

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on October 20, 2015

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

September 15, 2012
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson McEachran, Commissioners Bruels, Kline, Mercer, Oxrieder, Perelman

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Villar

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Terry Smith, Jaime Fajardo, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Klaas Nijhus, ARCH

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 Commissioner Perelman, who arrived at 6:43 p.m., and Commissioner Villar, who was excused.

New Commissioner Ann Oxrieder was introduced. She said she worked for the Bellevue School District for 25 years in several capacities, including assistant to the Superintendent.

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly introduced intern Jaime Fajardo, a second year masters of social work student at the University of Washington. He said he is from the Yakima valley and is the son of immigrants who came to the United States from Mexico.

Councilmember Chelminiak welcomed Commissioner Oxrieder to the Commission.

3. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Mimi Siegel, executive director of Kindering Center, thanked the Commission for

its generous support over the years to benefit children with special needs.

4. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Ms. Leslie noted that questions were asked by the Commission at the September 1 meeting when considering whether or not to reallocate funds from Bellevue Boys & Girls Club to ARCH to accommodate a project identified by that organization that would be eligible for CDBG funding through Imagine Housing. Since the September 1 meeting, Imagine Housing submitted an application to ARCH for the project which answers the Commission's questions about what other funds the agency is anticipating and what if any restrictions there would be with those other funds, and how comfortable the agency is with the project timeline. The other question in the Commission's mind had to do with whether or not the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club project timeline would be disrupted should funds be pulled out and given to ARCH, only to have them returned later if the ARCH project were to fail in moving ahead in a timely manner. Ms. Leslie noted the question was put to the Executive Director of the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club and that the response given had been included in the Commission's desk packet.

Commissioner Kline referred to the numbers included on the second page of the application transmittal memo and asked what other CDBG funding that might flow to the project from other sources. Mr. Klaus Nijhus, Senior Planner with ARCH, said it is unlikely other CDBG dollars will be involved. The CDBG rules are narrow in terms of what the funds can be used for in terms of creating new affordable housing. The rules do not allow the funds to be used for construction, but they do allow the funds to cover certain soft costs, including predevelopment appraisals, architectural services provided they do not include detailed drawings, engineering for utilities, and site surveys. Imagine Housing believes it could expend up to \$137,000 within the HUD-window. The overall project estimate is \$21 million, so the proposed \$130,000 from CDBG funds is quite small; in fact, the total ask to ARCH is only about four percent of the total project. The CDBG funds, however, would be leveraged to bring about a nine percent tax credit. While some portion of the \$899,000 coming from ARCH could include CDBG funds from other jurisdictions, the HUD rules will still need to be followed to the letter.

Commissioner Kline pointed out that if the Commission were to pass on funding ARCH for the Imagine Housing project for HUD-allowed up-front costs during the current funding cycle, there would not be an opportunity for the project to use CDBG funds in the next funding cycle because by then the project would be in the construction phase. She asked if there are other projects on ARCH's plate in the city that could potentially absorb some CDBG funds from the 2016 funding cycle. Mr. Nijhus said he could not say for sure. He said an application has been submitted for a three-bed group home, but that is for the current cycle. What will come down the pike in future cycles is unknown. The allocation of the low-income housing tax credits is throttled in that four-fifths goes to Seattle and one-fifth to the rest of the county, and there are projects queued up, but none are in Bellevue. The future permanent shelter

project in Bellevue would qualify for CDBG funds, but it is three to five years out.

Commissioner Kline asked what percentage of ARCH's budget will the \$899,000 represent. Mr. Nijhus said ARCH typically allocates roughly \$1.5 million per funding round, so the \$899,000 would be about 70 percent of the total. Two other projects submitted applications, including a group home representing a substantial ask for the number of folks helped, and additional funding for the Totem Lake II project which has grown from 85 units to 91 units. ARCH could approve funding for all three projects.

Ms. Leslie explained that ARCH applications are reviewed by an advisory group made up of staff from the member cities. The group also works to match up the funds ARCH has available to project applications; where ARCH has CDBG funds, the group seeks a match for those dollars. The Imagine Housing project still has to apply for state money and ARCH does not believe having Bellevue's CDBG funds attached would help in securing state dollars. She added that King County has the same difficulty in finding CDBG projects that Bellevue does; King County tends not to put money into projects in Bellevue given that Bellevue has its own CDBG money.

