

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on May 9, 2018

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

April 17, 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, Cynthia Moreno, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Perelman, who arrived at 6:11 p.m., and Commissioner Kline, who arrived at 6:24 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 20, 2018

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Liliana Godinez, McKinney-Vento Coordinator for the Bellevue School District, said she was present to observe the work of the Commission. She said her job is to work with homeless and foster care students in the district.

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner McEachran reported that the Wilburton CAC completed its work after a year and a half. At the last meeting, DASH highlighted two of its properties, Evergreen for seniors and Glendale with workforce units, which under the proposed plan could yield 250 units of affordable/attainable housing. That amounts to 10 percent of the 2500 units proposed for the city under Strategy 1.

Commissioner McEachran said he also spent a day on a team interviewing candidates for fire chief.

Commissioner Oxrieder said she had lately been acting as chauffeur for a family that is without transportation. She said one of the places she drove the family was to Bridge Ministries, which made it possible to visit the very impressive operation.

Human Services Manager Alex O'Reilly mentioned that on April 14 she along with Associate Planner Janet Lewine, Senior Planner Toni Pratt and City Manager's Office Assistant Manager Nancy LaCombe attended an all-day workshop at the Seattle University School of Law. The topic was land use related to homelessness. One breakout session focused on accessory dwelling units; another was about approved or legal encampments. Additional breakout sessions were around the topics of vehicle residency and other land use issues. Second year law students made specific-topic presentations and each will be publishing a white paper in early May.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Overview of 2019-2020 Human Services Funding Process/Application Review

Ms. O'Reilly informed the Commissioners that Doug Sanner is the financial analyst for the Department of Parks and Community Services. She said he along with the financial analysts for each department, works closely with the Budget and Finance Department. She noted that the information developed by Mr. Sanner for the Commission showed that the base for the Human Services Fund in 2017 stood at \$3.4 million. For the 2018 current year budget, the fund is \$3.5 million. For the past 14 years or so, the General Fund allocation to human services must take into account both inflation and population growth. With inflation calculated at 2.52 percent and a population growth of one percent, the Human Services Fund should in 2019 see an increase of \$124,234 for a base of \$3.653 million. Because the city operates on a two-year budget cycle, the estimated increases for 2020 will be calculated using an inflation rate of 2.63 percent and a population growth rate of one percent.

Chair Mercer asked about the \$150,000 increase that was granted two years ago. Ms. O'Reilly said that amount had been added into the base amount for 2019. The 2019 budget also included some \$10,000 from charitable donations.

Chair Mercer asked what the actual population growth percentage has been over the past two years. Ms. O'Reilly said she would have to look it up. Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano pointed out that the city does have a formula that projects population growth over 20 years, and that is the figure used in calculating the budget. Chair Mercer said she doubted the one percent figure was representative of current actual growth and suggested the Commission may want to point that out to the Council in seeking additional funds.

Commissioner McEachran said he learned during his participation on the Wilburton CAC that only 34,840 remain in Bellevue for work, while 46,000 leave Bellevue to work and 177,000 come into Bellevue to work every day. The Affordable Housing TAG group at one point recommended a one percent surcharge on all developers to fund affordable housing. The Council has not accepted that notion. He urged the Commissioners to review the Comprehensive Plan relative to human services and housing which also suggest moving outside the traditional pathways of support. The budget survey conducted every other year consistently lists traffic as the city's top concern, and affordable housing is always number two, yet human services, including homelessness, accounts for only nine percent of the city's budget. The Commission should expand its sense of what is being done relative to supportive services. The folks in Goal 1 are going to get money no matter what; the Commission should focus instead on Goal 5 which is where the next action point is.

