it might be helpful to send something to the Planning Commission reaffirming some of the things the Commission previously communicated, with a particular emphasis on affordable housing issues.

Commissioner Kline asked what will happen with the multiple pages of comments made by the public about housing. Mr. Parker said the comments range from the general to the specific. The specific comments are primarily from housing advocacy agencies and seek detailed wording changes to the policy language.

Chair McEachran proposed sending to the Planning Commission a memo outlining the Human Services Commission's support for the work done on the Housing Element and encouraging more specificity in policy language to provide more of a direct arrow to actions the city might take in the future.

Mr. Parker suggested it would be helpful to point out and reiterate support for the new policy in the housing opportunities section that directs the city to employ effective strategies that support the Fair Housing Act and to affirmatively further fair housing.

One public comment received by the Planning Commission relates to individuals with disabilities and existing training programs. Mr. Parker said the Planning Commission identified Policy HS-16 that encourages services that support Bellevue's workforce in maintaining or advancing their employment opportunities. The same policy in the existing Comprehensive Plan includes the tagline "including, but not limited to, transportation and childcare." In its review the Human Services Commission kept the heart of the policy but deleted the tagline. The Planning Commission took the proposal and suggested adding a new clause that speaks specifically to special needs and disability populations.

Ms. O'Reilly suggested the proposed modification is different from the public comment. The policy begins by encouraging businesses that work with non-profit agencies to provide jobs to people with disabilities. The proposed modification is not

on point, and singles out those with disabilities as opposed to a host of other things that could be called out.

Commissioner Bruels pointed out that "disabilities" is a term that is currently out of vogue; the phrase used currently is "differently able." Also, "special needs" is used often in reference to education but is not used much in relation to employment.

Mr. Parker proposed responding to the Planning Commission by saying the draft policy should be left as is and the topic of providing jobs to persons who are differently able should be a separate policy, possibly in the Economic Development Element.

Ms. O'Reilly commented that there are services offered in the community to gain employment for the differently abled, though not to the degree needed. The gap lies in the number of businesses that will hire them. That was the intent of the public comment.

There was consensus to send it back to the Planning Commission.

A motion to submit a letter to the Planning Commission reflecting the Human Services Commission's thoughts on the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan, along with a response to the recommended modification to HS-16, was made by Commissioner Villar. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bruels and it carried unanimously.

Ms. Leslie noted that Chair McEachran and Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano appeared before the Council on March 16 to make some comments and add some clarifications regarding the Commission's funding recommendations. Chair McEachran said he went to the meeting prepared to answer specific questions, but Mayor Balducci asked why the Commission failed to fund the request from Congregations for the Homeless and the Salvation Army. It was clear the Council wanted to move the issue off the consent calendar and take it up again later.

Ms. Leslie said staff has been directed to draw up a memo to the Council answering the questions. The Council clearly is interested in the process but also wants to know the rationale for not funding the Congregations for the Homeless capital project and the request from the Salvation Army. She said she has confirmed that the ARCH executive board has set aside up to \$50,000 for Congregations for the Homeless for the predevelopment work for the winter shelter.

A more succinct and clear rationale is needed, however, for not funding the Salvation Army request. The Commission has voiced concerns about the agency's religious activities, their history in terms of collaboration, and the fact that the agency has the capacity to raise funds from other sources.

Mr. Adriano said the published rationale that went to the Council was related to an interest on the part of the Commission in supporting projects already supported by the city. While the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club received \$1.5 million from the biennial budget, the Commission concluded it would be prudent to also allocate \$35,000 in CDBG funds. The Salvation Army project, however, is not supported by the city with other funds.

Commissioner Villar pointed out that the things the Commission chose to fund were all things that would have been funded in the regular allocations process had there been more money.

Mr. Adriano said one thing missing from the story is that the Commission on February 3 was clear about wanting to fund the Congregations for the Homeless application for \$68,000. That was the Commission's position until ARCH intervened with information that other funds were available. There was agreement to point that out in the response to the Council.

Ms. O'Reilly said the company contracted with to conduct the phone survey will very soon be sending out thousands of letters asking people to either take the survey online or be willing to be called for a phone interview. Things are on target to receive a report back sometime in May.

- 9. NEW BUSINESS - None
- 10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None
- 11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair McEachran adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date