

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

February 23, 2017
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Villar, Commissioners Bruels, Kline, McEachran, Mercer, Oxrieder, Perelman

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Department of Parks and Community Services; Gwen Rousseau, Department of Planning and Community Development

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by Chair Villar who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Bruels, who arrived at 6:09 p.m., and Commissioner Perelman, who was excused.

3. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Nishi Jain, co-chair of the Youth Link Board, invited the Commissioners to attend the 18th Annual Gumbo Night on Thursday, March 30. She said the event will begin at 5:00 p.m. at the home of Sherry and David Grindeland. Attendees will include members of the Bellevue Youth Council, the Bellevue City Council, and various boards and commissions. It will be an opportunity to talk with teens on an individual basis about community issues, and to eat great food.

Mr. Tudor Muntianu, a member of the Youth Link Board, updated the Commission on the Annual Kids Care Coat Drive. During the months of November and December, Youth Link collected nearly 3500 coats, hats, gloves and scarves for children and youth who lack proper cold weather gear. The community was very generous. Through two special events and in working with agencies, the Youth Council has

distributed about 2500 of the collection. The remaining coats will be distributed by human service agencies at school and to local community groups.

Ms. Krischanna Roberson, Youth Link Board member, said the Board has three priorities for 2017: homelessness, career development and mentorship, and equity. The Board members have begun digging into the data regarding homeless and is working on ideas for how they can impact changes. With regard to career development and mentorship, the Board members will be working with a variety of local businesses to help develop opportunities. The goal is to assist youth in career planning and getting them ready for the next phase of their lives. Equity involves partnering with and creating opportunities to work more with diverse youth organizations to create a higher understanding of equities across Bellevue.

Ms. Rachel Lau, also a member of the Youth Link Board, said 450 students attended the 2016 Youth Involvement Conference, which is hosted by Youth Link every other year. Five priorities were highlighted: employment, safety, transportation, education and health. With regard to employment, focus was given to extending access to community internship programs; organizing job and career fairs; creating a website that allows collaboration within vocational organizations; and removing educational barriers through things like tutoring programs. With regard to safety, the youth said they would like to work with the Bellevue School District on bullying prevention programs. Under the transportation priority, the youth called for working with the city to increase awareness of missing sidewalks in and around South Bellevue; and increasing awareness to counselors for student mental health issues.

Mr. Muntianu said the priorities for education were to create more classes for students to learn real life “adult” knowledge, such as how to do taxes and how to invest. Under the health priority, the youth called for increasing access to and information about mental health services, assessment tools counselors, as well as drug awareness and substance abuse.

Ms. Jain thanked the Commission for its continued support of Youth Link and for the youth in the city.

4. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner McEachran reported on his attendance at the Affordable Housing Technical Advisory Group earlier in the day. He said the group is hopefully only one meeting away from delivering an affordable housing strategy to the Council. In one of the reports given to the group, it was stated that the challenge of affordable housing is widespread. A fulltime worker earning minimum wage can afford a one-bedroom apartment in just twelve counties and one metropolitan area across the country. No minimum wage worker can afford a two-bedroom apartment in any county or metropolitan area in the United States.

Commissioner McEachran said he also is serving on the Wilburton commercial area CAC.

Chair Villar noted that she attended the recent King County Library System strategic planning feedback meeting where the focus was on narrowing strategies and gathering feedback regarding how they can best serve the community in the next five years. Focus is being given to how to plug into human services needs and provide more than just books and audio.

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said she and intern Kayla Vally traveled to Olympia earlier in the day to participate in United Way of King County and United Way of Washington lobby day. She said they were able to talk with legislators about the legislative agenda of United Way of King County, which is very similar to the one developed by the Eastside Human Services Forum. She said on March 21, Colleen Laing, formerly a staff person at Bellevue and currently public policy director for United Way of King County, will provide the Commission with an update on legislative topics related to human services. Now at the halfway point, bills that have not made it out of their respective policy committees and into the respective budget committees are not likely to survive. Lisa Wellman, the new senator from District 41, which includes some of Bellevue and Mercer Island, is very knowledgeable about human services and early learning and will be a good advocate in the legislature.

Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano reported that she attended the Alliance of Eastside Agencies (AEA) presentation on February 16 with Debbie Lacy of the Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition. The presentation was very sobering about the real fears being faced by the immigrant and refugee community.

5. PUBLIC HEARING

A. Human Services Trends and Needs

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

Mr. Michael Brown, Housing Coordinator for HERO House, thanked the Commission for its support. He noted that input was sought from some members regarding the questions asked by the Commission. With regard to the barriers to accessing housing and human services, availability of providers was mentioned most often. Many times providers have so much on their plates that they cannot provide adequate services to clients. He said HERO House does not receive services through Medicaid funding. As a result, even though limited services are received from other organizations such as Hopelink, rides cannot be arranged from Hopelink. With regard to the types of services asked for by clients, he said the need for affordable and available housing has been the biggest change over the last two years. HERO House has started a new initiative to promote and look for housing. The organization is seeking partners to

find housing resources for the members who often do not have knowledge about where to turn when looking for housing.

Mr. Ralph Casillas, who receives services from and is a member of HERO House, said he came to Washington in 2015 and was unable to obtain mental health services. He said he was often told by providers they could not help him. The clubhouse model that HERO House offers got him connected to what he needed. Public transportation is inadequate, and the ACCESS vehicles often show up late or not at all. There are also difficulties associated with having private transportation, primarily the costs. Clients often do not have a mailing address, which makes it difficult to access services. Those seeking jobs must give a permanent address, and HERO House allows its members to use the HERO House address. The cost of housing makes it very difficult to access, whether one has a mental illness or not. Some members highlighted the fact that few have any real knowledge of what local resources are available to them.

Mr. Arlen Olsen with the Housing Justice Project, explained that the organization, which is located in the Regional Justice Center in Kent, provides eviction defense services to low-income tenants. Any low-income tenant facing eviction in King County can walk into the office and be paired up with a volunteer attorney to represent them in either negotiations with their landlord or in court. There are some 200 attorney volunteers who come in at least once a month. Tenants do not need to have been served with an eviction notice in order to receive services; they may simply anticipate having a hard time paying their rent on time. Over the past years there has been an increasing number of seniors seeking help with eviction problems given that their fixed incomes make it difficult to keep up with rising rents in King County. In just the last two years, a new state law was passed that makes it easier for tenants who have been evicted in the past to find housing, and the law triggered a big demand among low-income clients who have been struggling to find a place to live because of a past eviction. Another issue is shifts in funding for legal services. The new administration has said it wants to eliminate the Legal Services Corporation, the organization that distributes federal funding to legal services organizations. The Housing Justice Project does not receive any money from the Legal Services Corporation, but many of its partner organizations do and if their ability to help clients is reduced, the clients will come to the office of the Housing Justice Project seeking help. The organization's list of clients includes immigrants, some of whom find it difficult to make a phone call and wade through the telephone tree in search of the right department. For them, face-to-face contact works the best. Many clients are seniors who are not computer savvy and who are not comfortable going online to search for housing, yet there are very few organizations that offer housing search assistance. The organization has three paid staff attorneys who supervise the clinics and backstop the volunteers, but reductions in funding means one of those three positions will go away at the end of the year. Funding from United Way is being sought to help reduce barriers to low-income tenants and help them get back into housing by cleaning up their credit histories and vacating past criminal records. It is too soon for the organization to see if its clients will be impacted by the new administration's focus on immigration. The

King County Bar Association is supporting legislation in Olympia to create a new source of funding dedicated to civil legal services for low-income folks, and the organization is supporting those efforts.

