

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on January 2, 2019

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

November 6, 2018
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Mercer, Commissioners Kline, Ma, McEachran, Oxrieder, Perelman, Piper

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Christy Stangland, Natalie Minas, Department of Parks and Community Services; Kathleen Kline, City Attorney's Office

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Commissioner Kline who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Chair Mercer and Commissioners Oxrieder and Perelman, all of whom were excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. October 2, 2018

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner McEachran. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ma and the motion carried unanimously.

B. October 16, 2018

Commissioner McEachran referred to the last paragraph on page 7 and said he had not meant to imply that because there are no health services on the Bellevue College campus that the fire stations would become healthcare centers. Rather, he said he was trying to suggest that Chief Hagen get together with Vice President Rich

Cummins to talk about how there can be a collaborative relationship should something occur on the campus.

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Piper. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ma and the motion carried unanimously.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Ma said he recently heard on the radio a report by a local grassroots party on how transportation is a big issue. He said they indicated they are looking for subsidized ORCA cards for seniors and youth and voiced the opinion that that would have a big positive impact. He noted that the Commission's talks with King County Metro have not included costs, which certainly is not inexpensive. Human Services Manager Alex O'Reilly said the approach and the issue of cost could certainly be added to the list of comments.

Commissioner Piper reported that along with Chair Mercer and staff he attended the City Council meeting on November 5 to present the Commission's funding recommendations. He said the presentation was very well received. He also noted that along with Commissioner McEachran he attended the training session on parliamentary procedure, adding that he found it very helpful. He said it was good to have some actual training on the tricks and techniques involved in moving a meeting forward.

Commissioner McEachran suggested that as the Commission sees new Chairs come onboard, it would be useful to be able to present them with a chart on the basic use of motions.

Commissioner McEachran reported that he had attended two discussions over the past two weeks on the homelessness issue with elementary school students from the Bellevue School District. The students were looking for faith communities within the neighborhood willing to address the need. He noted that Bellevue College is looking at some serious ways to create affordable and attainable housing.

Human Services Planner Christy Stangland highlighted the fact that the most recent *It's Your City* included an article about the Home Repair Program. The write-up included interviews with residents who have benefited from the program.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Bellevue Human Services Commission Bylaws

Assistant City Attorney Kathleen Kline that her predecessor appeared before the Commission in March and talked about the fact that the city is trying to standardize

the bylaws for all boards and commissions. She said a template is being used and noted that for the most part the procedures and rules in the template are not variable. There are, however, some things the Commission is free to make fit its specific needs.

Ms. Kline noted that the Commission's current bylaws have not been updated since 1988 so they are somewhat out of date and missing some important features. Additionally, they are not in compliance with state law. They have nothing about scope of authority and responsibility. City code at BCC 3.61 enumerates the powers and duties of the Commission and also talks about limitations. The proposed bylaws mirror the code in terms of the Commission's authority and limitations. The section is one that is not variable.

Ms. Kline said the section on membership and organization puts in place when elections happen and allowed that it does not completely match up with when some officers will be ending their terms. There is flexibility built in, however, which allows for electing officers as soon as possible therefore once there is an opening.

Ms. O'Reilly commented that for as long as she has been associated with the Commission, officers have been elected in January. Moving the elections to June will bring the Commission into compliance with the new bylaws. To do that the Commission could ask the current Chair and Vice Chair to continue serving until June. She asked what approach would need to be taken should the Chair and Vice Chair not be able to extend their role through June. Ms. Kline said in the event of a resignation, the Commission simply would need to elect new leaders. The bylaws are silent as to whether or not their term would be only for the period of time through June.

Commissioner McEachran asked if the City Council must approve the Commission's bylaws to make them official. Ms. Kline said the Council has already approved the template so the Commission simply must adopt them on its own.

With regard to the quorum section of the bylaws, Ms. Kline noted that the current bylaws talk about a quorum needing to exist at the opening of a meeting, and indicate that a quorum is presumed to exist until the meeting is adjourned, even if members leave. That is not compliant with state law or the city code. The new bylaws state that a quorum must be maintained throughout a meeting. No action can be taken without a quorum of Commissioners present.

Commissioner Kline commented that a recent meeting of the Commission was begun absent a quorum to accommodate a guest speaker. It was known that certain Commissioners would be late to the meeting and that a quorum would eventually be reached. No actual Commission business was undertaken until a quorum was present. She asked what the appropriate approach should be in such cases. Ms. Kline said absent a quorum the Commission cannot take action and cannot discuss issues.

