

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

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

November 20, 2018
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Perelman

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Christy Stangland, Natalie Minas, Megan Farwell, 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 6:00 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 was excused.

3. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

6. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Ma called attention to the incident in Kirkland involving the police being called to a restaurant by employees about an African-American man who was working to supervise a visit between two people. The case involved implicit racism. He said the incident had led him to want to look into associations or non-profits that are coming up out of the communities that have more familiarity and trust, and want to strengthen trust in the Commission in the communities that need help.

Commissioner McEachran added that the NAACP, the Kirkland police department and the owner of the restaurant where the incident occurred have been working together to address the issue. He noted that the restaurant had closed for the day to allow for staff training on diversity.

Commissioner McEachran commented that something consequential occurred at the November 19 City Council meeting with regard to affordable housing. He said the Deputy Mayor brought forward a memo regarding the removal of something called the eight-hour rule. Under the rule, if a Councilmember asks the staff to do something, it cannot exceed eight hours of preparation time. The request to remove the rule was related to a request for the staff to reignite the affordable housing plan approved by the City Council in 2017, particularly in regard to where the strategies have been advanced and where the numbers will not be reached. He said it would be well for the Commission to review the affordable housing TAG strategies. The Council priorities for 2016-2017 included a commitment to move the affordable housing strategy actions forward in full. However, the 2018-2019 Council priorities call for only moving Strategy 1 forward.

Chair Mercer said she had noted the announcement by the Bellevue School District of a new program under which they will provide grants to help their employees in pulling together a down payment for a house in Bellevue. While the district will put up 25 percent of the down payment, the district will also own a portion of the equity in the house. The program is innovative in many ways and bears watching over the next year to see how it plays out. She suggested it would be a good idea to make inquiries to see if any other organizations or companies have similar programs.

Chair Mercer said the Bellevue Welcomes Its Transgender Neighbors program was a great move toward diversity.

5. DISCUSSION

A. Bellevue Human Services Commission Bylaws

Assistant City Attorney Kathleen Kline reminded the Commission that the Council wants all city boards and commissions to have more uniform bylaws. They established a template for all to use and have allowed for making some modifications to meet the needs of each group. She called attention to the revisions that had been made to the Commission's proposed bylaws at the previous meeting, beginning with Article V, paragraph A, that had been redrafted to read "The regular meetings of the Human Services Commission shall generally be held at 6:00 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month..." She noted that the language also allowed for recessing the Commission for either the month of August or December.

Commissioner Kline asked if the paragraph could be written to allow the Commission to recess for both the months of August and December. Ms. Kline pointed out that under city code boards and commissions must meet at least once each month, but allows for recessing one month annually. Human Services Manager Alex O'Reilly said traditionally the Commission's annual meeting with the Parks and Community Services Board has counted as the December meeting.

Human Services Planner Christy Stangland asked if the December get-together with the Parks and Community Services Board would count as a meeting for the Commission if less than a quorum of members attends. Ms. Kline said she did not believe it would.

Commissioner Piper asked if the city code stipulates a set number of meetings per year or per month. Ms. Kline said the city code language is reflected in paragraph A of Article V, which states that there must be at least one meeting per month, with the exception of either August or December.

Commissioner Kline asked if the scheduling of a meeting in December in good faith would still count even if through unforeseen circumstances a quorum is not reached. Ms. Kline said there can be no meeting absent a quorum. Ms. Stangland pointed out that the December meeting is a holiday party and does not include any official Commission business. She asked if that can be counted as an official Commission meeting. Ms. Kline allowed that she would need to do a bit more research on that issue, but reiterated that absent a quorum there cannot be an official meeting.

Chair Mercer called attention to Article I, paragraph C, and the prohibition against the Commission participating in regional issues not specifically assigned to the Commission by the Council. She asked if it was assumed that all human services issues are in fact assigned to the Commission, even where they involve regional issues. Ms. Kline said the Commission's granted authority under the city code is very broad, which allows the Commission to do the work it needs to do.

Ms. Kline said order of business spelled out in paragraph D of Article VI was drafted to mirror the Commission's current agenda. She allowed that the section was one that is allowed to be tweaked.

Ms. O'Reilly asked if having item 10, Review of Commission Calendar, on the agenda would require a staff person to verbally review the Commission's agenda. She pointed out that the practice of the Commission is to have upcoming meetings listed on the printed agenda. Ms. Kline said having the information printed would be sufficient.

Chair Mercer pointed out that the Commission has not traditionally formally approved the agenda as part of each meeting. Ms. O'Reilly said the Commission could include that action, which is something that happens as part at many other meetings. Ms. Kline said the action is not required.