Ms. O'Reilly said Budget One, the biennium budgeting process, kicked off in March. The city's budget and finance staff gave a lengthy presentation to the Council that centered on the financial forecast and an overview of the budget process. Under Budget One, the communities priorities form the basis for the development of outcomes, and services are prioritized to meet those outcomes using available funds. The community's priorities are determined by a survey. From the start of Budget One, the process was intensive and complicated in terms of staff time, with budget teams focused on reviewing applications from each department. While the Budget One philosophy is set to continue, the city has chosen to discontinue the budget team process in favor of using the rankings from two years ago. The work of the Commission falls under the outcome of Quality Neighborhoods and Innovative, Vibrant and Caring Community, which was ranked number one. There will be conversations about additional funding for human services, and the Commission will be kept in the loop.

Commissioner Perelman asked why staff would not initially seek more than the proposed \$3.7 million. Ms. O'Reilly explained that the City Manager has directed all departments to come in with a flat ask. Additionally, any new projects requesting and receiving money will only be funded on a one time basis. The department requests will be submitted in early May and the Budget Office will review them and they will be discussed by the Leadership Team, which consists of the City Manager's staff and all of the various department directors.

Chair Mercer observed that the Council is unlikely to give more money where more money has not been requested. She noted that the Council has in effect asked the Commission to ask for more, and she asked how more can be sought for human services funding. Ms. O'Reilly said the direction from the Council will not be ignored. Staff will seek a strategy that can be successful in both honoring the request of the City Manager and the apparent interest of the Council to provide more funding for human services. Just what that might look like is not yet known.

Commissioner Oxrieder asked when King County will be releasing the One Night Count numbers. Ms. O'Reilly said she had been told it would be sometime in May.

Chair Mercer reiterated that the Council has indicated the Commission should ask for more, and the Commission has discussed the opportunity. The Commission has not, however, been asked to help strategize and craft the ask, or to indicate what should be part of the ask. It feels as though the task has been put on the shoulders of the Leadership Team. While from an organizational standpoint that makes sense, it leaves the Commission outside the strategy. Ms. O'Reilly reminded her that the long budget process has only just begun. She said there are conversations going on behind the scenes, and going forward the Commission will be in the loop.

Commissioner Perelman asked if there are any new organizations coming forward with unfunded needs in the community that should be highlighted as part of an additional ask. Ms. O'Reilly said it would be appropriate for the Commissioners in reading through the applications to tag those that are key and in need of funding. The application review process does not begin with numbers, which is why staff are not concerned there is no firm funding number and no specific strategy yet.

Chair Mercer noted that the Commission would be talking on May 8 with King County Metro and asked if there could be a way to incorporate an ask to fund that program as part of the human services funding ask. Ms. O'Reilly said she would research an answer to that question.

With regard to the application process, Ms. Catalano explained that in Round 1 the applications are reviewed without assigning any dollar amounts. During that round the Commissioners are divided into application review teams to review the applications by goal area, beginning with Goal 1. As the applications are read, questions in need of answers from the agencies or staff are jotted down. Staff then puts the questions to the agencies seeking answers. In Round 2 the Commission will be provided with the staff review for each application. The questions raised during Round 1 will be answered in the staff reviews.

Ms. Catalano called attention to application 29 and pointed out that in the table regarding residents served the reference to "Sophia's Place" should be changed to "Daycenter." Likewise, in application 30 the reference to "Sophia's Place" in the residents served table should be changed to "Eastside Women's Emergency Shelter."

Commissioner Perelman asked if there was anything the Commission should know about organizations splitting programs differently or combining them. Ms. Catalano had the Commissioners turn to the Sophia Way application and pointed out that their ask was much less than their 2018 award. She explained that the agency was splitting up the daycenter ask among more cities, and in 2020 they expect the daycenter to be in the permanent shelter in Kirkland, so they are asking for more money from other cities. Sophia Way also has submitted an application for its new outreach program. The application, however, references an award of \$2909 in 2018 which actually goes back to the King County RFP for homeless services outside of Seattle that Sophia Way was awarded, which required a 20 percent match from the cities.

