

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on January 7, 2020

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

November 5, 2019
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commissioners Amirfaiz, Jain, Kline, Ma, Mansfield

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Chair Mercer, Commissioner Piper

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Christy Stangland, Toni Esparza, Devin Konick-Seese, Department of Parks and Community Services; Gwen Rousseau, Kate Nesse, Department of Community Development

GUEST SPEAKERS: Mary Ellen Stone, King County Sexual Assault Resource Program

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Commissioner Ma who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Chair Mercer and Commissioner Piper, both of whom were excused.

3. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

5. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Human Services Manager Alex O'Reilly reported that the presentation regarding the 2020 CDBG recommendations to the City Council on October 28 went very well. The presentation was made by Chair Mercer and Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano. There were a few questions asked and answers were given. The issue will be on the Council's November 18 consent calendar.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Draft 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for Housing & Community Development and Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing

Ms. Catalano said the current five-year Consolidated Plan expires at the end of 2019 and must be updated. The plan outlines the overarching priorities and goals the city will use to guide its spending of CDBG funds over the five-year period. Within the Consolidated Plan is the Annual Action Plan for 2020 under which the Commission's recommendations are set to be approved by the Council. For the last four years of the Consolidated Plan, the Annual Action Plan is a separate document. The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing is required under the Fair Housing Act of 1968. All jurisdictions that receive CDBG funds must submit the analysis. Along with Kent, Federal Way, Auburn and King County, Bellevue is part of the CDBG Home Consortium. Accordingly, a regional analysis of impediments is required rather than a report for each individual jurisdiction, though each must adopt the document.

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Jain. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mansfield and the motion carried unanimously.

There were no members of the public present to speak during the public hearing.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mansfield and the motion carried unanimously.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Draft 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for Housing & Community Development and Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing

Ms. Catalano explained that two motions were required, one to approve the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, and one to approve the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing.

A motion to approve the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development was made by Commissioner Mansfield. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jain and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Jain and the motion carried unanimously.

8. DISCUSSION

A. Program Update – King County Sexual Assault Resource Program

Mary Ellen Stone, Executive Director of the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center noted that it had been two years since the Me Too movement started. Whereas the Center had been seeing some 4000 victims per year for many years, Me Too triggered a substantial increase in the number of people coming forward. Sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes in the country. Victims do not come forward for a variety of reasons, but Me Too has changed the conversation, and the result is that the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center is stretched to its limits. Calls to the 24-hour resource line have increased by 300 percent. The organization's 15 legal advocates now have caseloads of 80 or 80 victims each, well above the sustainable level of 60. Policy staff have had to be moved into direct services to handle the load.

In addition to Me Too, there have also been legislative changes that encourage more people to come forward, including elimination of the statute of limitations for child victims. The long overdue move means many victims may be able to go forward in the criminal system. The discussion about the testing of rape kits is another important step toward making changes that will make it easier for victims to come forward.

Ms. Stone said funding from the city is critical in making it possible for the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center to address the needs in the community. The number of victims in 2018 increased by about 40, both adults and children. For 2019, the expectation is that the 2018 numbers will be exceeded.

King County Sexual Assault Resource Center is the primary provider of holistic services for victims of sexual assault and their families throughout the county. The organization works in partnership with Harborview Center for Sexual Assault and Traumatic Stress and provides much of the community based work. The 24-hour resource line is the service of its type in the county. Calls are received from victims, their families, friends of victims and people who are in need of answers. The organization also works closely with the criminal justice system to ensure that the law and the system works for victims, and advocates for victims throughout the entire process. For adults it is a choice as to whether they report or not, and staff work closely with them to make sure they have good information. At any given time, there are about a thousand victims going through some part of the system process.

The organization believes strongly that victims benefit when their families and people close to them receive support. Staff work a lot with parents and caregivers where a child has been sexual assaulted. The ideal is for every parent of a child victim to have a parent educator working with them.

King County Sexual Assault Resource Center is one of the few organizations in the county that specializes in trauma-focused therapy. The intensive therapeutic

approach has been proven to work. Victims from children, teens and adults present with full-blown PTSD symptoms and their issues are usually resolved in four to six months.

All of the services offered by the organization are bilingual and bicultural. About a third of the staff are Spanish speaking and some of those are native Spanish speakers. The organization also provides prevention programming, which is a much more difficult piece to fund, and which is far more challenging because the direct service demands are so great.

Commissioner Jain asked if agency staff perform home visits. Ms. Stone said they do not. The work with the family of victims typically come to the agency at one of the four locations. If it is not possible for someone to meet at one of the locations, connections can be made via Skype and telephone.