Commissioner Kline proposed expanding item 7 to include reports from Commissioners as well as from staff. There was consensus to make that change and to list as the order of business Call to order and Roll Call; Oral and Written Communications; Communications from City Council, Community Council, Boards and Commission; Staff and Commissioner Reports; New Business; Old Business; Continued Oral Communications; Adjournment.

Chair Mercer called attention to Article XIII and asked if there was something the Commission needed to discuss. Ms. Kline said the language is drawn directly from the city code. Formal communications with the Council must represent the official majority or minority opinions of the Commission and not those of individual Commissioners. She allowed that some of the other boards and commissions are still working to identify what quarterly communications with the Council should look like, whether it be in person, in written form, or through the Council liaison.

With regard to Article VII, paragraph D.1, Ms. Kline noted that most boards and commissions allow for a total of 30 minutes for oral communications. She allowed, however, that the total time is a decision for each group to make individually. Ms. O'Reilly said it is rare for the Commission to have enough speakers to take up a total of 30 minutes during oral communications. There was consensus to allow a total of 30 minutes.

Commissioner Oxrieder raised the issue of when officers for the Commission are to be elected according to Article II, paragraph B. Ms. O'Reilly said traditionally the election of officers has been held in January. She allowed that the proposed bylaws indicate elections are to occur in June. Ms. Kline said the June date meshes with that of other boards and commissions. She suggested holding elections in January of 2019 and having the elected persons serve for a year and a half to get onto the June schedule. Ms. Stangland said the challenge for the Commission is that June is in the middle of the funding cycle, a time when a change of officers could prove to be problematic. The idea time to hold elections is January. Ms. Kline said it would be permissible to indicate in the bylaws that officers are to be elected the first meeting of January each year.

A motion to adopt the bylaws as amended was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Ma and the motion carried unanimously.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Potential Revisions for the 2019-2020 Human Services Needs Update

Ms. Stangland noted that while she was on maternity leave, Megan Farwell spent time putting together some different models for the Commission to consider. Focus was given to who the stakeholders are, specifically who uses the Needs Update on a regular basis. It was concluded that the stakeholders are the Commission, the City Council, local non-profit agencies, and community members.

Chair Mercer noted that other boards and commissions use the data included in the document.

Commissioner McEachran suggested the police and fire departments should be noted as well for reasons of collaboration. He noted that the Commission had

received an update regarding Bellevue Fire Cares, and in the Budget One process the fire chief is seeking funding for a street person to address the homeless. That person will need deep collaboration. Ms. Stangland explained that when putting together the information it was assumed that the various city departments were using the document as a planning tool internally.

Commissioner Kline proposed specifically calling out the regional human services commissions and committees as stakeholders. Ms. O'Reilly said she has had numerous agencies personally tell her that they use the Needs Update.

Ms. Farwell stressed the fact that not all stakeholders use the Needs Update equally. While many could use the document, it should be focused on the primary audience.

Ms. Stangland commented that in July regional human services staff met and discussed having a regional needs update. She said there are challenges associated with developing such a document given a lack of specific Eastside data. The available data is generally city specific and does not include the unincorporated areas of King County. The Eastside Human Services Forum is taking the lead, however, on possibly developing a regional needs update sometime between 2020 and 2022. A supplemental Bellevue document may also need to be developed. The community survey used to inform the Needs Update is not inexpensive and would require a large budget to target the entire Eastside.

Natalie Minas said she has been working on the idea of taking the data that is available from Eastside human services commissions and committees with an eye on identifying their priorities. The idea is to eventually be able to compare across cities to see how they line up relative to the five goal areas, and what their funding looks like.

Commissioner McEachran said he regularly reads the needs information documents printed by regional human services groups. He noted that both Issaquah and Renton base their documents on Bellevue's Needs Update. Snoqualmie is currently working to initiate a human services committee, and North Bend is about to do the same. From the minutes of Snoqualmie's preliminary planning session that they will be basing their work on Bellevue's Needs Update. He suggested that instead of producing a regional document, the focus should be on identifying areas of collaboration and zeroing in on them.

Ms. O'Reilly said United Way of King County is working on the project with Ms. Minas. The vision is to take what has already been done and group together the themes the individual cities have identified in an overview format. New data will not be sought.

Commissioner Kline said Bellevue should step up and acknowledge the fact that there is evidence out there that everyone looks to Bellevue's Needs Update. Those who are not just using the data from that document are focusing their own research on the Needs Update model and as an extension of Bellevue's data. While the actual

survey is expensive, it would be great if it could be expanded to include other cities, with the included cities sharing in the cost. The result would be a document that is more useful to more people. She added that she would like to see the dollars spent on the planning process minimized in order to get more money to actual users. Moving in the direction of working jointly with other jurisdictions to identify needs on the Eastside could have that result.

