

BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING
MINUTES

December 2nd, 2021

North Bellevue Community Center via Virtual – Zoom.

8:30am – 10:30am

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gazel Tan, Hannah Kimball, Janet Jelleff, Paul Bradley, Diana Thompson, Mary Fredeen, Gina Johnson, Abigail Brown, Desiree Leigh, Beverly Heyden, Catherine Wong, Phyllis Smilen.

Welcome New 2022 Members joining us today -Anne Rittenhouse, Julie Hart, Kira Hackett.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Berta Seltzer

STAFF PRESENT:

Dan Lassiter, Bellevue Parks & Community Services
Christy Stangland, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

GUESTS:

Terry Cleveland, Fairfield Senior Affordable Apartment Communities.

PRESENTER(S):

None.

RECORDING SECRETARY:

Betty Lee, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL:

The meeting was called to order by Gazel Tan and the roll call taken.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Terry from Fairfield commented there are affordable units available at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

November minutes approved.

PRESENTATION:

None.

HUMAN SERVICES UPDATE: *Christy Stangland, Human Services Bellevue Parks & Community Services.*

Introduction of Human Services for new members – Human Services Department feels the importance of being involved in BNOA because senior issues are often overlooked. Christy Stangland attends BNOA monthly meetings to give monthly Human Services update and to hear what’s happening in the community and stay aware of issues and challenges. Human Services Department funds agencies, it doesn’t provide direct services.

- ❖ Department is still recruiting for a Human Services Manager – please send any leads their way. Application deadline is December 21st, Christy will forward the job description to Dan to forward to BNOA members.
- ❖ Unfortunately, ARCH isn’t redoing their housing needs assessment, so it is difficult to determine the current needs for seniors. Hopefully this information will be updated when Janet Lewine’s position is filled.
- ❖ ARPA position will not be filled due to funding that ends in Aug 2022 which doesn’t give new hire to have much time to do the work. Christy will be taking on ARPA starting January.
- ❖ Please always feel free to reach out to Christy via phone or email with questions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: *Members were asked to read the following committee report minutes before the meeting for discussion:*

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MINUTES:

1. SENIOR LOBBY CONFERENCE Discussion of Senior Lobby October 21st webinar. Desiree said that the meeting was interesting and she relearned some things that had been presented in the past. Diana said she was interested in the presentation which focused on how the federal government is organized in relation to seniors. Kathy stated she would send to all BNOA/KSC advocacy members a link to the power points presented at the meeting.
2. DISCUSSION OF WHAT IS HAPPENING AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL. A great deal of what we have supported will not be included in currently proposed legislation. However, at this point it appears Medicare will be expanded to include hearing aids for persons with severe and profound hearing loss. Diana noted that AARP is still trying to get one important change—reduction of price of medication.
3. Discussion of Proposed State Legislative Agenda. The following suggestions for our agenda were presented by Diana. (She included some examples of bills and monetary requests related to the majority of these items. She also noted she had contacted the Alzheimer’s Association about bills they are supporting and will receive information by end of November.) Diana also noted she had written Senator Keiser, who drafts many of the bills regarding the price of Medicine, and suggested she might want to contact Rep. Slatter, a retired pharmacist.

BNOA /KSC State proposed Legislative Agenda

- 1) Maintain Washington's Long-Term-Care Infrastructure and increase support and availability of services which enable older adults to remain in their homes and in the community**
- 2) Support legislation, which will reduce the price of prescribed medication**
- 3) Increase access to death with dignity under Washington's Death with Dignity Act**
- 4) Support and fund legislation that will assist persons with dementia, their families, and organizations that serve persons with dementia**
- 5) Support legislation that will adequately fund the Housing Trust Fund and assist seniors in aging in place, while retaining the power of municipalities to enact zoning law.**

- The members agreed on all items except Caryn (KSC) opposed item 3. Diana stated she would bring up this issue when she gave a report to the BNOA.
- Abigail gave her thoughts on items that the Advocacy Committee might want to include in our 2022 local legislative agenda.
 - a. Changes in City regulations and procedures, so that it can be easier for seniors to remain in their homes and age in place

Abigail believes that current regulations, the waiting time if you seek variance, the cost of a variance, and the response of builders can stand in the way of seniors modifying their home when modification is needed to age in place. She believes that lower costs, quicker response by the City and a change in setback requirements could enable more seniors to make modifications to their home so they could continue to live at home. (Examples of home modifications needed to enable some seniors to age in place: a) add a bedroom to ground floor, b) make a bathroom useable, c) modify a stair case so you can add chairlift)

b. Help with current technology: e.g. helping seniors if they get hacked, lower cost for broadband (Diana recommended we should wait on this issue until we find out what is happening in Broadband, etc. due to action and funding in the 2022 Washington legislative session)

c. Need for advance notice to seniors and Bellevue residents if major building changes are being considered in Bellevue or at the border of Bellevue and another jurisdiction.

We didn't receive notice of the low-cost housing unit to be located at the Bellevue-Redmond border nor the hotel near Microsoft.) What can we do to get notification in advance? What can be done so we can give input? Need to contact local politicians, City managers, etc.

- ❖ Next years committee choices: Dan will send out committee meeting information to all new members to attend if interested so that new members can preview the committees before choosing in January.