Commissioner McEachran clarified that in fact that there had been a quorum reached at that meeting before the guest speaker began. However, when it came time to approve the meeting minutes, there were not enough Commissioners present who had attended that meeting. Ms. Kline said it was her understanding that Commissioners should abstain from voting to approve the minutes of a meeting they did not attend. Where necessary, approval of meeting minutes should be postponed until there is at least a quorum of Commissioners who were present at the meeting for which the minutes are being approved.

The section addressing the duties of officers and the Council liaison are mostly new. The current bylaws are either brief or silent about those points. The duties section give specific details and establish that there is a Council liaison, which the current bylaws are silent about.

Ms. Kline said the time and place of Commission meetings is a section of the bylaws that are variable. The new bylaws indicate the Commission meets on the first Tuesday of each month, and can be revised to include the third Tuesday of each month.

Ms. O'Reilly pointed out that on the Tuesdays following a Monday holiday, the Commission has traditionally moved its meetings to Wednesday to avoid a conflict with the Council's meeting. She asked if that needs to be included in the bylaws. Ms. Kline allowed that it does not, adding that the bylaws simply address the Commission's usual procedures.

Commissioner Kline asked if the language in the bylaws regarding the minimum number of meetings means the Commission will be required to have two meetings each month. She asked if the language could be softened to allow for waiving some meetings. Ms. Kline said that could be done by indicating the Commission generally meets the first and third Tuesday of each month.

Ms. Kline explained that the sections in the new bylaws referencing the Open Public Meetings Act and remote participation are both new. There are details about the requirements of the open meetings act, and the remote participation section mirrors what is already in the city code.

The time of adjournment is a variable item, Ms. Kline recommended inserting in the language a reference to a time when the Commission generally adjourns. Additionally, a specific time could be left out altogether, leaving the Commission free to adjourn when the Chair says the meeting is adjourned.

Ms. O'Reilly said the Commission generally adjourns at 8:00 p.m., but during the allocation process meetings sometimes run longer. Ms. Kline said most of the boards and commissions put in a reference to their general start and stop times. In any event meetings can be extended by majority vote.

Ms. Kline said the order of business and agenda items are variable. The sections covering public hearings and public testimony are not in the current bylaws and for the most part are not variable, except for the length of time the public is allowed to speak during oral communications during the meeting. Most boards and commissions limit public comment to a total of 30 minutes. There is no time limit on public hearing testimony.

Ms. Kline said the sections on motions and voting are for the most part new and not in the current bylaws. They are consistent with current Commission practice and they mirror what the city code provides. The voting section calls out when members are required to vote, when there might be a conflict of interest, and what happens when a Commissioner without a valid disqualification fails to vote, which is that they shall be declared to have voted in the affirmative. The ethics section provides some detail and flushes out the conflict of interest, appearance of fairness and legal assistance issues.

The section regarding communications with Council is new. Ms. Kline noted that city code governing the Commission provides that formal communications with the Council must represent the official majority or minority position of the Commission, and the new bylaws provide that the Commission shall provide at least quarterly communications to the Council. She recommended making it clear in the bylaws that the Commission will communicate with the Council at least quarterly and that all communications with the Council will represent the majority and minority view.

Commissioner Kline observed that the Commission does not currently communicate with the Council on at least a quarterly basis and asked what form that would take. Ms. O'Reilly said on any given year the Commission typically goes before the Council twice. In the current year the Commission presented the Needs Update to the Council in the first quarter and then in the last quarter presented the funding recommendations. The Commission would need to discuss next year how to incorporate a couple of additional communications.

Commissioner McEachran commented that some of the Council liaisons come once in a while and others come nearly every meeting. He asked if they should play a role in brokering the bringing of issues before the Council. Ms. Kline said the role of the liaison is not specifically clarified. Aside from indicating the boards and commissions are to communicate with the Council at least four times each year, the Council has not been specific about the kinds of things it wants to hear beyond highlighting major activities, future work plans, changes in work plans, and requests for policy direction.

Commissioner McEachran noted that one role the liaison has historically played has been bringing to the Commission information to inform and provide a heads up regarding forthcoming initiatives. At the November 5 meeting of the Council, the second study session item included four references to the Human Services Commission.

Commissioner Ma said he was not opposed to including in the bylaws a reference to the code, but said he would want to see the communications piece clarified, possibly adding that communications would not necessarily have to be formal and could include a written report. Ms. O'Reilly allowed that the communications to the Council can be in written form.

Ms. Kline said the last two sections of the bylaws were mostly new. The records section was updated to reflect the requirements of the Public Records Act and identifies some Commissioner responsibilities and protocols regarding records.

Ms. Kline said the amendments section allows for amending the bylaws with a two-thirds majority vote.

Ms. O'Reilly noted that during a training session instructions were given about how to segregate emails that come from the city for Commission business. Some boards and commissions, however, actually have a city email address. She asked if that is optional and Ms. Kline allowed that they are a tool to assure compliance with the open record rules.