Ms. Stangland said the hope going forward is that a user-friendly structure for Bellevue's Needs Update will be identified that will meet the needs of the stakeholders. Such a document could serve as the model for an Eastside approach.

Ms. Stangland explained that there were several reasons for seeking to revise the Needs Update, beginning with comments made by the Commission about the document being too lengthy, not being very visually appealing, and about the difficulty of finding specific data and information. A survey was sent out to every agency funding by the city to gain their feedback. While the number of responses was low, those who did provide comment indicated they do not want to lose any of the information currently contained in the Needs Update. The feedback from the various agencies was specific to their specific programs. There were some responses indicating that some agencies do not use the Needs Update at all. The feedback from the staff highlighted the fact that there is expiring data in the reports. Some data in the report is more than ten years old and new data is not available. The data used in the report should be as up to date as possible.

Ms. O'Reilly added that organizations, including state organizations, at times cut their budgets by not compiling reports. Some reports that used to be compiled every two years are simply no longer written, leaving data gaps.

Commissioner Ma asked if there was a way the city could use data collected by the non-profit agencies themselves. He allowed that such data might be tailored to match the needs of the individual agencies, it could prove to be useful generally. Ms. Stangland responded that there is agency data used throughout the document where appropriate. The issue is that the data can end up highlighting some agencies but not others.

Ms. Farwell added that there is a difference between provision data and prevalence. Information supplied by agencies about what services they provided is not the same thing as dictating what the need is. The Needs Update in its current format includes a lot of provision data. How to balance the data is a question for the Commission to address.

Chair Mercer asked if there are organizations that produce a similar needs report in which they describe the need across their service areas. Ms. O'Reilly answered that there are certain service areas, such as civil legal services, that are reported statewide. She said staff have relied on their report and have used their data to

generally show the need. United Way of King County used to produce a community report but it was discontinued some ten years ago.

Commissioner McEachran commented that metrics are good but narrative is better. He said he would like to see the Needs Update include data trends tied to narrative regarding effective practices.

Commissioner Kline said she would welcome having notes in the report indicating the areas for which the available data is limited.

Commissioner Ma said he assumed the needs can be extrapolated from provisional data based on the demand for services. Ms. Farwell said wait list data is useful in that regard, and some census and other publicly available data can be used in the same way. In other areas, however, including emergency financial services, there is no data about the demonstrated need, only service trend information. She agreed that narrative by individual service providers can be helpful but stressed that the question for the Commission is what the balance should be between showing what the city has done and the results, and serving as a true needs assessment for Bellevue. The current document has done both and that has led to difficulties in finding specific information in it.

Commissioner Ma said he would like to see the needs based on public reports, with gaps filled in by using data from utility companies and the like. Some of the document should also be devoted to outlining service trends. Ms. Farwell cautioned that service trends and funding go hand in hand. Where there is an increase in funding in one area, there is probably going to be an increase in services in that area. She stressed the need to be cognizant of the relationship.

Ms. Farwell reiterated that conducting the survey is very expensive, and noted that it is very rigorous compared to what happens in other communities. She said the current Needs Update does not really highlight the survey data. A lot of energy goes into qualitative data collection as well, and to some degree both pieces get buried in among all the statistics. She said finding a way to better highlight the community voice should be identified.

Ms. Farwell said the potential revisions for the Needs Update included removing two of the sections from each of the goal areas, specifically the Why Is This Goal Area Important section because it is repetitive to other parts of the report, and the What's Working section also because of concerns regarding repetition and the potential for bias by highlighting certain agencies and not others. Ms. O'Reilly added that taking those two actions would result in a greatly reduced number of pages.

Commissioner Piper asked if there might be a way to capture information about why the goals are important. Ms. Farwell said there could be a one-pager at the beginning that talks about why each of the goals is important and how they connect to one another. What seems superfluous is the amount of real estate devoted to the topic at

the beginning of each section, especially when the rest of the report details much of the same information. Another change that could be made would be to move some of the community perceptions to the beginning of the chapter to capitalize on the feedback, as proposed in Option 1.

Chair Mercer suggested the approach cut out too much. For instance, several useful charts are left out. She said she wanted more data not less, and more visuals not less. It would be helpful to have a page for each specific targeted population along with highlights of the impacts across the areas for each of the populations. That would benefit the Commission when advocating for specific populations, and when determining if the needs are really being met for the different populations. She said she would like to see something like Option 3 for each goal area and for each of the target populations. Ms. Farwell countered that the intent of removing duplications in the report might not be achieved using that approach. Staff would need to produce very focused topical briefs as well as a brief for each of the special populations. Chair Mercer commented that the Commission hears a lot about diversity, a topic that is very important, and yet the needs report is not written in a way that allows for zeroing in on any specific population.