Councilmember Chelminiak allowed that the Council likely would question why the Commission chose not to put any of the CDBG allocation toward affordable housing absent an explanation that there were no eligible projects identified when the Commission rendered its preliminary recommendation. The Council may also question why, once a project was identified, the Commission chose to take a large portion of the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club allocation instead of taking some of it and some of the allocation for the International Community Health Services application. The Bellevue Boys & Girls Club project is very dear to the Council.

Commissioner Kline said the Commission took into consideration in making its preliminary recommendation the fact that the winter shelter project will be coming up and that in the future CDBG dollars will be allocated to that project, and the fact that the opportunity to contribute to the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club and International Community Health Services projects was in hand.

Councilmember Chelminiak recommended making a principled decision and being ready to give a solid explanation for the decision.

A motion to allocate \$50,000 to ARCH and \$132,076 to Bellevue Boys & Girls Club was made by Commissioner Perelman. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mercer and the motion carried unanimously.

There was consensus to draft the rationale for ARCH to read more positively, beginning with "The Commission continues to recognize and affirm the need for affordable housing in Bellevue."

With regard to the contingency plan, Commissioner Mercer said one option would be

to give any additional dollars to ARCH, and a second option would be to give additional funds to the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club to get their application back up to \$182,000. If in fact there is a delay in the Imagine Housing project that would preclude ARCH from spending its allocated funds by the HUD deadline, the funds could potentially be reallocated to the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club. Ms. Leslie said the conditions that require spending the funds by a certain date are clear and understood in the recommendation. She recommended against including in the contingency plan any mention of reallocating funds not spent by the deadline to the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club.

Ms. Leslie said it is unlikely there will be more CDBG funding available than anticipated.

There was agreement to leave the preliminary CDBG allocation contingency plan unchanged relative to having a greater amount to allocate.

5. DISCUSSION

A. 2015-2015 Needs Update

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said staff are still waiting for some data that was not received in time to be included in the first draft. She also allowed that additional proofreading is needed. The environment is dynamic and changing so even some of the data included in the report will need to be updated as the process moves forward. The document is as it always has been about people in Bellevue, all of whom deserve a good quality of life.

Ms. O'Reilly stressed that while the individual chapters are written to silo information, in practice the various issues crosses all boundaries. Affordable housing is a clear issue for every population group in the specific populations chapter, as is access to transportation.

Mr. Fajardo said the Diversity Advantage Plan will have a huge impact on the city over the years. The Diversity Advantage Initiative Team was tapped to write the chapter. He said the data shows Bellevue is growing into a multicultural city. There are 80 languages spoken in the homes of the students enrolled in the Bellevue School District, and minorities represent more than 40 percent of the city's resident population. The city's Diversity Plan was launched in 2014 to focus on diversity, equity and cultural competence, and the plan includes specific outcomes for each of those issues. The themes that came out of the public engagement process included cultural competence, human services, public safety, education, economic development and civic engagement.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Perelman, Department of Parks and Community Services Assistant Director Terry Smith said a major component of the plan calls for the hiring of staff to help implement the plan, both internally within the

organization and externally within the community. Council approved the funds and the first four months was spent hiring a staff team. Once in place the team was charged with reviewing the 60 recommendations and developing a work plan. The Commission will be provided with an update around the first of the year.

Commissioner Mercer said she loves the idea that diversity will be given a special focus. She said it is interesting that Bellevue is second only to Redmond in terms of diversity. She asked how the seven recommended actions listed at the end of the special focus areas chapter were chosen. Mr. Smith answered that they were pulled from the 60 overall recommendations and specifically relate to human services. They surfaced through the outreach efforts.