Commissioner McEachran added that while serving on the Wilburton CAC and the affordable housing TAG to refrain from using reply all in responding to emails and to direct emails directly to staff. Often it is easier to pick up the phone instead.

Ms. Catalano referred to the statement in the bylaws indicating the Commission has no authority or responsibility to participate in regional issues not specifically assigned to the Commission and asked if that meant not meeting with area human services commissions to talk about homelessness. Ms. Kline said she did not believe such a meeting would be disallowed. The city code at BCC 3.64.070 provides extensive powers and duties, including supporting regional cooperation in the planning, funding and delivery of human services.

Commissioner Kline commented that the Commission convened some meetings with the Bellevue Network on Aging on the issue of transportation. Ms. Stangland replied that in that instance permission was obtained from the staff representative for the Transportation Commission. Ms. Kline added that the topic of transportation as addressed by the Commission and the Network on Aging could arguably be deemed to fall into the category of the planning, funding and delivery of human services.

Transportation Commission pointed out that a staff person from the transportation department a few months back attended a Commission meeting to provide a presentation on the mission and work of the Transportation Commission. The invitation to attend included the Transportation Commission chair, but the staff person responded that that would not be allowed unless the entire Transportation Commission voted to allow it. Ms. Kline allowed that there is language in the new bylaws that prohibits members of the Commission from speaking for the Commission

unless authorized by the Commission. At the same time, there is language allowing members to voice their position on any issue provided they clarify that they are not speaking as a representative of their body.

Ms. O'Reilly said she would invite Ms. Kline to attend the November 20 meeting of the Commission to finalize approval of the bylaws.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Debrief of City Council Meeting Presentation 11/5/18

Ms. O'Reilly noted that three of the Commissioners had attended the Council meeting, adding that Commissioner McEachran had watched the video as well. She asked for comments and observations regarding the presentation and about any items on the Commission's agenda for the coming year. She took a moment to commend the Commissioners for their work in formulating the funding recommendations, a process that began in April. She added that the Council clearly appreciated the work of the Commission as well.

Commissioner McEachran said the comments made by the Council made it clear that the Commission is a conflict-free body. He said he has not seen that kind of solidarity from other boards and commissions. He said one Councilmember mentioned the word "risk" in light of looking at the organizations requesting funding. The Councilmember came close to saying that organizations that have received major funding throughout the years should possibly be reconsidered in terms of where the funds go. The Council commended the Commission for being bold in a couple of areas. The presentation was remarkably good.

Commissioner Piper noted that Councilmember Zahn mentioned new agencies asking for funding and what it would take for them to receive some. She also raised the issue of the opioid crisis to which Chair Mercer's response was excellent. That is an area, however, around which the Commission is well informed. The Council praised the Commission for the work it does but also mentioned considering the return on investment for each investment.

Commissioner Kline said it was good that Ms. Catalano stepped in and mentioned that the staff reports do go into contract compliance issues.

Commissioner Ma said he found the meeting interesting and added that he appreciated the Council's clear support for human services. He suggested the Commission should follow up on the collaboration the Council referred to, and the financial aid aspect that the Commission chose to consolidate. The Commission owes it to the organizations to following up on the issue, particularly in respect to how similar projects by different organizations may be targeting different populations, thus each having unique value. The Commission should look at how it might facilitate collaboration or efficiencies to get a better return on investment. Ms. Stangland noted

that the Commission had talked previously about forming a panel with representatives from various agencies to discuss the financial assistance issue. Commissioner Ma said that would be a good first step.

Commissioner Ma said the Council was appreciative of the Commission funding new organizations. It was brought up in the public hearing that that is important to the community as well. He said the Commission had previously talked about either having a small separate fund to be used for new organizations, or some level of training. Ms. O'Reilly said the training that is currently available to organizations is focused on equity and bias. The north and east funders meet monthly and have taken some preliminary steps to put together a menu of options. Community members who might want to apply to the city for funding need to be brought into the mix with an eye on making diversity the overarching umbrella. The north and east funders hope to meet soon to put together a plan to follow starting in 2019 to address all of the different components. The cities of Kent and Federal Way have jointly put together funds that are part of a separate small grants RFP, and staff are reaching out to determine how they have accomplished that set aside to increase access by smaller organizations, especially in underrepresented communities.

Commissioner McEachran commented that there are a number of small organizations that have a specialized focus that the Commission knows nothing about. He suggested the Commission would benefit from having an inventory of them all. If the small organizations could be convinced to collaborate with larger organizations, or possibly even be absorbed, particularly where there are common goals, the results could be very positive.