Commissioner Kline asked what the agency would do if more money were made available for prevention services. Ms. Stone said two or three additional staff would be hired, and the immediate focus would be on the Renton school district where the services are already being provided in six week stretches in individual classes. The additional staff would make it possible to expand the program to several middle schools and a couple of high schools. Staff work with the teachers to provide the very interactive skill-building program. While honoring family values, which is critical to the process, the more kids are educated with regard to health relationships, respect and issues of consent as they apply to their own families, the more the culture can be shifted away from reducing risk to stopping people from committing sexual assault.

Ms. Stone said King County Sexual Assault Resource Center is a 40-year old organization. When it started, the tagline was "It's Okay to Talk About it." In time that was changed to "It's Never Too Late." That was followed by "End the Silence," and now it is "Be Loud." She said the latter is a perfect statement of where things stand. No one is apologizing or asking for permission. The only way things will change is to keep talking, to talk loudly, and to talk often.

9. DISCUSSION

A. Community Profile and Census 2020

Senior Planner/Demographer Gwen Rousseau reminded the Commissioners that every decade the nation engages in taking a census. Beginning in March 2020, all US households will be invited to participate. The census is a head count of every person living in the United States. To be sure the government represents the people, the Constitution requires a population count every ten years. The outcome determines the number of seats each state receives in the US House of Representatives. The data are also used to make decisions by decision makers, including how billions of dollars should be allocated annually for critical public services like roads, schools, hospitals and healthcare clinics, fire and emergency

response services, and hundreds of other programs. For the first time, the 2020 census can be completed online, by phone or by mail. The questionnaire will ask a few simple questions, such as how many people live in each home as of April 1, their ages and sex, and the number of children. By law, all census responses are completely confidential, and personal information cannot be shared with any law enforcement agencies. By participating in the census, everyone plays a role in shaping the future of the country.

There are currently 425 members of the House of Representatives. As a result of the 2010 census, Washington state received an additional seat for a total of ten. The census is very important when it comes to a fair allocation of federal tax dollars back to communities. The allocation of funds to 55 federal programs are guided by the census data. In 2016 alone, Washington state received more than \$16 billion from those programs. Since 2010, Bellevue has received more than \$76 million in federal funding for transportation projects; some \$7.1 million for park projects; and \$5.8 million in CDBG funds. State distributions of tax dollars back to the city totaled \$40.9 million since the 2010 census. Bellevue's population number directly affects how much it gets back every year.

Ms. Rousseau said the census data yields information that helps to clarify who is being served in the community. It is relied on in making the right decisions about the kinds of programs and services will get them best, and in making sure everyone has access to those programs. The Commission may use the information in determining how many older adults need transportation services, how many children would benefit from an after-school language program, how many households might be at risk of being displaced, and how many people will be drawing on the water supply, all of which are based on population estimates drawn from an accurate census count.

The census is an easy form to fill out. There are only about ten questions and it takes only about ten minutes to complete. There are questions about age, Hispanic origin, race, relationship to the householder, sex, owners versus renters, and operational questions that are aimed at making sure everyone is counted once, only once and in the right place. To that end, the operational questions include names and phone numbers, whether there is anyone else living at the location, and how many people live there.

Demographer Kate Nesse said one of the most undercounted populations is babies. She said her first child was born in February 2010 and when it came time to fill out the census that year, she indicated there were two people living in the household, completely forgetting to include the baby on the form. Babies are persons and need to be included in the number of persons living in a household. Ms. Rousseau said there are always questions about who to count and the census website has good answers.

Ms. Rousseau said households will receive a postcard in the mail in mid-March 2020. The recipients will be guided to go to fill out the questionnaire, which has never been

done before. The census is one of the largest mobilization efforts in the country and is also one of the most expensive efforts. The move to an online format will save the government millions of dollars. A second postcard will be mailed out. If households do not respond by mid-April, they will receive a letter along with a paper questionnaire. If by May households have still not replied, census takers will be going door-to-door asking them to fill out the forms face-to-face. For those who go online to fill out the census, they will find it available in 12 different languages beyond English. Those without access to computers will be able to call in to fill out the census. In addition to the 12 non-English languages, there are guides available in 59 languages in video and paper formats, including American Sign Language and Braille.

The push to raise awareness of the census is predicated in part on the thinking that there would be a lower response rate without the efforts. The online format will present challenges of its own where people either do not have the skills or access to the internet. There has generally been an increased level of public distrust in government and a higher level of fear. There are fewer local offices established for the 2020 census. In 2010 there were offices in both Seattle and Bellevue, but this time there will only be the Seattle office.