Ms. Leslie said she had been given the task of writing the section on homelessness and noted that it covered a number of topics ranging from food insecurity to housing. The chapter also includes information regarding the changes going on in the homeless service system. The food insecurity section outlines the number of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch, which has been decreasing slightly, and the number of Bellevue residents who participate in the food stamp program, which has been leveling off. Affordable housing remains a huge issue in Bellevue. The percentage of renters and homeowners who pay more than 50 percent of their household incomes for housing continues to grow as the median rent in Bellevue continues to increase. While the annual One Night Count of Homeless showed a large decrease in the number of homeless persons in Bellevue, the decrease could be a factor of having had the Eastside winter shelters in operation; the number of persons staying in the winter shelters over the last two winters has almost doubled.

With regard to supportive relationships with families, neighborhoods and communities, Ms. O'Reilly said over the years there has been an increase in the data about the importance and relevance of social support. Social support is what helps people maintain in times of stress. Public health staff of Seattle/King County conduct a countywide survey periodically to determine levels of social support. Overall, King County residents are rather low on the scale. However, low-income residents, those who are English language learners, and people with children have higher levels of social support. Eastside Pathways is referred to throughout the document, but it will also be given a chapter of its own.

Ms. O'Reilly said the need for free or low-cost legal assistance remains quite high. A state study that included local providers found a need for legal assistance relating to healthcare issues as well as consuming financing and employment. Data collected from 2-1-1 shows that the highest demand is for basic needs; almost half of the calls deal with the basic needs of housing, food and utility assistance.

With regard to a safe haven from all forms of violence, Ms. O'Reilly said the number of reported domestic violence incidents statewide increased by 25 percent between 2011 and 2012. In Bellevue there was also an uptick in the number of reported cases. The increase in the number of elder and vulnerable adult abuse cases in Bellevue

was not as large as it was countywide.

Ms. Leslie said the chapter on healthcare highlights the continuing need for dental care. Forty-six percent of those responding to the consumer survey reported dental care as a major or moderate problem in their households. There has been a significant increase in crisis stabilization services over the last few years, likely because the county launched the mobile team and the crisis diversion center.

Heroin continues to be a huge issue. Heroin deaths increased 58 percent in King County between 2013 and 2014, and admissions for heroin use were up over a hundred percent.

The good news is that with passage of the Affordable Care Act, more than 90 percent of the state's population now has health insurance. There continue to be, however, disparities, particularly certain racial groups and among people with limited English skills. There are also still some who are not able to qualify for the Affordable Care Act, including undocumented immigrants or those within the five-year waiting period.

Answering a question asked by Councilmember Chelminiak about the apparent link between stronger prescription drug laws and heroin use, Ms. Leslie said people who have gotten addicted to prescription drugs are finding it more difficult to get their preferred drugs and are finding it easy to switch over to heroin. Commissioner Bruels added that about 15 years ago the Joint Commission on Hospital Accreditation decided to make pain management a main issue. At the same time a number of new synthetic narcotic pain medications hit the market. The result was an explosion in prescription pain medication use. Now the push is toward decreasing the amount of pain medications dispensed through emergency departments and disposing of pain medications from home medicine chests. That is leaving many who are addicted to seek other options, and heroin has become their drug of choice. Ms. Leslie said youth providers are saying that with the legalization of marijuana kids are skipping over it because it is not cool anymore, and those kids are going straight to heroin.

Ms. O'Reilly said the education and job skills chapter includes data on childcare. There is a clear connection between having affordable childcare and being able to keep a job. Post-recession most people have jobs, but one thing that came up frequently when talking to providers was the fact that even with the highest minimum wage in the country, persons can have full-time jobs and still fall under the federal poverty level. Another challenge is finding jobs for persons with limited English skills. The list of barriers to getting to a job interview and keeping a job include lack of transportation options. For a single adult with a school-aged child, it is necessary to earn about \$24 per hour in order to meet the basic needs in the city of Bellevue without the use of subsidies. She noted that subsidy programs are vitally important, but some who make more than minimum wage earn too much to qualify for certain subsidies, putting them in a difficult situation.

Commissioner Mercer called attention to figures in the document that were pulled from an online self-sufficiency calculator and asked how the standard per hour could be less for Bellevue while the amount per year is more. Ms. O'Reilly allowed that there could be a glitch in the online calculator. Councilmember Chelminiak agreed that at first glance the numbers do not add up, but said the real issue is what the calculator is measuring. He said he has seen some metrics that indicate in spite of Bellevue's high housing costs, the fact that Bellevue is relatively well served by transit reduces the transportation cost factor, which can help to even out the cost of basic living.