Commissioner Oxrieder said she did not disagree with Chair Mercer but stressed that the document should be something someone will take the time to read. The current document is not widely read, possibly not even by Councilmembers.

Chair Mercer voiced her support for Option 3 as a good way to display the information visually. Adding in the special populations would make the document something that could be ripped apart and handed to people looking at individual issues. Ms. O'Reilly said feedback from agencies has indicated they print out the sections that relate to their areas of focus and only use that information. The specific populations section addresses all of the goal areas, though some could be strengthened.

Commissioner McEachran said he has often used the executive summary to explain the work of the Commission. He suggested the reports given to different organizations should be checked, many of which take different trends, in order to create a fuller picture.

Ms. Farwell shared with the Commissioners for format purposes a brief she proposed for United Way of Snohomish County as part of their strategic realignment process. She noted that they identified a new mission of breaking the cycle of poverty and included ten areas in which research was needed to specifically connect each topic area to poverty. She noted that the document was very funder focused and pointed out that no provision data was included.

Commissioner Kline asked if using a similar format would mean abandoning the goal areas and shifting to topic areas instead. Ms. Farwell pointed out that various topics are housed in the various goal areas. For instance, Goal 1 has food, emergency

financial assistance, shelter and housing. The goal areas could be retained while still addressing topic areas specifically using a needs-focus approach.

Commissioner Kline noted that the focus areas were developed several years ago in order to align with the approach taken by United Way of King County. They were useful at the time, especially to show how the continuum was broken down. She said she was willing to do away with the goal areas, but voiced concern that the Snohomish County format could result in a document that is ever changing.

Commissioner McEachran said the various topic areas could be articulate in line with the seven-targets strategy of the Council. The Council always feels good when what the Commission is doing articulates with what they are doing. That may simply mean changing the words of the goal areas.

Ms. O'Reilly said one of the cornerstones of importance to the Council is what their constituents think is important. That is why the city invests over \$30,000 every other year to conduct the online and phone survey. The finance department also does a budget survey and a performance measured survey so they can know if the residents approve of how the city is spending their tax dollars. It will continue to be important for the Needs Update to include information about what Bellevue residents believe is important to them in terms of the needs. Over time the Council has provided a great deal of support based on the scientifically collected data indicating that people who live in Bellevue think. Because the same questions have been asked over the years, it is possible to identify trends.

Chair Mercer reiterated her desire to see the report include separate sections for individual populations in a shorter, targeted way. Commissioner Kline suggested that given the electronic nature of the document, it should be possible to gather such information through a sort function. Chair Mercer said certain data could certainly be hyperlinked, but it could also simply be coalesced into something that is usable.

Commissioner Ma suggested that approach could actually make the report even thicker, not pared down. Chair Mercer agreed that could be the case. She pointed out, however, that during the funding cycle the Commission focuses on the goal areas while at the same time looking at targeted populations. She said she would like to be able to bring out the various separate sections to make sure the needs of each is being addressed. She added that she would want to revisit the list of populations, and said it might be sufficient to produce a single page for each population with bullets of the top five issues and a couple of quotes that at a glance would yield information about the population.

Commissioner Ma pointed out that the previous Needs Update had just that. Chair Mercer noted the staff proposal would remove it. Ms. Farwell clarified that rather than taking out the information, the staff proposal streamlines some of the wording, and taking specific population information and incorporating it into each of the sections, with any information not fitting into a particular section being removed.

Ms. O'Reilly added that over time the Commission has made it clear it wants to include stories in the Needs Update. Some of the stories come from the qualitative data gathering, including from the community conversations and the provider surveys. There will still be a place for stories in the document.

Commissioner McEachran highlighted the need to outline how the Needs Update articulates with the Comprehensive Plan and Council initiatives. Having those ties in hand can help explain to people why the Commission funds the way it does.

There was agreement around truncating the document and the potential in some of the options presented. There also was consensus to avoid losing information on specific populations by burying it in the other information. The Commissioners agreed the document should maintain some stories and incorporate as many graphics as possible.

Chair Mercer commented that it is hard to pull out of the current Needs Update what is important and why. Having more lists with associated follow-up details would be very helpful. Ms. Farwell asked how to go about identifying the priorities. She pointed out that there were concerns with the stakeholder slide relative to who was left off and what order they were in when it was simply intended to be a list. If in an official document there is list ordered one through five of the most important things, there would need to be solid backing data for why those things were identified. Chair Mercer agreed the lists would need to be predicated on qualitative data.

