

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on October 6, 2015

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

September 1, 2015
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Terry Smith, Camron Parker,
Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 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 Perelman who arrived at 6:37 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 21, 2015

Commissioner Villar called attention the first paragraph under Staff and Commission Reports and said it should be revised to read "Commissioner Villar said she would be meeting with Imagine Housing on July 24 to tour Andrews Glen."

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

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Kline reported that she attended the Sammamish High School

orientation on August 31. A community resource fair was held at the same time at which it was noted the high school would be having four staff members from Jubilee Reach on the campus during the school year under a pilot program. The goal is to create bridges between community services and the students in need of them.

Department of Parks and Community Services Assistant Director Terry Smith suggested there may be value in having the school district come talk to the Commission about the growth in their work regarding community schools. During the last budget cycle, they asked for a significant increase in order to expand the community schools model. They have particularly enhanced their relationship with Jubilee Reach. The organization has become a much more connected partner with the school district in providing after-school and out-of-school events and activities for students in K-12.

Commissioner Villar commented that during her recent visit to Andrews Glen she met with staff from Imagine Housing and learned there are three different purposes for the facility: to help veterans, to house families, and to house single individuals. Income checks are made and where it is found a person exceeds the target income level they are allowed to remain. She said she also learned that in order to have a full office manager or facility manager it is necessary to have 75 housing units. Most facilities in the area have fewer than 75 units so those providing managerial services end up spread over several facilities, an approach that is not particularly efficient. Imagine Housing would like to see affordable housing in the medium range for those who are able to climb above the lower income levels and would like to remain in Bellevue.

Commissioner Bruels announced that he began a new job on August 31 as a behavioral health specialist at the Factoria location of the Swedish Physicians clinic. He said there is a crunch in access to public mental health services and as a result people are not getting the care they need. As a result, the lion's share of mental health problems are falling on primary care providers. That is what has driven the behavioral health specialist initiative within the Swedish system.

Chair McEachran said he took the opportunity recently to visit with the new Executive Director of Imagine Housing, Chris Jowell.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie reported on the staff changes that occurred since the last Commission meeting. Joseph Adriano has returned to the non-profit sector and has taken a job with Neighborcare Health in Seattle. His position has been posted on the city's website with a closing date of September 11 with the hope of having someone on board by November 1.

Ms. Leslie said interviews with those seeking to fill the vacant Commission seat were conducted and Councilmember Chelminiak anticipates getting the appointment approved at the September 8 City Council meeting.

6. PUBLIC HEARING

A. CDBG Preliminary Funding Recommendations

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

Ms. Kelly Namura, Vice-President of the International Community Health Services (ICHS) board of directors, thanked the Commission for its preliminary recommendation to fund a grant application that will help the organization meet the healthcare needs of uninsured and underinsured Bellevue residents. She strongly encouraged the approve the recommended grant amount of \$80,000 to help cover the costs of the necessary renovations of the Bellevue medical, dental and behavioral healthcare clinic. ICHS was started in 1973 by a group of community activists and university students to address the needs of low-income and isolated elderly Chinese and Filipino residents living in Seattle's Chinatown and Pioneer Square. From that initial small free health clinic, the organization has grown into being a federally qualified health center with four medical and dental clinics, three satellite clinics, and a school-based health center. The services offered are high-quality, affordable, linguistically and culturally appropriate. All are served regardless of their ability to pay. ICHS was recently accredited and has been recognized as a national quality leader; it is currently the only federally qualified health center in the state with the designation. ICHS looks forward to a strong and continued partnership with the city and its residents.