OUTREACH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES:

1. Primary discussion centered around resources for caregivers, emphasis will be on unpaid caregivers who lack institutional support. Abigail and Paul have already made headway on

resource lists for dementia. Gazel suggested locating value-added newsletter sources and adding their links to our materials. Some caregivers are not adept at using the internet, language barriers exist, so printed materials will also be available. Each of us will find an applicable website and order pamphlets. In addition to caregiving information, access to affordable legal help for elder law, estate planning, and power-of-attorney should be available.

2. Saturday 11/20 is final 2021 Bellevue Farmers Market, so we'll be without this distribution point until May 2022.

- ❖ The library has done a great job of displaying flyers and Neighborhood News.
- ❖ The information submitted for the new resource book should be getting close to being done, Dan will send it out to the committee for final approval before printing.
- ❖ Committee is still working on caregiver packet and gathering resources, please forward any resource you think that will be helpful to the outreach committee.
- ❖ Diana will be writing an article on legal for January, thank you.

HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION MINUTES:

- Conversation focused on affordable housing currently being built, existing housing stock in older neighborhoods being replaced by mega-houses, the need for "senior housing" set-asides, and the challenge of downsizing in your neighborhood.
- Berta noted that seniors need to weigh in on senior affordable housing needs and have a "say" in where the affordable housing dollars are going. The emphasis is clearly on workforce housing and homeless housing, not seniors. A senior in Bellevue who sells is unlikely to be able to stay in their neighborhood or even in the City of Bellevue. AMI is currently \$120K+, and a good many seniors who've been retired for 20 or 30 years are on fixed incomes that do not rise with the market, inflation, or hot real-estate market.
- This discussion further focused on the need for seniors to plan for the future before the future overtakes them. Most are ill prepared for a sudden change in housing needs, medical challenges, or financial changes. Homework assignment: who do you have in your life who can and will help you survive? No one likes to ask for help, independence is a source of pride for most older adults. The Washington DSHS has a good series of questions on their website to help with this exercise.
- The COB just published flyers entitled ***Do you need Rental or Mortgage Assistance?*** which we'll distribute. ARPA limits for housing assistance are based on 2021 HUD income limits.
- ❖ Diana shared something interesting from State legislative agenda for Bellevue – Bellevue strongly urges legislature to honor local decision making authority and refrain from preempting the authority of city elected officials who are closest to the people that they serve. The city strongly opposes unfunded mandates and state preemption of local authority.
 - This caused a big problem last year because the city can't control the zoning.
 - Hannah stated this is House bill 1220 from 2020 – it was written to allegedly enhance and embellish the ability to build affordable housing but what it did was to step over local authorities with new zoning.

- The city has no right to control the number of people living in a household.
- ❖ New women's shelter coming in at Silver Cloud next to the library in downtown.
- ❖ Mary's place opening a new family shelter for families with children with medical issues. Mary's place works with Motels that went out of business to provide shelter until it is occupied by a new owner to get use of it at a very low cost. This is not funded by the city, so council does not need to approve it. This is different from the Silver Cloud in Redmond that was purchased by King County as a homeless shelter. Website for additional info: www.marysplaceseattle.org/bellevue-family-center
- ❖ The BNOA members had additional questions on availability of affordable housing for Terry but due to lack of time today, the Housing & Transportation committee will invite Terry Cleveland to the next committee meeting for questions and answers. Feel free to email her with additional questions: tcleveland@ffres.com

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP REPORT:

Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative: Report has been sent to BNOA members.

- What's happening with Hopelink transportation? Camille Heatherly moved on to King County's Department of Equity. Brianna Boyce is the new coordinator.

WA Senior Lobby, Aging and Disability: Nothing to report at this time.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS:

- ❖ Congratulations to Abigail and Janet for graduating Bellevue essentials. Both highly suggesting others to apply. Also registered and joined the Engaging Bellevue site which anyone can register for, Abigail commented there's a wealth of information so please sign up if you're interested.
- ❖ Abigail met with Eastside Interface Social Concerns Council. In part to talk about Momentia but also talked to them about BNOA and Old Friend's Club (Memory Loss Group) and how possibly to become involved.
- ❖ Phyllis met with Mark Dones, the CEO for the King County Regional Homelessness Authority. He feels that people are homeless not because of drugs or poor decisions but that homelessness causes more homelessness.

NEW BUSINESS: (Dan)

- ❖ Change to bylaws: The interview committee met and spoke with many great candidates for BNOA. Someone who lives in Redmond and works mainly at home applied, and the committee unanimously agreed that she would be an excellent addition to BNOA, thus bringing the suggested changes to the bylaws.
 - The bylaws right now indicate that one needs to be a resident of or work in Bellevue to be on the BNOA.

- Some members feel that there are so many issues and priorities that Bellevue has that are in common with other neighboring cities. A definition of neighboring cities need to be clarified.
- The bylaw can be amended with a vote and approval of 2/3 of members.
- Some members are hesitant to choose someone from a neighboring city if candidates who work or live in Bellevue are available and interested. Some members are open to expanding it to neighboring cities when common problems are shared and can make our voices stronger.
- It was questioned if this violates any City of Bellevue ordinances. Dan will follow up on Diana's request regarding the city's position and report back to the committee before moving forward with a vote.
- Abigail suggested possibly having a coalition of our neighboring cities that are all liaisons- one from each neighboring city and meet with them once each quarter.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50am and BNOA members continued with a holiday celebration.