

*The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on April 5, 2016*

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION  
MINUTES

March 1, 2016  
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
City Council Conference Room 1E-120

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Oxrieder

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Shelly Brittingham, Dan Lassiter, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Councilmember Robinson; Diane Thompson, Janet Zielasko, Bellevue Network on Aging; Hillary Rossi, AtWork!; Amy Holland, Aging and Disability Services

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by Chair McEachran who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Kline, who arrived at 6:43 p.m., Commissioner Perelman, who arrived at 6:46 p.m., and Commissioner Oxrieder, who was excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 2, 2016

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Councilmember Robinson said she was honored to have been chosen to serve as

liaison to the Human Services Commission.

## 5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Mercer reported that she participated in the annual One Night Count in January.

Commissioner Villar said she has been coaching a team for Leadership Eastside that has been focused on the disproportionality of discipline for Latino students in the Bellevue School District. The group pulled together a very effective community conversation with school administrators, Latino parents, and other interested parties. The group is working to move forward with Jubilee REACH on building a program that will empower Latino parents to get more involved with the schools.

Chair McEachran said he is looking forward to the upcoming Friends of Youth luncheon and the Imagine Housing auction.

Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano reminded the Commissioners that applications for funding would start being accepted on March 2. She said the North/East funders workshop in Redmond was slated for March 3, and the south King County workshop at SeaTac would be held on March 4.

## 6. DISCUSSION

### A. Older Adults Trends and Issues

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said the Bellevue Network on Aging is asked to provide the Commission with a report annually to keep the Commission updated with regard to what the Network is working on. She introduced Vice-Chair Diana Thompson, and Dan Lassiter, North Bellevue Community Center manager and lead staff for all older adult activities for the city.

Mr. Lassiter explained that the Network on Aging was created in 2006 as an advisory group of volunteers who either work or live in Bellevue. There are currently 15 voting members and there can be up to five non-voting members. The role of the Network is to evaluate and make recommendations to the Parks & Community Services Department on matters of interest to older adults in Bellevue. There are three subcommittees and the members are required to serve on one of them.

In 2015 the Outreach Committee attended two different Council meetings, once to mark National Older Americans Day, and once to highlight World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The Network also took part in meetings focused on light rail design; worked with ARCH to proof the brochure for senior housing; and spent time communicating with state legislators on a notice of Medicare Observation Status. The Network works closely with the Kirkland Senior Council on various issues, including memory care programs

In conjunction with the Kirkland Senior Council, a Legislative Forum was conducted on December 2. It was very well attended by local elected representatives and activists focused on elder issues. The conversation included medications, getting Medicare to pay for hearing aids, protecting vulnerable adults from fraudulent and predatory practices, and The Care Act.

Mr. Lassiter said the Network will have four subcommittees during 2016: Outreach/Education, which will build awareness for older adults on topics of interest to them; Public Relations; Housing/Transportation/ and Advocacy.

Ms. Thompson said she has served as a member of the Network since its founding. She said almost 14 percent of Bellevue's population is 65 or older, Nationwide, it is expected that by 2030 fully 20 percent of the population will be 65 or older. In Washington State, people who are 85 and older are the fastest growing senior group. Over the last decade, the number of Bellevue residents 85 and older increased by 67 percent. According to AARP, 50 percent of older adults rely on Social Security for about half of their income, and about a quarter of seniors depend on it for at least 90 percent of their income. The average Social Security check is only \$1284 per month.

Most seniors prefer to age at home rather than in a residential facility. The provision of services at home enables many seniors to achieve their goal. One focus for the current year is on preserving Washington's long-term care infrastructure and increasing support for services that enable adults to remain in their homes and in their communities. The list of needed services includes adult day health, family caregivers support, case management, and programs funded through the Senior Citizens Services Act. Affordable housing and transportation are two very needed items, along with programs that seek to improve or maintain mental or physical health.

It is far less expensive to serve seniors at home and in the community rather than in adult family homes and nursing homes. The average cost for a home health aide in the Seattle area is \$28/hour, while the average cost for a semi-private room in a nursing home is more than \$100,000 per year.

