

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on June 3, 2014

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

May 6, 2014
6:15 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Perelman, Commissioners Bruels, Beighle, McEachran, Plaskon, Stout, Yantis

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Jessamyn Findlay, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 p.m. by Commissioner McEachran who presided until the arrival of Chair Perelman.

2. ROLL CALL

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

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. April 1, 2014

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Beighle. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Plaskon and it carried unanimously.

B. April 15, 2014

Commissioner Beighle called attention to the sixth paragraph on page 6 and suggested that "...percentage of total funding each application..." should be changed to read "...percentage of total funding and units supported each application...."

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Stout.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Plaskon and it carried unanimously.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said the Eastside Community Network recently was awarded grant funding to produce a series of presentations on the research done on adverse childhood experiences and the issue of how resiliency helps to offset some of the negative effects. The presentations will also focus on how a lack of transportation adds to resiliency. The next presentation will be in Council Chambers on Monday, May 12, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie said King County Metro will be holding some public meetings to discuss the proposed transit service cuts as a result of the failure of Proposition 1. One of the meetings will be at City Hall on May 15 at 5:30 p.m.

Ms. Leslie said the joint board and commission meeting on diversity will be taking place the evening of May 7. Commissioner Stout will serve as one of the panelists.

Ms. O'Reilly informed the Commissioners that the annual Eastside Human Services Forum education event is slated for June 12. The breakfast event will run from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. The topic is going to be livable wage and some experts will be brought to the table to participate in the discussion, including Lori Finks, senior budget analyst for the Washington State Budget and Policy Center; Marilyn Watkins from the Economic Opportunity Institute; Jasmine Donovan, niece of Dick Spady of Dick's Drive-In fame; State Senator Mark Mullet from the 5th District; and Deborah Lerman, staff person for the San Francisco Human Services Network.

Commissioner Stout commented that after reading the applications and doing some quick calculations based on number of staff and the budget for the staff her conclusion was that many must be paid minimum wage. She also noted that a large number of agencies give their clients bus tickets and said access to services will suffer once the proposed Eastside route cuts go into effect.

Ms. Leslie said interviews to identify new Commissioners will be held on May 8. All candidates were invited to attend a Commission meeting and were sent copies of the first round applications.

6. DISCUSSION

A. ARCH / CDBG Construction

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano reminded the Commissioners that over the last two years the recommendations for CDBG and ARCH have included a restriction to avoid construction activities that would trigger Davis-Bacon monitoring requirements

for the city. The concern was the administrative burden and the risk exposure. ARCH is now requesting to be allowed to use its recent years allocations for the Bellevue Manor project, a King County Housing Authority construction project in Bellevue that will preserve senior housing. The tweak is that King County Housing Authority will assume the Davis-Bacon monitoring responsibilities. King County will be putting funds into the project as well.

Mr. Adriano said over the years HUD has expressed concern over Bellevue allocating funds to ARCH for use on a project outside the city of Bellevue. The current project is actually in Bellevue, which is a plus, and given that King County Housing Authority will handle the Davis-Bacon responsibilities, the positives outweigh the concerns.

Ms. Leslie said the issue was on the table because of the Commission's previous approval of the restriction against using CDBG funds for construction projects that would trigger Davis-Bacon monitoring. She said the recommendation of staff was to remove the restriction for the one project only but to retain the restriction in general.

A motion to approve removing the Davis-Bacon monitoring responsibilities for Bellevue Manor ARCH project only was made by Commissioner Beighle. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bruels and it carried unanimously.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Round 1 - Initial Review of Human Services Applications

Commissioner McEachran noted that he took a full day to read through all of the applications. He said he observed that four of the applications were identical to the last funding round except for updating the numbers. By way of full disclaimer, he noted that the church community he serves is deeply involved with 13 of the grant requesting organizations. Some of the applications make reference to faith community and houses of worship, yet their revenue spreadsheets do not make specific mention of faith communities as sources of revenues, even though over the last two years his church has allocated more than \$120,000 to agencies and organizations. He suggested that when reviewing the applications, there should be some clarification with regard to what agencies mean when they say they have faith community involvement.

Answering a question asked by Chair Perelman, Mr. Adriano said the requests, including CDBG, total \$5.3 million, which is far more than the roughly \$3.2 million available to allocate.