Mr. Richard Mellon, Board Treasurer for International Community Health Services, added his thanks to the Commission for its preliminary recommendation to fund a grant to help the organization meet the healthcare needs of uninsured and underinsured Bellevue residents. ICHS has long been established in Seattle and opened the doors to a medical and dental clinic in Bellevue in May 2014. The need in Bellevue was made clear by the 2006 Community Needs Assessment which confirmed that Asian communities were expanding outside Seattle. The need for high-quality and affordable care delivered in a culturally and linguistically appropriate manner continues. Nearly one-third of the greater Bellevue/Eastside population was born outside of the United States, with over 60 percent of the foreign-born population coming from Asia. Thirty-five percent of the Bellevue/Eastside population speaks a language other than English at home, with 61 percent of those speaking an Asian or Pacific Islander language. Ten percent of the Bellevue/Eastside population are uninsured, and among the foreign-born residents, the number climbs to 15 percent. The number of patients seen by the Bellevue ICHS clinic continues to increase; by 2016 the anticipation is that 9800 unduplicated patients will be seen annually. Hours for the clinic have been expanded and the facility is now open six days a week to ensure the services are as accessible and convenient as possible. When the Bellevue building was purchased, several of the suites were leased to third parties. Those leases are set to end in 2017 and the plan is to renovate the space and utilize it for medical exam rooms, providing behavioral health facilities, and community

outreach activities. ICHS is grateful for the support provided by the city and looks forward to a strong and growing partnership.

Mr. Arthur Sullivan, Program Manager for A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) introduced himself. With regard to the ARCH Trust Fund CDBG application, he recognized that there are challenges involved with meeting the CDBG and HUD guidelines. ARCH appreciates the historic support offered by the city in the form of using CDBG funds to support affordable housing in Bellevue and East King County. The program has been effective over the years in identifying projects and addressing the HUD guidelines as they have changed over time. He noted that earlier in the day the King County Housing Authority submitted its bill for its full request for all CDBG funding that has been allocated through the city for the past four years; with that bill in process, it should be easier to address the city's timing issues. ARCH is sensitive to the issue of timeliness and to that end has looked into various options. He noted that materials included in the Commission packet provide background information related to the potential options regarding the St. Luke's property. ARCH is willing to pursue working along the path outlined in the in the materials in order to be able to utilize CDGB funding from the current year. In the event the Commission elects not to fund ARCH, hopefully that will not be an indication of a long-term perspective relative to the use of CDBG funds in the future.

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

****BREAK****

7. DISCUSSION

A. Finalize 2016 CDBG Applications Funding Recommendations

Ms. Leslie remarked that subsequent to the last Commission meeting she spoke with staff at ARCH about the recommendation. That is the reason ARCH shared information about a potential project where CDBG funds could potentially be used in 2016. She said she and ARCH staff are checking with colleagues from Imagine Housing to make sure the project will be going forward on time. Additionally, ARCH has committed to spending all of the funds allocated to the agency for 2012 through 2015 on the Bellevue Manor senior housing renovation project.

Ms. Leslie allowed that it takes time for ARCH to bring projects online. Given the HUD timing guidelines, it will be necessary to evaluate how CDBG funds will be used with ARCH in the future. ARCH is facing the same issues with the CDBG funds allocated through King County. The HUD rules themselves have not changed by they are being interpreted differently than they have in the past, including that funds allocated through Bellevue must be spent in Bellevue.

The Commissioners were told that if they were open to reconsidering making an award to ARCH, staff had some potential options that could be addressed.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Bruels, Ms. Leslie clarified that since the last Commission meeting, ARCH has identified a project for which CDBG funds from the 2016 award could be used. The project is not yet locked down but it is reasonable to assume it will be a go. ARCH is clearly aware of the city's challenges relative to timeliness.

Commissioner Mercer asked if there are any aspects of the ARCH proposal that would not qualify. Ms. Leslie said the initial assessment by King County staff was that the only thing that would not qualify is staff time.

Commissioner Kline commented that in her view the thing that is missing from the application is what the other anticipated revenue sources are that are needed to cover the total project cost, and whether or not other CDBG dollars will be included in the mix. Ms. Leslie said she did not know what other funds Imagine Housing will go after. If they are applying for ARCH funding, they will need to show a budget that lists the specific revenue sources. The actual application will not be submitted until September 10, 2015.