Ms. Amanda Sherry with Imagine Housing said the organization struggles to help its clients to find the resources they need to be successful given recent funding cuts that have affected service organizations in the community. Imagine Housing takes in Tier 3 individuals who are coming directly from being homeless, and is one of the only organizations on the Eastside doing that. Tier 3 clients have the highest needs and the strongest barriers to accessing those needs. So long as Imagine Housing continues to receive the same level of funding, it will continue to offer the same level of services. The list of barriers described by clients relative to accessing the help they need includes transportation, especially bussing. Many residents do not have a car and many of them struggle in using public transportation due to mental health and PTSD issues. Clients have expressed having difficulties in reaching medical specialists, many of whom do not take Medicaid patients. Hopelink is one of the biggest resources Imagine Housing relies on for many of its clients, but transportation to and from Hopelink is difficult to access. Communication is another barrier, particularly translation services which can be very expensive. Many clients from immigrant and refugee populations have expressed fears and concerns over how the new administration's policies will affect them, particularly in regard to traveling and enforcement actions. Many will not seek help from the police for fear that questions about their status will be asked. With regard to legislative issues of interest to Imagine Housing, she said in 2008 the state responded to the housing crisis by putting nearly \$200 million into the Housing Trust Fund. Since then, the allocation has been reduced every single year and currently stands at its lowest since 2001. The Housing Trust Fund is a critical source of capital for building affordable housing and without it gaining more affordable units will be challenging. If approved, HB 1797 could allow millions of unused dollars to be invested in affordable housing. HB 1633 and SB 5407 seek to ban source of income description which is a barrier for many veterans who are struggling to find housing with vouchers. Imagine Housing supports HB 1570 establishing the Housing Opportunities Act.

Mr. Jerry Kroon with the Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP) said the organization has a budget request in with the civil legal aid community in the state for an additional \$12.9 million. Currently, the allocation is \$25 million statewide for civil legal aid. Nationally, there is one civil legal aid attorney for every 5000 qualified residents, but in Washington the number is one in 10,000; in East King County the number is one in 22,000. There are only four attorneys offering legal civil aid services in East King County, and they all work at ELAP. The good news is that funds from the federal Victim Crime Act were received specifically to hire the fourth attorney. Two legal navigators have also been hired to work in the courthouses in Kent and Seattle with victims of crime, primarily domestic violence and sexual assault. Language continues to be a huge barrier to access for clients, as is transportation. One way the transportation issue is being addressed is by having the attorneys stationed at the agencies that make referrals to ELAP, including Consejo and Lifespring. The biggest

change over the past two months has been in the area of immigration. There is fear in the immigration community. A clinic for people with concerns about immigration was offered two weeks after the election at Stevenson Elementary, and 250 people showed up. Since then, two workshops have been held with families who need to have their paperwork put in order for their children, including power of attorney so someone can take their children in the event they are detained or deported. To date 75 families have received services, and there are seven more clinics scheduled in East King County and in the South King County areas. The Bellevue Police Department has been participating and has been trying to get the word out that the police will not ask about immigration status. The Fire Department and School District has also been involved, a level of support that has not been seen in other communities in East King County. ELAP is now the domestic violence agency of record for the entire county and handles over 1200 cases annually. Anything the Commission can do to increase the level of funding to the agency would be appreciated.