Ms. Thompson commented that in the last year there have been marked changes in how senior programs are funded and organized, and in the amount of funding allocated to seniors. There are two main underlying causes for the changes, the first of which is the change in funding by Aging and Disability Services, which is a major funder of services for seniors and disability programs. The second change is the change in the goals of United Way which affects the programs they will fund. Contracts which serve seniors and persons with disabilities totaling approximately \$1.8 million will not be renewed on July 1. United Way will no longer fund some programs that benefit seniors, including community dining, wellness classes, programs to reduce social isolation, and programs that maintain quality of life, mental health and physical health. Beginning in July, Elder and Adult Day Services will lose

\$67,000 that go to fund programs to help people with progressive illnesses or severe disabilities live as fully as possible, and programs that help family caregivers maintain and improve their physical and mental wellbeing. Jewish Family Services will lose \$11,000 needed to fund services that enable people with physical, cognitive or developmental disabilities to live independent productive lives. Refugee Women's Alliance will lose \$20,000 used for a program to improve and maintain a high quality of life and to decrease social isolation. Senior Services of King County will lose the most. The agency, now called Sound Generations, will lose \$746,000 in contract funds. Their programs include health promotion, improving or maintaining quality of life, maintaining optimal physical or emotional health, and family caregiver support, as well as support for community centers.

It is likely that agencies the Commission has funded in the past will seek additional funding in the upcoming funding cycle due to the loss of funds from United Way. Agencies not previously funded may also come forward seeking funding.

Ms. Thompson said the Network on Aging outreach activities include participation in the Active Senior Fair, which will be held in March at Westminster Chapel. The fair, which is partly funded by Overlake Hospital, gives attendees information about programs that serve seniors. The Network participated in the founding of the Alzheimer's Café and continues to be an active participant. The idea behind the Café is that a person with some dementia and their caretaker can go to a normal activity where they meet and talk with other people, order some food to eat, and enjoy the socializing. Tutta Bella Neapolitan Pizzeria in Crossroads has provided the space in Bellevue as well as in Seattle. The Network also keeps up to date the ARCH website that deals with senior housing.

Ms. Thompson explained that in its advocacy role the Network advocates for local, state and federal policies that benefit seniors. At the local level, the emphasis is on physical and hearing access to public buildings for all members of the community. Two years ago, the Bellevue City Council set aside funds to improve sound amplification for those with hearing impairments. An induction loop has been installed under the rug in Room 113 and in the Council Chambers, allowing those with hearing aids to have the sound travel directly to the aids.

At the state level, the Network both writes to and visits with legislators in Olympia. Once a year the Network hosts or participates in a Legislative Forum. The most recent one was held in Kirkland and the agenda included restoring the lost Medicaid hearing benefit, which was discontinued in 2010. Budget provisos were introduced to the legislature to restore the funds, though unfortunately they did not get included in the final budget. The issue could stand a better chance next year.

To help protect vulnerable adults from predatory practices, financial exploitation, abuse and mistreatment, the Network had two statutes it wanted to see approved, including a statute that allows the state to file civil suits for Medicaid fraud. Under the statute, the state Attorney General has successfully recovered \$2.7 million in

Medicaid fraud. Additionally, HB-1499, which passed the House and is currently in the Senate, creates the crime of theft from a vulnerable adult, and makes it easier to prosecute criminal mistreatment and financial exploitation of vulnerable adults. Adult Protective Services provided testimony that 30 percent of their cases involve financial exploitation. King County is lucky to have a prosecutor's office that is very concerned with protecting vulnerable adults and seniors. Elder and vulnerable adult abuse is common but very difficult to prove, but King County is a nationwide leader.

Ms. Thompson asked the Commissioners to give consideration to increasing the allocation of funds to senior programs.

Commissioner Villar asked if it has become more difficult to find a unified voice for aging adults given the increase in diversity among aging adults. Mr. Lassiter said the Network has worked diligently to bring in more diversity, even on the board. The efforts were, however, only mildly successful. At the community center level, all manner of groups are connected and involved.

Chair McEachran asked if seniors are being found in homeless shelters. Ms. Thompson said up to half of the people at Sophia Way are 50 years old or older. Ms. O'Reilly added that there is an increased interest by Aging and Disability Services to look more closely at aging populations who are currently homeless or who are at risk of homelessness. Roughly half of those in the women's shelter are 50 or older, and at the men's shelter the percentage is slightly less.

Councilmember Robinson asked if hearing loss is counted as a disability in determining the number of persons who have a disability. Ms. Thompson said persons with hearing loss are included. Councilmember Robinson suggested it would be better to define physical disabilities different from hearing loss or vision loss. The latter two are natural occurrences in the aging population whereas physical disabilities are not necessarily natural. It would be beneficial to make the distinction. Ms. Thompson pointed out that half of those who are age 75 have some hearing loss, while the other half do not. Whether or not hearing loss is solely part of the aging process is arguable; clearly hearing loss is triggered by exposure to noise.