Commissioner Kline said she continued to feel good about the Commission's preliminary recommendation. The rationale for not funding ARCH with 2016 CDBG dollars included the notion of weighing things in favor of ARCH in the future once the organization has a solid plan in mind for how to spend the money.

Chair McEachran said one option would be to take some portion of \$70,000 and allocate it to ARCH with a contingency of having to spend it by a certain date. Ms. Leslie said if by some certain time after the first of the year ARCH were to find itself unable to fund the project, the dollars could be redistributed to the projects that have already indicated they could use additional funds in a timely manner. Another option would be to leave the recommendation as is and revise the contingency plan to move ARCH into position to be first to receive any additional funds that come with the entitlement award. She stressed that receiving additional funding is unlikely. A third option would be to leave both the preliminary recommendation and the contingency plan alone.

Commissioner Mercer asked what changes would need to be made to the preliminary recommendation in order to go with the first option. Ms. Leslie said the preliminary recommendation allocates to two agencies, Bellevue Boys & Girls Club and ICHS, much more than they asked for. It would be up to the Commission to decide if funding for ARCH would come from one or both of those recommended allocations. Both of those agencies have indicated they would be able to spend the funds in accord with the HUD timelines. She also reminded the Commissioners that the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club received a substantial number of capital dollars from the city for the

development of their site, and the Commission previously allocated \$99,000 to the project.

There was consensus not to reduce the preliminary ICHS allocation.

Commissioner Mercer said she also was comfortable with the preliminary funding recommendations and was more inclined to explore the option of revising the contingency plan.

Commissioner Kline said she favored being sensitive to the housing issue, particularly in light of the money going into the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club project. It is at least likely ARCH would be able to use the funds in a timely manner.

Commissioner Perelman asked if the Commission could put off making a decision. Ms. Leslie said the CDBG recommendations are slated to be presented to the Council for approval in October. A decision from the Commission will be needed no later than September 15. The deadline for the ARCH application is September 10. Commissioner Perelman said she would not want to take too much money away from the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club application, but would favor allocating some funds to the ARCH affordable housing project.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Kline, Ms. Leslie clarified that ARCH has not historically come to the Commission seeking permission to fund specific projects. The organization pulls funds from the various cities, receives and reviews applications, and allocates funds as it sees fit. The CDBG barriers and restrictions triggered the need for ARCH to shift the way it has traditionally operated. The restriction that Bellevue's CDBG funds must be spent in Bellevue is a new wrinkle. There are known Bellevue-specific projects that will be added to the pipeline in the future. Currently, the Bellevue Manor project is the only one ARCH is aware of that fits the criteria. The purpose for the public hearing is to receive input on the Commission's preliminary recommendation, and there is precedent for changing the recommendation based on public hearing testimony.

There was agreement to delay the final vote until the September 15 Commission meeting, and to ask Imagine Housing what other funds it intends to put toward their project, what strings are attached to those funds relative to how and when they must be spent, how comfortable they are with the HUD-established timeline, and to ask Bellevue Boys & Girls Club if their capacity to utilize the CDBG funds from Bellevue will be impacted if the full amount of funding will not be known at the first of the year.

8. DISCUSSION

A. Update on Parks & Open Space Plan

Senior Planner Camron Parker said the process to update the city's Parks & Open Space Plan is under way. The plan is updated about every six years and at the core

of the system plan is a set of capital recommendations covering parks facilities, trails, open space, recreation facilities and community centers. The department's mission statement is built on the concept of creating a healthy community through the provision of parks and open space as well as arts and human services. The recently updated Comprehensive Plan serves as the foundation on which to base changes to the Parks & Open Space Plan.

Mr. Parker said two core questions are being asked in talking with Bellevue park users, residents, workers and other groups: how do you use Bellevue's parks and open space currently; and what would you like to see more of in the future. A long-form survey has been sent out to a random selection of Bellevue-only residents in an attempt to generate a scientifically valid response. Additionally, an online survey has been posted to which anyone can respond. Together the two surveys are key elements of the public outreach efforts.