Ms. Christy Becker with Hopelink thanked the Commission for its ongoing support. She stated that in 2016 the agency served 64,000 individuals with an array of services. A third of the population served is made up of refugees and immigrants and the agency works hard to provide a safe community for them. Many in the refugee and immigrant community are fearful, and the agency is working to get out as much information as possible. The agency has seen a very large increase in the number of persons who have health insurance, but that may change in the future. Client difficulties in connecting with mental health services has been identified as an increasing need. The lack of affordable housing is one of the biggest barriers faced by families and individuals, as well as by employees of the agency, many of whom must live outside of the city. Lack of affordable and adequate transportation is another issue. Hopelink has seen an increase in stability services, which involve financial assistance and food. There has been an increase in the elderly population. The Bellevue food bank since 2013 has seen about 100 new participants every year, and to respond to the need the agency is in the process of increasing the food bank hours. There has also been an increase in requests for emergency food bags. Hopelink is in the process of piloting with Imagine Housing a possible food delivery program. There has been an increase in the number of asylum seekers who are waiting for employment authorization, an increase in the number of skilled immigrants in need of professional guidance to find employment, and an increase in the number of older job seekers. The community case management family development program has seen an increase in the number of English language learners which has resulted in an increase in translation costs. Over a third of families receiving case management are on the Coordinated Entry for All housing waiting list or are currently homeless. The winter shelter fills a huge void for families that need housing, but once it goes away, the families have nowhere to go. Participants in the homeless housing services will not be staying in the area unless they receive a subsidy; those not lucky enough to get into housing with Imagine Housing or through the King County Housing Authority are moving either to Snohomish County or South King County. The need for housing is clear. There has been an increase in the number of African-American

participants in the housing programs, and an increase in the number of two-parent households. There has been an increase in Medicaid transportation ridership. Hopelink is grateful to have received an increase in city funding. Funding for housing has experienced a number of shifts over the last few years; the agency has become ineligible for some funding sources.

Mr. Josh Terlouw with Congregations for the Homeless thanked the Commission for its support over the years. He commented that access to mental health and substance abuse disorder services continues to be an issue. Particularly with regard to the latter, access to treatment facilities is always problematic. The agency has participated with All Home and Coordinated Entry for All becoming a part of Our Housing. As the new approach comes on board, clients will access housing with Congregations for the Homeless through Coordinated Entry for All. The agency is in support of serving clients with greater needs and is working to ensure the housing model is set up to serve the most vulnerable. With the increase in the cost of housing, the agency has seen a shift in the number of people in need of housing who have full-time work and who have fewer of the traditional barriers to entry into housing. The agency receives most of its funding for housing from King County, United Way and the Eastside cities. The number of available units has been increased from 74 to 80. It is too early to tell what impact the new administration's policies will have on the refugee and immigrant population. The winter shelter and the day center are being operated from the Lincoln Center and Congregations for the Homeless would like to see the facility fully renovated to offer a little more dignity to the men who are served. The desire continues to be to have a shelter facility that can be open year round.

Mr. Wally Tablet with AtWork! explained that the agency provides employment services primarily for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. He said he has been in the field for over 20 years and still has problems navigating the system, which the clients also must deal with. It is particularly difficult where cultural and language barriers are concerned. Families seeking services are often overwhelmed. Given how diverse the city and the county is, a huge population is being missed. With regard to capacity, he said there is always a waiting list of people wanting services. That could be due to a lack of funding, lack of qualified staff, or because the agency cannot afford to pay people what they can earn at Costco or Starbucks in managerial positions. Many of the clients AtWork! works with are termed high acuity; they might be non-verbal, have personal care needs, or they might need assisted technology in order to do their jobs. The mission is to find those people jobs. It has not come to light yet, but there are murmurings that the increase in the minimum wage is making employers more reticent to hire persons with disabilities. One argument is that employers cannot afford to pay a higher wage to someone who is not as good at doing the work. Every opportunity is taken to say that people with disabilities bring value to the work place, and that just because they might need an accommodation does not mean they cannot do the job. With regard to the school to work transition program, he explained that the clients are special education students in their final year of school. The goal is to transition them from school to work. One of the agency's partners, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, might be pulling out

of the program after 12 years of meeting with success, and that is worrisome. School districts have students who will be in need of employment, and that need will have to be addressed.