Mr. Adriano reminded the Commissioners that during Round 1 each of the applications will be preliminarily reviewed without getting bogged down in the details. The round is designed to call attention to issues and possible stumbling blocks as well as key questions in need of follow-up.

Chair Perelman suggested the Commission should avoid suggesting preliminary funding amounts during the Round 1 review. She said in the past the process has not benefited from having dollar amounts discussed in the initial review of the applications.

With regard to the two new applications in Goal 1 - Hospitality House Homeless Shelter and Lifelong AIDS Alliance Chicken Soup Brigade - Commissioner Stout said the recommendation of the Goal 1 review team was to remove both from consideration. Hospitality House is not a Bellevue program and does not serve Bellevue clients. Lifelong AIDS Alliance, while a reputable program, is a duplication of services already being funded in Bellevue and the application does not make the case that the service is needed in Bellevue.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Plaskon, Ms. Leslie explained that Congregations for the Homeless and Sophia Way both used to be under the umbrella of the Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council. They have since each become their own non-profits, both have taken on winter shelter programs, and both have more recently taken on day center programs.

Application 1: Catholic Community Services of King County - Emergency Assistance

Commissioner Bruels said the program provides rental and cash assistance to clients. He noted that they are seeking a 25.7 percent increase over their previous ask and claim the increase is needed to address increased services to Bellevue residents. However, the application data does not support that claim.

Chair Perelman said her reading of the application was that the agency would increase services to Bellevue residents if the additional funding is received. Commissioner Bruels allowed that issue could use some clarification. If the agency is projecting an increase in the demand for services, it would be good to know on what the projection is based. It also would be good to know if the agency has been turning Eastside clients away or giving them less money per request in order to stretch their funding.

Chair Perelman pointed out that the math calculations on page 13 of the application are in error and actually project a decrease in services.

Commissioner Stout said she found the application overall to be poorly written.

Application 2: Catholic Community Services of King County - Harrington House

Commissioner Stout pointed out that the application does not make the case for an increased allocation, the information is not related to the data provided, and the program serves only three to four Bellevue girls.

Ms. Leslie said the reason most of the clients served are from out of the area is because of the Family Housing Connection referrals. Commissioner Stout agreed but commented that the program never has served very many from Bellevue.

Commissioner Stout said the numbers on pages 12 and 13 indicate the program served 164 clients in 2013 and state that 45 will be served in 2014 and 2015. The reason for the reduction is not addressed.

Commissioner Plaskon observed that the program has the goal of moving their clients into permanent housing but the numbers indicate they have only a 60 percent success rate. He said he would like to know why the program does not have a higher success rate.

Commissioner Beighle said she is bothered by the fact that the program does not include talking to clients about family planning. Some of the women have continued to have children while in the program.

Commissioner Plaskon said he could understand not putting down in writing anything about family planning, but said his suspicion is that the staff do talk to their clients about it. Commissioner Beighle said she knows someone who volunteers there that she could ask.

Commissioner McEachran noted that little is said on page 18 about the faith community response, but on page 19 it can be seen that parishes are offering significant input.

Application 3: Congregations for the Homeless - Drop In Center

Commissioner Plaskon said the application seeks a sizeable increase in funding over the last cycle. He said he suspected that to some degree the increase is intended to help pay for a new facility.

Ms. Leslie said the program will be moving to a new location in May 2015.

Chair Perelman questioned the wisdom in funding a program that does not have a location identified after May 2015. Ms. Leslie said the agency is currently searching for a new location that is similarly situated and which will not carry high costs. Commissioner Plaskon said it would be helpful for the Commission to be updated with regard to the agency's search for a new location.

Commissioner Plaskon asked what would happen to any funds allocated to the agency if in fact it folds up shop and is gone by 2015. Ms. Leslie said the funds are only allocated as reimbursement for services rendered. Dollars not paid to the agency would remain with the city.

Commissioner Stout said Steve Roberts testified before the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC and he offered every indication that he is seeking space for the program in the downtown as close to the transit center as possible.