Ms. O'Reilly suggested that it should be clear that lists in the document are not in priority order. That is the approach used in addressing the focus areas in the supplemental. Ms. Farwell pointed out that from the survey and the community conversations the top two issues will always be things like the cost of living and housing. She questioned where a list of top issues would reside in the Needs Update.

Commissioner Ma suggested there was an overall sentiment among the Commissioners that it is difficult to pull useful data from the Needs Update.

Chair Mercer pointed out that the current document in the section regarding seniors includes service trends. It highlights the need for long-term care and services, but it is necessary to go over a couple of pages to figure out the next one, which is more support for family caregivers and such. She argued that all of the headings are there and they are pulled out as being important, just not important enough to be at the beginning. The information should be pulled out and placed in a list up front to avoid having to read through the whole document to figure out the list of what is important.

With regard to the use of provision data, Commissioner Ma said he wanted it to be distinct from the hard data in the document. He also said he liked the notion of putting the community vision and voice in the forefront along with a story early on that

captures the data. He said he liked the Snohomish County option but suggested it should include provision data in specific ways.

Ms. O'Reilly said she would work with Ms. Farwell and Ms. Stangland to develop another format and bring it back to the Commission for additional review early in 2019.

7. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly called attention to the letter dated November 16 that was included in the desk packet in which comments were included from two large agencies related to funding for MCRC.

Commissioner McEachran commented that the Budget One public hearing before the Council on November 19 had seven persons who addressed environmental issues. Also providing testimony was one member of the MCRC board of directors who made a direct appeal to the Council for \$50,000.

Ms. O'Reilly reported that she had not been contacted by anyone on the Council or from the City Manager's office. She said she would keep the Commission informed should there be any communications related to the Commission's funding recommendations. She allowed that the Commission was clear in communicating with the Commission's Council liaison about why funding for the organization was not recommended. The Council is scheduled to approve the budget at its first meeting in December.

Chair Mercer pointed out that the Commission had made it clear to the Council liaison that funding MCRC would be problematic because of financial audit issues with the agency. Commissioner McEachran said those points were addressed at the public hearing by the agency representative along with an indication that the audit issues are being addressed.

Ms. O'Reilly acknowledged that there is a need for a separate process to address the challenges smaller agencies face in seeking funding. Many of those agencies serve underrepresented persons in the community. The East and North funders group, which meets monthly, has held one meeting and has begun to develop a timeline for addressing the issue. Two jurisdictions in south King County have developed a parallel process and they will be announcing their awards in early December, following which there will be a process evaluation sometime in the new year. She said she would keep the Commission updated.

Chair Mercer asked the Commissioners to comment on funding MCRC should the Council come up with extra funds. Commissioner Ma said he personally felt that support from another agency provides some legitimacy. Commissioner Kline stressed that MCRC is not a small agency. It is large and substantial and their level of financial sophistication as demonstrated through communications between them and the

Commission did not rise to even the minimum level. As such it would not be prudent to fund the agency. The problem is in their hands and it can be fixed.

Commissioner Ma said he was not willing to make any changes to the Commission's funding recommendations unless directed to do so by the Council. He voiced support for the organization given the need to support the populations they deal with in the community.

Commissioner McEachran said the request made directly to the Council for funding is outside the scope of the Commission's work.

Commissioner Ma said if the Council were to come up with additional money and seek the opinion of the Commission in regard to funding the agency, he would not immediately change his mind and fund them, but that he would be willing to help guide them through the process and make any funding for them predicated on certain stipulations. Ms. Stangland said Redmond appears to be taking that approach.

Ms. O'Reilly allowed that the Commission has in the past included stipulations along with recommended funding. In those instances, however, the stipulations related to programmatic issues rather than organizational issues.

Commissioner Piper said he had had some fundamental concerns with the organization. He said if the Council were to come up with additional money, his inclination would be to put it somewhere else.

Chair Mercer pointed out that the organization was very fairly treated by the Commission during the funding process. It was clear the Commission wanted to fund them, but in the end it was the clear financial obligations that tipped the Commission's hand away from recommending funding. She said she was not willing to back away from that position and would also allocate any additional dollars the Council may come up with to other agencies.

With regard to the vacancy on the Commission, Ms. O'Reilly related that she confirmed with the City Clerk's office that press release would be released on November 26, and that the application process would remain open for two weeks, closing on December 7.

8. NEW BUSINESS – None
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 8:10 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date