Amy Holland with Aging and Disability Services (ADS) explained that the agency is the Area Agency on Aging (AAA), which is a designation chartered under the Older Americans Act. The agency is charged with advocating, planning and coordinating services for older adults in King County. There are 629 AAAs in the United States, of which 13 are in Washington. Some of the AAAs cover multiple counties.

The ADS has three sponsoring organizations: the Seattle Human Services Department, King County, and the United Way. The 27-member advisory council is very active, particularly around advocacy work. The 2016 budget totals \$41.4 million which is used to address 150 contracts with 80 community agencies which provide services throughout the county. The ADS has 167 staff, 136 of which are direct service providers in the case management program, 27 of which work in planning and



administration, and four of which work in the Mayor's office for seniors. In a given year, the office provides services to about 39,000 individuals in King County.

Ms. Holland said that ADS is a subcontractor of the state Aging and Long-term Support Administration in the DSHS office. Their role is to manage all ADS services in the state. Fifty-four percent of the funding received by ADS is from Medicaid Title 19. Those funds are used for the long-term care case management program. About 14 percent of the budget involves state funds via the Senior Citizens Services Act and the Family Caregiver Support Program. Seventeen percent of the funding comes from the Older Americans Act, and 12 percent comes from the city of Seattle general fund. The balance of the budget is made up of funds received from small grants.

Commissioner Mercer asked if United Way provides any funding. Ms. Holland said United Way is part of the governance structure but does not fund any programs directly through ADS. United Way has not indicated any desire to change its role in helping to oversee the work.

Ms. Holland shared with the Commissioners that the list of services funded by ADS include adult day services, case management, health promotion, elder abuse prevention, family caregiver support, mental health services, community living connections, legal services, nutrition, senior centers, transportation, and homecare.

Commissioner Villar commented on the fact that ADS serves about 11 percent of the older adult population and asked where the other older populations are going when they are not using the ADS services. Ms. Holland allowed that the need far exceeds the ability of ADS to provide given current funding levels. ADS prioritizes certain populations and focuses on the Medicaid eligible, ethnic and cultural minorities, and those with other barriers to access. There are also services for older adults that are funded by local jurisdictions and agencies.

Turning to the Area Plan on Aging, Ms. Holland explained that the four-year plan is required by the state. Every four years ADS goes through the process of gathering community input and gathering demographic data, all of which is used to develop a new plan. The 2016-2019 plan is focused on developing age-friendly communities. The plan summarizes the budget and outlines how it is used. The document is updated every two years.

By the year 2040, 25 percent of the population of King County will be over the age of 60. That will usher in an increasing need for services and along with it a need for additional funding. The largest areas of growth for older adults are East Urban at 28 percent; South Urban at 32 percent; and Seattle at 24 percent of the growth. People of color represent 23 percent of the King County population, which is an increase of four percent since 2011. Of that 23 percent, 13 percent are Asian; one percent are American Indian or Alaskan Native; four percent are African American; three percent are Hispanic or Latino; two percent are two or more races; and 0.3 percent are Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

Ms. O'Reilly clarified that for the East Urban area, 25 percent of the population are foreign born.

Ms. Holland said the overall format of the plan is established by the state and responds to specific goal areas, the first of which is to have high-quality community based long-term care services and support. The objectives ADS is working toward include improving efficiencies and reducing costs while maintaining a high-quality of care for Medicaid case management clients; and advocating for funding to meet the growing demand for services, including the increasing number of vulnerable clients with complex needs. Washington is far ahead of the rest of the country. AARP conducted a study of long-term care systems nationally and ranked the states' Medicaid programs according to affordability, quality and client choice. Washington came in as second from the top. Program models that will provide for even more choice are being worked on at the state level.

Another goal area is access to information and services to support healthy aging. The focus is primarily on pre-Medicaid services. The Family Caregiver Support program falls under the category, as do the Community Living connections program and the Health Promotion programs.

Ms. Holland said the Community Living Connections program is relatively new. It was developed by the state and is being rolled out throughout the state. The program was implemented in King County through an RFP. Funds have been distributed to agencies by way of contracts. The program expands on the former information and assistance program. The goal is to provide easy access to information and resources, and to provide some individualized support for exploring long-term care options as people age. There are currently contracts with 13 agencies throughout the county, many of which provide specialized services for different cultural and ethnic groups. Regional work that involves outreach and connection building is also going on in different parts of the county. The program brochure is currently only available in English, but steps are being taken to make the materials work for the various populations being served.