Ms. Catalano said the Round 1 schedule has the Commission discussing the Goal 1 applications on May 1. Goals 2 and 3 will be discussed on May 15. Then on June 5 the focus will be on Goals 4 and 5. The first Round 2 meeting is slated for June 19. The Commission will come to a preliminary funding recommendations at the July 3 meeting, and the public hearing is on the calendar for July 17. The Chair will present the recommendations to the Council in the fall, and the Council will approve the human services funding as part of the city's overall budget in December.

The Commissioners were informed that the 2019 requests total 26.8 percent higher than the requests for 2017, which is a larger increase than usual even though the total number of applications is the same.

Commissioner McEachran said it will be interesting to see what the agencies are seeking from other municipalities.

Ms. Catalano stated that during Round 1 the Commission can conclude that a program seeking funding does not meet the focus areas and is not a good fit for Bellevue funding, and on the strength of a straw vote can remove it from the list.

Commissioner Perelman commented that several of the organizations have been funded annually for many years. That is usually because the Commission has a lot of passion about the programs. She urged the new Commissioners, however, not to be afraid to question funding the agencies and programs and to come up with suggestions for spending the funds elsewhere.

Commissioner Oxrieder said the previous funding cycle was difficult in that some new agencies submitted applications, but it was hard to break away from the tried and true programs. Ms. Catalano noted also that traditionally the Commission has tried to give a cost of living increase to currently funded agencies that the Commission chooses to fund again. Those increases quickly can eat up the new money available.

Ms. O'Reilly suggested the 25 new requests is a positive sign. It is an indication that the RFP was widely distributed and gained the attention of agencies and

organizations in the area. There are also more ethnically based organizations in the mix, including the Muslim community, which is more in line with the city's demographics.

Commissioner Perelman said she would welcome setting aside time at a Commission meeting to allow new organizations not previously funded by the Commission to introduce themselves and their programs. Ms. O'Reilly agreed that would be a good idea.

Commissioner McEachran encouraged the Commissioners to view and consider as many resources as possible in working through the applications. He said One Table, the community approach to homelessness in King County, has been addressing the root causes of homelessness. The supportive services element of the homelessness issue can draw attention off of Goal 1 and onto the other goal areas. There seems to be some funding available for the homelessness issue, which might mean dollars could be shifted to supportive services.

7. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly asked if there were any takeaways from the equity training sessions.

Commissioner McEachran said he liked the Theory of Change materials and noted that it was a reminder to him of the need to open his vision.

Commissioner Perelman commented that some of the terms, like targeted universalism, were a bit much. The message would be clearer if normal terms were used.

Commissioner Ma said he appreciated the equity training. It was helpful, particularly as a newbie going into a funding cycle for the first time. Implicit bias is everywhere; it is not possible to get away from it and it must constantly be acknowledged.

Commissioner Oxrieder said she saved the guide from the training because she found it very helpful. She said she would like to have heard more about case studies around particular agencies. Ms. O'Reilly agreed and said it was interesting to learn that there can be implicit bias even in an agency like Consejo that is serving another culture. Commissioner Oxrieder added that the Lifewire example did not specifically state that they involve their clients in identifying their needs. Ms. O'Reilly said that could be the type of thing the Commission will want staff to follow up on in reading through the applications.

Ms. Stangland clarified that those two applications were selected because Lifewire covers a broad population while Consejo is more focused. In the past, another Commission suggested not funding an agency that had a specific focus precisely because they did not cover a wider base.

Commissioner Piper commented that it would have been helpful had there been more time to focus on practical application.

Ms. Catalano reported that the program year 2018 CDBG special supplemental application period would close on April 23, as will the program year 2019 application period.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Stangland said affordable housing week would be May 14 to May 18. During that week there will be different affordable housing activities going on throughout the community. On May 7th, the Bellevue City Council will issue a proclamation. The Housing Development Consortium and the Eastside Human Services Forum are in the process of lining up speakers to talk about affordable housing.

Commissioner McEachran noted that Mayor Chelminiak has been using the phrase “attainable housing” rather than affordable housing. He said the term is catching some positive attention around the region.

9. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

10. ADJOURNMENT

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

Chair Mercer adjourned the meeting at 7:24 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date