Application 4: Congregations for the Homeless - Eastside Winter Shelter

Answering a question asked by Commissioner McEachran, Ms. Leslie said some of the increased costs listed in the application are for utilities and maintenance. She said by the time the Commission finalizes its recommendations for funding in July staff will have a better sense of whether or not the application will be looked on favorably in the internal City budget process.

Commissioner Beighle noted that the agency was seeking to have a bus stop located adjacent to the shelter location and asked if that is even a possibility now that Proposition 1 failed at the polls. Ms. Leslie said she would ask. She added that how long the building will be available to be used for the winter shelter until sometime next year when Sound Transit decides what to do with the building. The building will for sure be available during the winter of 2014-2015. Congregations for the Homeless would undoubtedly like to buy the building should Sound Transit decide to sell it, but the price is bound to be very high.

Application 5: Congregations for the Homeless - Housing and Shelter

Commissioner Bruels said the program is the men's shelter program. He pointed out the application seeks only a modest increase.

No questions were asked about the application.

Application 6: Eastside Baby Corner - Meeting Basic Needs for Children

Commissioner Plaskon observed that the application states the value of the program's inventory is close to \$4 million. Commissioner McEachran said their warehouse is huge and well stocked. The organization is very impressive.

Application 7: Emergency Feeding Program of Seattle/King County

Commissioner Bruels pointed out that the requested amount represents a decrease over the previous allocation.

Commissioner McEachran said the program has seen an amazing turnaround and the new executive director is increasing the level of community engagement. They also have a huge warehouse, and they received a substantial grant from Walmart.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Beighle, Ms. O'Reilly explained that the program does not provide services to clients but rather deals only with agencies.

Commissioner Stout said she has had dealings with the agency for many years and added that their progress towards better management and forming partnerships is impressive.

Application 8: Friends of Youth - Homeless Youth Services

Commissioner Plaskon noted that the budget numbers in the application do not add up in that the city previously allocated \$76,122 to the program, not \$73,000 as shown in the application.

Commissioner Stout reminded the Commissioners that two years ago the agency provided flat numbers on some of its applications. No calculations were made for increased healthcare costs and other variables. The agency has also seen a consistent turnover in grant writers and development officers.

Commissioner Bruels said the justification for the increase appears to be that the program fills gaps and is the only Eastside service to do so. He said the fact is that has been their model of operating for a long time and does not really justify the requested increase. The application indicates ten new housing units in Kirkland, but nothing is said how many of the clients are anticipated to be from Bellevue. The application does not make the case for the increase in the ask.

Application 9: Friends of Youth - The Landing Shelter

Commissioner Bruels suggested the application does not make a case for the sizable requested increase. It is noted that the winter shelter will increase by five beds to a total of 20, but that does not justify a 78 percent increase. The application shows an increase in personnel costs but does not clarify if that means additional staff or raises for current staff.

Commissioner Stout referred to page 7 of the application and noted that in 2013 the program served 48 actual Bellevue residents. The projection is that 50 will be served in both 2014 and 2015, of which they are asking Bellevue to pay for 45. That certainly does not make the case that any of the new beds will go to Bellevue residents.

Commissioner Stout pointed out that the per-unit cost shown for Bellevue and Kirkland is almost twice as much as for Redmond.

Commissioner Bruels said the application highlights the need for increased capacity for the coming winter, but no data is cited to justify the projected increase.

Commissioner McEachran said his sense was that sometimes agencies looking to expand programs will go fishing for funds to make it happen. Commissioner Bruels said he had no problem with an agency seeking to expand services, but in such cases there should justification for the expansion.

Ms. Leslie commented that the shelter is full during the winter months and a lottery is used to decide which kids to let in. Those not chosen are sent to Congregations for the Homeless winter shelter. Commissioner Bruels said he would like to see some information about how many kids are being turned away.

Ms. Leslie clarified that The Landing is for young adults over the age of 18.

Commissioner Stout referred to page 10 of the application and the statement made that every King County Metro bus is a Safe Place site, as are all King County libraries. She said she was not aware of any written agreements to that effect, but even so the pending loss of buses for budgetary reasons will mean Safe Place options for kids will be lost.

Application 10: Hopelink - Emergency Food

The Commissioners had no questions about the application.

Application 11: Hopelink - Emergency Services Financial Assistance

The Commissioners had no questions about the application.