Service integration and systems coordination is another goal area. The focus is on integrating aging network services and other human services with medical and behavioral health systems for better healthcare at a lower cost. ADS is participating in the Accountable Communities of Health work which is being led by King County, a program that looks at social determinants of health and how community based agencies can have an impact. ADS also has a longstanding relationship with the county prosecutor's office and fire departments to do different projects related to elder abuse prevention. Work is being done to help improve educate and improve connections between healthcare providers and community based agencies.

Ms. Holland said another goal relates to older Native Americans and is focused on ensuring greater success for the population group in King County. The work to

develop relationships with the tribes is mandated statewide to meet the needs of older adults in those communities. Plans for how the AAA can work with the tribes in providing training, resources and support for older adults in their communities are worked out in conjunction with the individual tribes. The focus is on providing case management in culturally appropriate ways along with training for caregivers and agency staff in the tribal organizations.

To address the livable communities goal, the focus is on engaging local governments, decision makers and consumers in preparing to make neighborhoods and cities great places for people of all ages. The big topics raised at every meeting with community groups falls under the goal, including housing, transportation, safety and homelessness. Even where the ADS is not funding things directly, there is often coordination and collaboration with other groups, and the advocacy group works to promote the issues and the need for funding. Housing, community mobility, economic security, and civic and social engagement all under the heading of how communities can be age friendly. The specifics include things like well-lit sidewalks and pathways, accessible housing and good transportation options. Portland and New York were the first two cities to achieve the framework developed by the World Health Organization. AARP is the organization that has taken it on in the United States. In terms of the official framework, there are eight domains of livability: outdoor spaces, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, community support and health services. Each must be addressed in order to become an age-friendly city.

Ms. Holland said ADS is working with a number of organizations to accomplish the goal for Seattle and King County, including Sound Generations, which was formerly Senior Services, Hopelink, SHAG, Leading Age, Horizon House, AARP, Changing Age, and the Healthy Aging Partnership. There is a five-year planning and implementation cycle for the work which has just begun.

Commissioner Mercer asked if the work will be done primarily in Seattle or if all of the cities will be involved. Ms. Holland said the hope is that all cities in King County will be involved. The agency is operated administratively under the city of Seattle and as such the hope is that the Mayor will adopt the program and make it his platform for how to promote aging issues and how to make Seattle a livable community. As part of the effort to take the program countywide, ADS is hoping to connect with stakeholder groups, such as King County, human services commissions, city councils and providers.

The process of preparing and launching has involved securing political commitments and organizing stakeholders. An assessment process will be undertaken to determine where things stand currently, and then an action plan will be developed. Implementation will be coupled with measuring progress and engaging in continuous improvement.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Perelman about how well the organization did in carrying out the previous plan, Ms. Holland said the 2012-2015 plan included specific objectives. As the plan sunsets, a report is developed indicating the degree to which the objectives were met. The plan is updated every two years to allow for making adjustments as needed. In general, ADS did quite well in achieving the objectives.

Councilmember Robinson noted that Bellevue receives benefit from the ADS services, and Bellevue contributes to services provided to seniors at the North Bellevue Community Center. She asked if it would be better to continue with the status quo or to contribute the funds to ADS and have them provide the services to Bellevue residents. Ms. Brittingham said the services offered at the North Bellevue Community Center are focused around recreational programs and services. Ms. Holland clarified that ADS contributes funds to senior centers that are in Seattle but not in other jurisdictions. The AAA administers funds on behalf of other organizations, but given that Bellevue has its own priorities and its own community centers, the current approach is probably better.

Ms. O'Reilly added that some of the funds in the AAA budget are required to be spread throughout the county, so some percentage comes to the Eastside.

#### 7. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie reminded the Commissioners that a public hearing would be conducted at the next Commission meeting as required by HUD prior to the funding process.

#### 8. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Kline reported that she attended the Eastside Human Services Forum meeting on February 24. One of the main topics discussed was the funding shift resulting from United Way taking a new direction. In talking about what can be done to stabilize the funding environment, it was noted that there is no agency or entity at the county level or higher that oversees what the needs are and what needs are going unaddressed. Additionally, because most jurisdictions operate on two-year funding cycles, it is far less possible to be nimble when necessary.

#### 9. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

#### 10. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Bruels. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Villar and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair McEachran adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

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Secretary to the Human Services Commission

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Date

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Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

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Date