Ms. Jennifer O'Neal with the Chinese Information and Service Center said she manages the Cultural Navigator program that has been in Bellevue and Redmond for about eight years. The program provides navigating services for immigrants who do not speak English well. Those with language barriers often cannot do such simple things as make a phone call or fill out a form, so the program does it for them and provides all kinds of information they might need. She said after coming on board as manager about a year ago and taking over the fundraising process, the budget has been increased by 40 percent. Funding from Bellevue and Kirkland has not increased, except for a cost of living adjustment. Funding from Redmond has doubled, and new funding has been received from Issaquah, Bothell, SeaTac and Sammamish. Additionally, the program partners with the India Association of Western Washington and has been awarded a \$25,000 grant from United Way that has been evenly split between the two organizations; the funds will be used to go into restaurants, development relationships with the owners or managers, and then work with the employees who do not speak English and do not know about the services they are eligible for. Effort is being put into leveraging funds to get more funding from other sources. Chinese people are not generally financially needy, though they often need information and services. A curriculum is going to be put together and Chinese people will be invited to come get the information they need. Non-Chinese people will also be invited to come and socialize and get to know their neighbors.

Ms. Helen Banks Routon with Eastside Baby Corner thanked the Commission for its past support. She said the agency does not provide direct services, rather it works with other programs and agencies, 191 in all. One need that continues to grow is the need for diapers. The increase in the distribution of diapers has been in the double digits range over the last four years; in 2016 just under 1.2 million diapers were distributed, which was a 34 percent increase over the prior year. The product was obtained through purchases, drives and strategic partnerships with organizations such as the National Diaper Bank Network. The increase in diaper distribution is reflective of the agency's overall growth and the need in the community. Over the last ten years, the number of children served has nearly doubled. The number of orders filled has increased by 125 percent. Eastside Baby Corner is a legacy name and no longer reflects the work of the agency, which offers services to more than the traditional Eastside, is not focused solely on babies, and is not located on a corner. One change is the number of older kids being served. The number of 1-2 year olds and older toddlers has increased by 50 percent, and the number of elementary school-aged children served has more than doubled over the last two years. The basic needs of school-aged kids are different and the orders are not easily filled, especially clothes for older boys and shoes. Kids up to age 12 are served, and by the time they are 10 they have needs for hygiene products. One thing that has contributed to serving more of the elementary-aged children has been being in every early learning classroom in the area. About 25 percent of all distributions go to

housing programs, another 22 percent goes to home visiting programs, and food banks and early learning programs account for 14 percent. By assisting families with diapers, formula and clothing, there is a little more money for rent. One thing the agency needs is more information about the changing human services landscape, and about how things are changing for the agency's partners.

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

BREAK

Commissioner McEachran said he was grateful to hear Hopelink talk about its connection with Imagine Housing and the delivery of food. He said it was also fascinating to hear the issues around transportation and access to services. He suggested the Commission would benefit from having an update regarding coordinated entry.

Commissioner Mercer said it was good to hear some of the agencies explain how they are working together. That is something the Commission has been calling for for quite some time.

Commissioner Bruels said he was happy to hear that the Cultural Navigator program has successfully garnered some additional funding sources. Commissioner Mercer agreed and added it was good to hear what the program manager has been doing since coming on board.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Bellevue Demographics

City demographer Gwen Rousseau allowed that there are challenges associated with presenting demographic data. It can easily be used to express biases or to stereotype people and groups. It cannot tell individual stories of people and their past experiences. The data can, however, serve as a starting point for developing an understanding of differences.

Job growth is a driver of change in communities. Bellevue's jobs have been growing steadily since the 1970s and are projected to continue growing through 2035. In 2015, there were just over 150,000 jobs in the city. Job growth continues to outpace the population growth rate. In 2016 there were about 139,400 people living in Bellevue, and the projection is that the number will grow to 160,400 by 2035.

People are attracted to live in Bellevue because of its convenient access to jobs, good schools, goods and services, parks and natural areas, strong and safe communities, and affordable housing.

Chair Villar challenged the assumption that Bellevue has housing that is affordable. The information shared with the Commission has been that housing in the city is barely affordable even for folks who have good-paying jobs, and that for those earning less than the area median income, finding housing that is affordable is a real struggle. Ms. Rousseau agreed that there is a lack of affordable housing for all segments of the population.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie pointed out that if there was more affordable housing, it would serve as something that attracts people to the city. Ms. O'Reilly agreed and pointed out that affordable housing is certainly not currently an element that is driving population growth in the city; it is actually having a counter effect as folks are leaving the city in search of housing they can afford.