Ms. O'Reilly shared with the Commissioners information about specific populations. She noted that much is said in the media about the rise in the number of older adults. That rise is triggering an increased need for long-term care. An AARP study shows that about a third of the older adults will have costs that exceed their ability to pay. Those who can are staying in the work force longer. In Bellevue, over 61 percent of older adult renters are paying more than 30 percent of their income for housing. The number of old adults with developmental disabilities being cared for by older aging parents is viewed as an impending crisis. The increasing diversity of the older population will bring with it various challenges. More providers are reporting children aged birth to three with disabilities, and state funding is not increasing to match the population growth of either children or adults. Additionally, some funders are no longer offering programs for the populations, especially adults with disabilities.

Turning to review the chapter on refugees and immigrants, Mr. Fajardo said according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, global forced displacement during 2014 accelerated to once again reach unprecedented levels. By the end of that year, 59.5 million individuals were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, internalized violence or human rights violations, an increase of 8.3 million persons over the previous year. The increase in displacement resulted in a record 1.7 million persons submitting application for asylum or refugee status. The leading countries continue to be in the Near East and South Asia. For the United States, the large increase in the number of refugees admitted reflects better synchronization and security as well as medical checks for refugee families. The ceiling for 2015 has been set at 70,000, but that might change if the Obama administration decides to change it. Washington ranks number 11 in the nation for refugee resettlement. King County typically resettles approximately 66 percent of all refugee arrivals in the state. In 2002 the United States granted 1.63 million immigrants with legal permanent residence status. In 2013 the total was just over 990,000. There are some 898,000 residents in the state who were foreign born. A very high percentage of them speak a language other than English in the home; in Bellevue, 39 fall into that category.

Chair McEachran said he recently had a conversation with a large group of older Asian folk who were talking about new immigration trends. Massive numbers of younger immigrants coming do not quite get with the elders who have been in the

states for generations, and levels of conflict are arising with regard to values, relationships and cultural traditions.

Mr. Fajardo said the Bellevue School District had an on-time graduation rate of 88.9 percent for the 2013-2014 school year. The Seattle rate was 73 percent, and the Lake Washington rate was 88.6 percent. However, Bellevue's African American students had an on-time graduation rate of 78.7 percent, and the percentage for Hispanic/Latino students was 79.3. The Bellevue School District reported a large increase in the number of students eligible to receive services funded by the federal McKinney-Bento Act due to their homelessness. The district tallied 228 homeless students. The ratio of ethnic diversity of Bellevue's population under age 18 stands at 48 percent, higher than percentage of diversity in the adult population, which is 38 percent.

Councilmember Chelminiak pointed out that in three of Bellevue's four main high schools minority students are in the majority, and the fourth is right on the cusp of becoming so. That change has occurred during the lifetime of the current graduating seniors.

Ms. O'Reilly reminded the Commissioners that a couple of years ago veterans were added as a specific population. King County staff who work on veterans programs are reporting that they are seeing a decrease of veterans in the county. However, they are seeing larger populations of older veterans in need of services; many are living below the poverty level, and many are not able to access services due to the nature of their discharge from the military. There is also a need for mental health services, including suicide prevention and substance abuse services, for all veterans, particularly the younger veterans coming back from the current war arena. Housing continues to be a big issue facing veterans even with vouchers provided by the Veterans Administration. There are some good employment programs in place for veterans, but many veterans are having a difficult time translating their skills into employment.

With regard to the Bellevue adult misdemeanor probation chapter, Ms. O'Reilly said the data has been updated. Of note is how many of the services provided everywhere in the human services system are really needed by those who are in the probation program, and how many of those in the program experienced traumatic experiences early in their lives.

Ms. O'Reilly briefly outlined the schedule for continuing the review of the Needs Update.

6. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie called attention to the memo from City Manager Brad Miyake regarding the cultural competence training that is being provided to all of the city's boards and commissions on November 12 and December 17, 2015.

- 7. NEW BUSINESS - None
- 8. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None
- 9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bruels and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair McEachran adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date