One challenge Bellevue faces is the large number of recent immigrants. About 24,000 Bellevue residents entered the United States after the 2010 census and have never participated in a census. There is also a large population in Bellevue who have limited English skills; about 43 percent of the city's residents speak a language other than English at home, and about 15 percent report that they speak English less than very well. Over 34,000 of Bellevue's residents were not even United States citizens in 2017. While there has been some confusion, a citizenship question will not be included on the census forms. A map has been drawn showing where in Bellevue there are concentrations of hard-to-count populations. Those places include high percentages of renters, people who have recently arrived from outside the United States, and people who may not speak English very well.

Ms. Rousseau said Bellevue's strategy is focused on publications, people and places. The publications will entail both print and digital formats, including audio and video. The people will be the frontline staff, all partners, and all city boards and commissions. The place strategy will be making sure there is a presence at every city facility and at every city event starting in January. The main tool the census uses to make sure everyone is counted is their master address file. It is key to knowing how many respond. The address coordinator in the city's IT department has been combing through thousands of addresses to make sure that none are missed. Bellevue has also been collaborating with the neighboring jurisdictions of Redmond, Kirkland, Issaquah and Sammamish, as well as with all the local school districts, as part of the East King County Communities Committee. Bellevue has contributed \$50,000 toward a regional census fund that will fund local community based organizations on the Eastside that have direct contact with hard-to-count populations. The list of organizations includes Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition, India Association of Western Washington, Chinese Information and Service Center, and

Muslim Association of Puget Sound. Additional organizations will be brought into the fold soon.

An event was held in April as a kickoff intended to raise awareness of the census. The Council proclaimed April to be Census Awareness Month. A webpage has been created and is linked to the city's website. Additionally, a census task force has been created internally. The census will be highlighted in Bellevue publications, including *It's Your City*.

Ms. Rousseau urged the Commissioners to become census ambassadors. She reiterated how important the census is in making sure the city has the resources it needs to be successful in the coming decade. She said staff would love to see people host census parties as a way of making sure people fill comfortable.

Commissioner Amirfaiz asked if it is mandatory for people to participate in the census. Ms. Rousseau said the law mandates that every person fill out the census. The postcards that will be mailed out will indicate that a response is required. She said she was not aware of anyone having been penalized for failing to fill out the census. Commissioner Amirfaiz pointed out that there is a large number of persons who do not have documentation as United States citizens and she suggested it is likely they will not respond. The question is whether or not they will get in legal trouble for not filling out the census. Ms. Rousseau agreed that that issue will prove to be very challenging. The goal has been to make sure everyone will have the information they need to make their own decision. The Census Bureau is by law required to protect the personal information of everyone. Because the census is so important to the foundation of what the country represents, the security of the data is a top priority. The Bureau cannot by law share anyone's personal identifiable information with any law enforcement agency or any other agency. The Bureau does supply aggregated data in terms of statistics about populations. The statistical information is used for making a lot of decisions. Not filling out the census is also a statistical piece of information. Commissioner Amirfaiz said the door-to-door visits can be quite intimidating, especially for those who do not speak English.

Commissioner Amirfaiz asked for clarification regarding the race categories shown in the new census. Ms. Rousseau said there is always the issue of whether or not the right questions are being asked by the census. There was talk of adding a category for Middle Eastern, but in the end it was decided the race categories would not be changed. There is a question asking about Hispanic origin separate from race and that is because many of Hispanic origin believe they are not represented in the given racial categories so they end up choosing "other." Commissioner Amirfaiz said she is personally always forced to choose "other" since no one would consider her to be Caucasian. In 2010 when the census taker personally came to her door, she refused to check Black, Hispanic or White. The person was a bit obnoxious in directing that it had to be done, and was asked to leave. She said that left her out of the count. There are many Africans who are not African-American who also object to the race categories. Ms. Rousseau pointed out that the census form affords the ability to write

in information. Commissioner Amirfaiz said the census taker refused to let her do that.

Ms. Nesse commented that census takers who are obnoxious and who do things that are not appropriate can be reported on the census website. Ms. Rousseau noted that there is also a local number that can be called to make reports about census takers, or to make sure someone is in fact an official census taker. No one is required to let anyone into their home.

Ms. Nesse turned the focus to what the city does with the census data and what it says about the people who live in Bellevue. She said much information comes from the American Community Survey, which is a rolling survey that has more detailed questions. While the census counts everyone, the American Community Survey is a sample based on the what is known about the population from the census. She shared with the Commissioners maps showing the location of residents who identify with a specific racial category or multiple racial categories. The first map depicted where things stood in 1990, the second in 2000, the third in 2010, and the fourth showed the situation in Bellevue between 2013 and 2017. She noted that the Bellevue of 1990 was primarily White but by 2017 was much more dense and much more diverse.