Commissioner Mercer commented that housing that is affordable is a factor in population growth. In Bellevue's case, however, the lack of affordable housing is probably keeping the city from growing as fast as it might otherwise.

Ms. Rousseau shared with the Commissioners data about the different types of growth that are growing in Bellevue. She noted that information technology has demonstrated the largest growth and represents the largest job clusters. Interestingly, tourism has also shown growth. Tourism includes restaurants, accommodation services and other industries. The information technology and tourism clusters, however, employ people at very different earnings levels. Business services, while still a large job cluster, did not grow much between 2009 and 2015.

Growth in the information technology sector has affected the city's demographics in terms of cultural diversity, age diversity and economic diversity. Bellevue's foreign-born population has been steadily increasing and since 2000 it has accounted for 93 percent of the city's population growth. Bellevue's percentage of foreign-born residents at 39.2 percent is much higher than Seattle, King County, Washington state, and the United States. Most of Bellevue's residents who were born outside the United States were born in Asia, primarily India and China. At 50.0004 percent, Bellevue's minority residents outnumbers the city's White residents.

While Bellevue is increasing its percentage of minorities at a steeper incline, in some ways it is simply catching up with other cities in the western part of the United States. Other large cities have higher percentages of minority residents, including Kent, Yakima, Federal Way and Renton. Bellevue's percentage of Asian people, however, ranks the city tenth in the nation for cities of 100,000 residents or more. Outside of California and Hawaii, Bellevue has the highest percentage.

Chair Villar asked if there is a city that is similarly sized to Bellevue with whom consideration should be given to having a sister city conversation about best practices. Ms. Rousseau allowed that there probably are similar cities in terms of information technology jobs and increasing diversity. Ms. O'Reilly said there was work done by staff in the finance department relative to performance measures. She

suggested it might be interesting to review that work. Commissioner McEachran added that Senior Planner Mike Kattermann has identified effective practices from other cities relative to his work with the Affordable Housing Technical Advisory Group that may have some correlations.

Ms. Rousseau noted that the Hispanic population and people of two or more races has also been increasing. The Black or African American community has also grown but it has not increased in its proportion.

The number of persons speaking a language other than English at home had by 2015 grown to 42 percent; it was only 14 percent in 1990. Chinese is the most frequently spoken language in the home other than English, followed by Spanish, Korean, Hindi and Russian. The Bellevue School District reports that currently there are 95 languages spoken by enrolled children.

In 1970, the percentage of Bellevue's population under the age of 20 was 44 percent. At the time a number of new houses were being built and young families were moving into them. Those folks have largely stayed in place and the percentage of those under age 20 has steadily declined, while the percentage of those from 45 to 64 years old, and the percentage of those 65 and older, has steadily increased. The population of 20 to 44 year olds has fluctuated over the years. With regard to gender, Bellevue's population is fairly even at 50.6 percent male and 49.4 percent female. However, males generally outnumber females in the younger segments; in the over 55 categories, females outnumber males. The median age for males currently stands at 34.8, while for females it is 40.7.

Chair Villar asked if it would be possible to overlay the male and female populations with the native-born and foreign-born populations. Ms. Rousseau said that could be done.

Ms. Rousseau noted that Bellevue's age distribution is similar to the data for King County, the state and the nation. Seattle has a higher percentage of 18 to 44 year olds. For 2015, Bellevue's median age dropped a little bit, a trend that might indicate a coming change in the 18 to 44 year category.

With regard to race by age, Ms. Rousseau noted that 20 percent of the White population are older adults. Of those who claim two or more ethnicities, 45 percent are under the age of 18. The median age of Asian Indians in Bellevue is 29.2, while for Chinese residents in Bellevue that number of 37.5. Conversely, in looking at age by race, about 40 percent of the children in Bellevue under the age of 18 are White, while 78 percent of the 65 and older category are White.