Commissioner Ma said he has been participating in the Bellevue Essentials program and noted that some of his classmates have their own non-profit organizations. A city sponsored organization similar to Eastside Pathways might be a good way to draw in various small organizations and connecting them to a central network.

Commissioner Kline commented that several years ago the Commission sponsored a panel of ESL providers. It turned out to be a very fruitful meeting as the eyes of the providers were opened as they engaged in conversation and sharing. They were able to identify gaps that needed to be filled in. Providing the same type of forum but on other topics could prove to be a great use of time. Ms. O'Reilly said the Commission's interest in emergency financial assistance organizations would indicate that topic should be first up.

Commissioner Kline said the comments of Councilmember Stokes at the Council's November 5 meeting included a directive to provide him with feedback on where dollars need to be put, not just during the next funding cycle but in advance of it. That could serve as an opening to ask for a little pot of money, either for small grants to new agencies or for seed money for some training opportunities.

Commissioner Ma said prevention provides the biggest return on investment. He said he would like to see the Commission push for more tools in requiring development of affordable housing, which will ultimately prevent homelessness in the future. Commissioner McEachran noted that the Council adopted a series of strategies as part of its commitment to affordable housing, including multiple alternatives. The only problem is that so far the Council has failed to implement the plan. Individual members of the Commission could address the Council as members of the public seeking to understand why the vision has not been implemented as outlined. Commissioner Ma suggested having a panel discussion by experts on affordable housing would bring information to the Commission's attention that the Commission could then forward to the Council as a communication. Commissioner McEachran stressed that the Council already has all of that information as part of the report from the affordable housing TAG.

Ms. O'Reilly said staff could bring the adopted affordable housing plan to the Commission, and invite Associate Planner Janet Lewine to attend a Commission meeting to discuss pulling out recommendations around the need.

8. DISCUSSION

A. Commission Agenda Items for 2019

Ms. O'Reilly said staff would pull together a panel of emergency financial assistance and get it placed on the calendar.

Ms. O'Reilly noted that during 2019 the Commission would turn its attention to the human services Needs Update. Former intern Megan Farwell has been working with Ms. Stangland to put together some potential models for making substantive changes to the Needs Update. She will attend the Commission meeting on November 20.

Transportation issues will continue to be on the Commission's agenda during the coming year. Ms. O'Reilly said after Thanksgiving she and Ms. Stangland would be meeting with Mark Smutny, the staffer with Hyde Shuttle for Sound Generations to start talking about a model currently being worked on in Seattle that involves creating a van route serving a number of shelters. The route will include some locations shelter residents need and want to get to.

Commissioner McEachran said he would like to see the issue of economic development on the Commission's agenda.

Commissioner Kline said she wanted to include gatherings of agencies that address various service areas.

Ms. O'Reilly said the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force led by King County recently released a report. Once a work plan is adopted, which should happen by the end of the year, it would be good for the Commission to receive an update from a

King County representative. The report is very broad but does address such things as prevention.

Commissioner Piper suggested the Commission would benefit from having an update on the opioid crisis and how it is affecting Bellevue specifically.

Ms. Stangland said several agency tours will be scheduled for 2019. She asked the Commissioners to indicate which agencies they would like to visit.

Commissioner McEachran said he would welcome having an update from the Council liaison regarding Council initiatives for the next two years.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly called attention to the invitation included in the packet to the annual Christmas party with the Parks and Community Services Board. The Commissioners were asked to RSVP their attendance.

Ms. O'Reilly informed the Commission that staff are working with the City Clerk's office regarding the selection of a new Commissioner to replace Commissioner Perelman. She said a strong priority for Council Liaison Robinson is to make sure appointments are made from throughout the neighborhoods in the city. The vacancy will be posted in November.

Ms. Catalano announced that the city passed the CDBG timeliness test.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly reported that about a month ago the Utilities department made a presentation to the Council about some changes they are proposing, and about a new utilities tax rebate program. Currently there is a program for homeowner seniors and those with disabilities under which application can be made for a discount on their utilities. Additionally, the same program gives renters a mechanism for receiving a utilities rebate. There is a second program for low-income residents that historically has had a budget of \$150,000 as part of the human services budget, though it is controlled by Utilities staff. Under that program, rebate checks are sent out in December. The Council has now approved a third program that will create a pot of funds, some from donations by private citizens, that would be available on a one-time-only basis for people who are in crisis. Details are still being worked out for the new program.

Commissioner Kline suggested having staff for the new program to participate in the future panel discussion with the Commission.

Commissioner Ma informed the Commissioners that the Ride To program has started. The program focuses on the last mile from the Eastgate park and ride. The program is sponsored by King County Metro as a pilot program.

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Ma. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McEachran and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Kline adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date