Application 12: Hopelink - Housing

The Commissioners had no questions about the application.

Application 13: Hospitality House - Homeless Shelter

The application projects to serve two Bellevue clients in 2015, with services decreasing from 2013 levels. The Commission believes that the City's limited funds can be used more effectively in other housing/homelessness programs that may have a greater impact in Bellevue. The application was removed from further consideration.

Application 14: Imagine Housing - Homeless Shelter

Commissioner Stout pointed out that during the previous funding cycle the program was not yet up and running and was allocated only limited startup funds. What appears to be a serious increase has been anticipated and should be honored.

Commissioner McEachran said he and Commissioner Plaskon participated in a site visit and came away impressed with the collaborative impact the program has with Friends of Youth, Sophia Way and Congregations for the Homeless.

Application 15: Imagine Housing - Resident Services

The Commissioners had no questions about the application.

Application 16: Kirkland Interfaith Transitions In Housing Transitional Housing Program

Ms. Leslie reminded the Commissioners that the program merged with Housing at the Crossroads right after the last funding cycle. The program has taken on additional properties and that is the major reason behind the significant increase outlined by the application.

Ms. Leslie noted that some organizations, including Hopelink, intend to convert some of their transitional housing to permanent housing, but the KITH application does not indicate if they intend to follow suit. While things are still a bit up in the air relative to how homeless families will be served, it appears the agency intends to operate business as usual for the foreseeable future. Changes to the system will occur because of federal funding requirements aimed at moving homeless people through more quickly.

Application 17: Lifelong AIDS Alliance - Chicken Soup Brigade

The program appears to be a duplication of services already funded through the City (e.g., Meals on Wheels). In addition, the request exceeding \$270,000 is inordinately large when compared to other non-capital programs supported by the City's Human Services Fund. Currently, no one such program is funded at more than \$165,000. This one program, if fully funded, would comprise 8% of the total available funds. The application was removed from further consideration.

Application 18: Refugee Women's Alliance - Basic Food

Commissioner Stout voiced concern over the fact that the program is basically referral. The first page of the application outlines the services provided by the agency and nothing is said about meeting basic needs. On page 2 the application addresses emergency disaster preparedness and states that the agency provides training for local response agencies, but nothing is said about what type of training is offered.

Commissioner Plaskon commented that the program does have a collaborative impact.

Commissioner Bruels pointed out that the application gives no support for why a 21 percent increase is needed.

Chair Perelman said the application indicates the city awarded the agency \$25,000 previously, not \$22,245 as shown on the matrix. If true, that would mean their ask

represents much less than a 21 percent increase. She allowed, however, that the same basic concerns were voiced about the agency two years ago and questioned whether or not they should be funded at all. She said she was not convinced by reading the application that the program offers anything not already being provided by other programs operating in the city.

Commissioner Stout pointed out that according to page 17 of the application the program funds one FTE salary for less than \$43,000. The agency does have access to some of the Middle Eastern language groups, which is unique. The program focuses on helping people fill out applications for basic food assistance. The application indicates the program works with Hopelink two days per week, but Hopelink does not acknowledge ReWA in its long list of partners. The service being provided is being provided by others.

Ms. O'Reilly said she would check with Hopelink to get their perspective on what value ReWA offers.

Application 19: Renewal Food Bank

Commissioner Stout said the program is currently operated by a single person and the application indicates an intent to expand to two persons. The agency apparently has no disaster plan and apparently does not have any plans to create one. Page 5 of the application lists the number of persons served but there is no clarification as to what the numbers mean and if they include duplicates.

Mr. Adriano observed that the numbers do not appear to be correct in that they do not match the agency's 2013 year to date report.

Commissioner Stout said the application on page 4 is practically poetic about the honesty and integrity of the executive director, who is the only person at the food bank. The person who signed the application is unknown.

Commissioner McEachran said he has longstanding concerns about the operation. He said one of his first site visits as a Commissioner was to the Renewal Food Bank when it was operating out of the Foursquare Church. He said the data outlined in the application makes it appear as though the operation is a major player, but the reality is much different.

Commissioner Beighle noted the program still does not ask for income information from its clients.