Bellevue is now has a majority non-White population, the sixth-most non-White big city in the state of Washington. Bellevue is one of the least White cities in a very White state. Forty-two percent of Bellevue residents speak a language other than English at home, with the most common language being Chinese. Most of Bellevue's citizens who were born abroad were born in Asia. There are more of Bellevue's residents who are in the first half of their careers, and more people who are in the second half of their retirement, than in the Puget Sound region as a whole. Typically, people in their mid 20s to 40s tend to have babies, but that is not the case in Bellevue. That factor could be tied to Bellevue's housing stock. In 2010 Bellevue had more family sized homes of two and three bedrooms. By 2018 that segment of the housing market changed dramatically. The family homes being built in Bellevue now typically have four or more bedrooms. Multifamily homes are being built with a focus on small units of zero and one bedrooms. Those who are having babies are probably going somewhere else to have them and they are not bringing them into a studio or one-bedroom apartment.

Ms. Nesse stated that another challenge is income inequality. She shared a chart showing income by quintile using 2018 dollars. She pointed out that 20 percent of the population falls into the lowest quintile, which equates to a high of about \$50,000. Those in the lowest part of the fourth quintile, however, made about \$225,000. If incomes were equal, there would be a small distance between those two lines, and if they were increasing at the same rate the distance between the lines would stay the same. In fact the top incomes are rising a lot faster than the bottom incomes.

With regard to the transit network, Ms. Nesse pointed out that the city's Frequent Transit Network reaches 73 percent of all jobs in Bellevue, and 71 percent of all multifamily units. However, most Bellevue residents choose not to take public transit and elect to drive alone. That could be because they have a short commute given that Bellevue is a job center, making it possible for them to live and work in the city. Forty-five percent of Bellevue residents work in Bellevue. For those who live outside of Bellevue but work in the city, about two-thirds choose to drive alone.

Ms. Nesse shared that between 2000 and 2010, the rate of natural population increase, calculated in terms of births minus deaths, was much higher than the rate of increase in the net migration category. That has changed to where currently population growth is being driven by net migration. Across the board, women are having fewer babies. She also noted that the age structure of the population in the Puget Sound region has been changing and is expected to continue to change. It used to be that population pyramids showed lots of babies at the bottom and then fewer and fewer people higher up. The fact that people are having fewer children and are living longer has changed the graphics to more of a column.

Ms. O'Reilly commented that the Commission has been very interested in the issue of transportation as it relates to human services in general. She said the transportation gaps of particular interest involve people who are not currently employed because of age, disability or lack of housing. Sometimes people do not use public transit because they do not have the money, because it is not convenient for them to access, or because they work nights and there is no public transit available. She said it would be interesting to dig a little deeper into the data for those specifics.

Commissioner Ma commented that those who choose to move outside of the city to have families potentially turn into commuters. He asked if there is data about that, and also asked if there is data about why mega houses are continuing to get built. Ms. Nesse said the housing market in Bellevue is very hot and homes that get built are very easy to sell. The demand for all types of housing cannot be met fast enough. Land has become very valuable as a result, and when the land becomes more valuable than the home on it, there is a strong incentive to tear down the home and build a house that is more valuable than the land, which in most cases is a mega house. There is a market for very small units as well and in fact developers can get the most return on their investments with small units. If the city wants to see family sized units developed, it will need to change the incentives for them.

Ms. O'Reilly said the cost of living in Bellevue and on the Eastside in general is an issue for many. Bellevue does not have a high rate of people living at the federal poverty level, but it does have low- and moderate-income residents as defined by the HUD guidelines. The income levels data helps tell that story. Child care on the Eastside is also higher than King County in general, which is another bit of data that helps make the case for why federal, county and state resources should flow to Bellevue.

10. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly asked the Commissioners to indicate to staff if they and their partners planned to attend the annual holiday party with the Parks and Community Services Board in December.

Commissioner Ma noted that event is always informal. The chairs of each commission usually provide updates regarding what they have done during the year and plans for the upcoming year.

Ms. O'Reilly reminded the Commissioners that each Commissioner would soon be assigned an iPad for conducting official Commission business. Training on their use will be provided by the City Clerk's office.

11. NEW BUSINESS

Human Services Planner Christy Stangland announced that the Human Services Needs Update would be mailed out in mid-December. She asked the Commissioners to indicate to staff if they wanted to receive it in hardcopy format or electronically.

12. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

13. ADJOURNMENT

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

Commissioner Ma adjourned the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date