Chair Villar noted that a recent article in the *Bellevue Reporter* about Black and Hispanic student graduation rates for some reason did not include Asians in the minority populations designation. She said her concern was that pulling apart data

can result in negative implications. Ms. Rousseau said she did not know if the information contained in the article was accurate or not.

Ms. Rousseau noted that in 2011 the first of the Baby Boom generation hit the age of 65. By 2040, the older adult population in the state is projected to reach beyond 1.8 million, or about 21 percent of the total population.

Bellevue has a lower proportion of people with disabilities than other jurisdictions. Only 30 percent of the city's disabled population are aged 35 to 65; most of the population is 75 and older. Bellevue's percentage of persons with disabilities who are ambulatory is much lower than the state and the nation, and that could beg the question of whether or not the city sufficiently accommodates those with ambulatory challenges.

Commissioner Mercer suggested it would be interesting to see how the data from the Bellevue School District matches up. She said it was her understanding that the district has seen a dramatic increase in the number of kids with disabilities over the last several years. That may be a trend that shows up first on the district's radar before it shows up in the census data. Ms. Rousseau noted that the district does not collect some disability information, such as cognitive disabilities, for children under the age of five. Even the census data relative to children under five lists only hearing and vision.

With regard to economic diversity, Ms. Rousseau explained that educational attainment level relate to occupations which in turn relate to earnings and therefore household income. Between 1970 and 2015, the number of Bellevue residents with a bachelor's degree or higher has steadily increased. Not surprisingly, the number of persons employed in management, business, science and arts occupations has also increased, as has household median income. The biggest change has been in the number of persons with graduate degrees, which increased nine percent between 2000 and 2015. By age, Bellevue's younger residents are much more highly educated. By race, the Asian population stands out as having one of the highest percentages of having a bachelor's degree or higher.

Commissioner Mercer commented that because the tech sector continues to grow in Bellevue, it likely is attracting people with higher educational attainment levels. Since Asians are driving Bellevue's population growth, they are also likely taking up a greater segment of the population with higher degrees.

Ms. Rousseau pointed out that there are people with doctorates and people without a high school education in every race category. It cannot simply be said that an Asian resident has a bachelor's degree because they may not even have a high school diploma. Diversity exists within all racial categories. A large percentage, 29 percent, of the city's Hispanic or Latino residents work in the service industry, though 15 percent of them are in management, business, science and the arts. The median

earnings for those in the service industry is only \$26,700, whereas those in the management, business, science and arts category are making \$101,200.

About half of Bellevue's households have incomes of \$100,000 or more. A full 12 percent earns less than \$12,000 annually, and another 12 percent makes between \$25,000 and \$50,000. Nineteen percent of the population makes \$200,000 or more per year. Clearly Bellevue has a high percentage of wealthy people, but the city is not lacking in those who are not wealthy.

Commissioner Mercer commented that the fact that half of Bellevue's population is making more than \$100,000 per year in many ways makes the affordable housing issue bigger. The wealthy 50 percent are driving the demand for housing, which in turn is driving up prices.

Ms. Rousseau stated that Bellevue has a lower percentage of poverty. However, poverty percentages vary by district within the city. Interestingly, a higher percentage of the foreign-born population is married. Additionally, household size is increasing. Foreign-born residents are willing to live in multifamily structures, which might have an implication for housing unit construction down the line. Bellevue College is growing, as is the GenX age bracket, which highlights the need for a variety of housing affordability.

With regard to the jobs-to-housing ratio, Ms. Rousseau noted that about 1.4 jobs are generated per household. The last time the city had a balanced jobs-to-housing ratio was 1980.

7. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly reported that the letters inviting people to participate in either the phone or online survey for the Needs Update were mailed out earlier in the day. She said reminders will be mailed out next week.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie reviewed the Commission agenda items for the upcoming meetings.

9. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Villar adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date