Commissioner Stout said the statement on page 6 about having a large portion of clients for whom English is their second language is interesting in light of the fact that the application goes on to say no on-site language translation capabilities are offered in association with helping clients collect basic family data and walk through the food collection process. The response in the application relative to outreach is very

strange. The program offers no support to clients aimed at long-term self-sufficiency, which is concerning.

Commissioner Bruels noted that while the application seeks an allocation increase, there is at least an attempt made to justify the increase.

Application 20: Salvation Army - Eastside

Commissioner Plaskon suggested the application does not make the case to support the requested increase of 154 percent.

Commissioner Beighle said she would like to see the program defunded.

Chair Perelman suggested the program overlaps with other programs funded by the city.

Commissioner Bruels agreed that the statement intended to justify the increase in funding is vague at best. Nothing is included by way of data to indicate there is an increased need for the services, nor is anything said about what the agency has been doing to meet the increased need and if clients have had to be turned away or if the size of the individual grants has had to be reduced.

Commissioner Stout noted from page 8 that the agency is projecting it will serve 175 in 2014 and projects an 1800 percent increase for 2015. Chair Perelman added that the application says no one from Redmond was served in 2013 but will be serving Redmond clients with the new allocation.

Commissioner Stout said the application does not indicate the agency undertakes any outreach at all to the growing Middle Eastern and Muslim populations. She said she would like to know.

Commissioner Beighle voiced concerns about the budget figures relative to staff salaries and benefits, travel and training, and officers allowance and benefits. She said there is a real issue with continuity given that the officers are switched out every two years.

Commissioner Stout said she found no evidence in the application that the program attempts to move clients toward self-sufficiency. Ms. O'Reilly noted that in addition to providing hot meals the program provides financial services, which could be construed as bolstering self-sufficiency.

Application 21: Senior Services - Meals on Wheels

The Commissioners had no questions about the application.

Application 22: Solid Ground - Housing Stability Project

Answering a question asked by Chair Perelman, Ms. Leslie said the Housing Stability Program operates countywide, but other than in Bellevue it is mostly funded by the King County CDBG consortium. That is the reason why the application indicates a funding request to Bellevue only.

Application 23: The Sophia Way - Eastside Winter Shelter

Commissioner Stout said she has done some work with the agency over the years and has seen it looking out for the needs of families. They make an attempt to provide services for nine months in order to allow for some stabilization, particularly for children in school.

Chair Perelman noted that the increase being sought is significant and said she would be comfortable giving it to the organization.

Answering a question asked by Chair Perelman, Mr. Adriano said the program is partially funded with CDBG funds from Redmond.

Commissioner McEachran noted that the organization has been stabilized through the efforts of the executive director, who among other things increased the level of board commitments.

Commissioner Plaskon said the organization clearly has a vision of where it wants to go and is seeking funding to get there.

Application 24: The Sophia Way - Sophia's Home

Commissioner Plaskon observed that the ask outlined in the application is significant, but pointed out that they expect to grow and recently took over the day center from the YWCA.

Chair Perelman commented that on page 10 of the application it is implied that no case management is done for Bellevue in 2013. Commissioner Stout suggested the statement is likely in error but agreed the agency should be asked to clarify the remark.

Application 25: YWCA-Seattle-King County - Family Village

Commissioner Bruels said his reading of the application left him with the understanding that the requested 30 percent increase in funding will be used to increase staffing for case management. However, the application also projects a decrease in services. He said he would like the agency to explain the discrepancy.

Ms. Leslie said she did not see much detail in the application relative to how the agency is addressing the family homelessness initiative.

8. OLD BUSINESS

The Commissioners reviewed the agenda items for the next meeting.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Stout said she recently received an email from Jeff Brandt at Eastside Elder and Adult Day Center in which it was announced he will be leaving to take a job in Minnesota. He is seeking recommendations for an interim executive director.

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Gigi Meinig with the Area Agency on Aging said she recently provided testimony before both the Planning Commission and the Downtown Livability Initiative CAC to discuss the role of her agency and the coming silver tsunami. She said she also talked about the need to get aging priorities into the Comprehensive Plan. The response was positive and the suggestion was made to meet one-on-one with other commissions, with the Council and with the Mayor to talk about the future.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Perelman adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date