Commissioner Mercer said she uses Bellevue trails for walking, running and biking. She added that she visits Downtown Park more than any other, though her children participate in recreational offerings at the South Bellevue Community Center. The zip line tour was very fun. She said she extensively uses the greenbelt areas that connect with the Cougar Mountain area.

Commissioner Perelman said she uses Bellevue parks for picnics and the trails for walking the dog and riding bikes.

Commissioner Bruels said his daughter thoroughly enjoyed the naturalist program at the Mercer Slough Nature Park in the spring, and said his family attended several of the Movies in the Park events during the summer months. The botanical gardens are magnificent, and Garden d'Lights is a wonderful experience every year. He encouraged the city to continue its investigation and plans regarding the Tyler property.

Commissioner Kline said there are several community events held in the parks in the Bridle Trails area where she lives. She said she also uses the trails for walking and jogging, though Viewpoint Park is a bit scary so it not often used. She said her son plays little league baseball, though on a private field that at some time should find its way into the parks system, and the gym her husband works with often takes clients to Downtown Park for training.

Commissioner Villar said she uses parks to walk her dog and that she periodically attends festivals. She said she enjoys taking photographs in parks, especially in those with water.

Chair McEachran said he and his wife walk in Downtown Park often. He said he has observed a clear need for more park areas that accommodate dogs.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Mercer, Mr. Parker said urban park systems are those that are located in urban areas. Bellevue's only urban park used to be Downtown Park, but the redevelopment plan for the Bel-Red corridor triggered the need to expand the view to include that area. Bellevue does not have a lot of experience with urban parks, but given the planned future that envisions most of Bellevue's future growth concentrated in high-density areas, there is a real need to bring urban parks online.

Commissioner Perelman commented that even though there are several good parks within a mile of her house, there are no sidewalks to use in getting to most of them.

Chair McEachran said community centers are anchors of community activities, but neighborhood activities can also build community, and such activities can often occur in neighborhood parks.

Commissioner Villar suggested the need for Bellevue to create a historic trail people could follow and gain an understanding of what used to exist along the trail. With regard to partnership opportunities, she said during the summer months when children have less access to food and books, it would be good to have opportunities in the parks for meals and access to mobile libraries, all with a festive flair.

Chair McEachran said Robinswood Park is a community gathering point. It accommodates everything from youth sports to senior activities.

Commissioners Bruels and Mercer stressed the need to improve waterfront access where possible. They both indicated waterfront parks encourage participation by all generations. Commissioner Mercer added that cities never have enough sports facilities.

Commissioner Villar said the provision of sidewalks and benches would go a long way toward encouraging seniors to use the parks.

Commissioner Mercer said the interaction that occurred because of the Pianos in the Parks event was wonderful. She encouraged the city to do more things like that.

Commissioner Villar pointed out that during the times when shelters are not open, homeless persons often congregate in open space areas. While they do not necessarily cause any harm or problems, it would be helpful to include on the city's website, or in a public information campaign, information about who other than the police to contact in the event the public has specific concerns, particularly when persons are not engaged in criminal activities. Mr. Parker said the city's park ranger program could be one point of contact.

Commissioner Mercer noted that the Downtown Park playground has been redesigned to be accessible. She said she would like to see more accessible playgrounds around the city to better accommodate special needs children.

Commissioner Villar pointed out that there is a growing trend toward including all-age playgrounds, and something like that would be welcomed in Bellevue.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie provided the Commissioners with the first draft of the Needs Update. The Commissioners were asked not to share the data with other individuals or organizations given that it remains in draft form and there is more data to be included.

10. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie reminded the Commissioners to save October 28 on their calendars for the Eastside Joint Human Service Commissions meeting. The focus of the joint meeting will be on immigrant and refugee services. The Commission will have three meetings in October.

11. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

12. 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 8:21 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date