

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Extended Study Session

November 13, 2018  
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Chelminiak and Councilmembers Lee, Nieuwenhuis, Robertson, Stokes, and Zahn

ABSENT: Deputy Mayor Robinson

1. Oral Communications

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m., with Mayor Chelminiak presiding.

- (a) Alex Zimmerman, representing StandUP-America, referred to the City's budget and said he wants to stop taxation. He expressed concern that Bellevue will end up like Seattle.
- (b) Natalie Sarabosing, a 9<sup>th</sup> grader at Newport High School and a member of the Bellevue Youth Link Climate Action Committee, talked about her love of nature and how she started noticing signs of climate change, including the cherry trees blooming earlier every year and warmer summers. She thanked the City for joining the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) and urged the Council to allocate money in the budget to create a Climate Action Plan.
- (c) Mehr Grewal and Daniel Koo, members of the Youth Link Climate Action Committee, spoke about the need to address climate change now. Mehr thanked the City for its efforts with K4C, converting lights to LED, and enhancing energy efficiency in government buildings. She encouraged the Council to create a Climate Action Plan with a budget, schedule, and measurable outcomes. Daniel noted that the recent carbon tax initiative was not approved by the voters. He urged the City to address climate change now in order to meet future goals.
- (d) Tracey Cook Lee said she is looking for cities and governments to make the appropriate changes to address climate change. She said Northern Europe has strong policies regarding climate change as well as an increasing use of green energy sources. She said

people want to live in healthy communities with environmentally responsible government.

- (e) Jacquelyn Green said she was speaking on behalf of more than 8,000 residents whose lives are affected by the Cedar Hills Landfill. She expressed concern about plans to expand the landfill and asked the City to move away from using landfills. She said the landfill sits on the Issaquah Creek aquifer. She expressed concern about the costs, environmental impacts, health impacts, and earthquake risks associated with expanding the landfill. She said King County has not responded to major gas leaks that have been proven to cause cancer for some neighboring residents. Ms. Green asked the Council to oppose the expansion of the landfill and to pursue other alternatives. She provided her comments in writing.
- (f) Leslie Morgan said the King County Solid Waste Division settled a class action lawsuit with neighbors of the Cedar Hills Landfill for \$16.5 million. The lawsuit found that the County knowingly exposed the community to gases and carcinogens, as well as vibrations that caused structural damage to some homes. She described a major gas leak at the landfill in 2013 that resulted in a lawsuit in which King County was found to be negligent. She expressed concern about the proposed expansion of the landfill and asked for the Council's leadership in addressing critical issues. Ms. Morgan provided her comments in writing.
- (g) Janet Dobrowolski, a resident of Maple Hills near the Cedar Hills Landfill, noted her professional experience in accounting, statistics, and computer programming. She referenced the 2000 lawsuit against the King County Solid Waste Division, which settled for \$16.5 million. She said the lawsuit had a number of requirements, including some related to the height of the landfill. She said the expansion plan violates those requirements. She asked the Council whether they are willing to support the use of the landfill, knowing that it violates the 2000 settlement. Ms. Dobrowolski submitted her comments in writing.

Mayor Chelminiak disclosed that he was Chief of Staff for the King County Council during the 2000 Cedar Hills Landfill lawsuit and he now works for Waste Management, which operates landfills.

- (h) David Kyle, representing Trout Unlimited, spoke regarding the importance of preserving kokanee salmon, which are native to Lake Sammamish. He thanked the City for its ongoing support of salmon recovery efforts. He said this year's returns are already higher than last year. He thanked Kit Paulsen, Bellevue's Watershed Planning Supervisor, for her leadership with the Kokanee Working Group. He noted that she volunteered until midnight the previous night to help collect data. Mr. Kyle said the kokanee are important because they have evolved over centuries to live in Lake Sammamish and this area.

Mayor Chelminiak noted that Youth Eastside Services (YES) is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He said the organization was created in 1968 by a pharmacist who was concerned about the increase in illegal drug use.

2. Executive Session

At 6:34 p.m., Mayor Chelminiak declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 20 minutes to discuss one item of potential litigation.

The meeting resumed at 7:02 p.m., with Mayor Chelminiak presiding.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved by consensus.

4. Study Session

(a) Council Business and New Initiatives

There was no discussion.

(b) Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) Strategic Plan Update

City Manager Brad Miyake recalled that the Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI) began in 2007 and is currently guided by the ESI Strategic Plan adopted in 2013. He said staff is seeking Council input regarding the process to update the plan.

Mac Cummins, Director of the Community Development Department, noted that staff will be working to update the ESI Strategic Plan over the next year.

Jennifer Ewing, ESI Program Manager, highlighted the ESI's history, beginning with the City signing on to the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement and developing its first greenhouse gas emissions inventory. She said the Resource Conservation Manager for the City is partially funded by Puget Sound Energy as part of PSE's program with their largest customers to reduce energy usage. The City has participated in the program since 2009. The five-year ESI Strategic Plan was adopted in 2013. Ms. Ewing said the Comprehensive Plan Update adopted in 2015 included a number of environmental policies, and the City joined the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) in 2014. A number of ESI programs during the past three years include the Green Power Challenge, Solarize Bellevue, Urban Smart Bellevue, and the Georgetown University Energy Prize competition.

The 2018-2020 City Council Vision Priorities list includes the goal to review the progress of the Environmental Stewardship Initiative and to analyze additional steps the City could take to reach its environmental goals. The Environmental Element of the Comprehensive Plan established a citywide greenhouse gas emissions target and a 40-percent tree canopy goal, as well as policies related to green building, energy efficiency, and renewable energy.

Ms. Ewing said the current ESI Strategic Plan includes 57 actions and 17 sustainability indicators. The purpose of the update is to review the progress toward environmental goals and

to analyze additional steps for achieving the City's goals. The scope of the updated plan will be consistent with the current plan and will encompass six topical areas: 1) climate change and air quality, 2) mobility and land use, 3) green building, energy, and water, 4) materials management and waste, 5) ecosystems and open spaces, and 6) tree canopy. Ms. Ewing said the City wants to foster partnerships with the community to help achieve goals.

Ms. Ewing said the timeline for the work to update the ESI Strategic Plan will be to finalize the ESI Progress Report and review existing goals and policies through January 2019. Public outreach to discuss goals and strategies will extend from February through June, and the draft ESI Strategic Plan will be released for public comment next summer. Staff anticipates finalizing the ESI Strategic Plan in November 2019. Public outreach and engagement will include a neighborhood leadership gathering, online engagement and survey, stakeholder focus groups, the Mercer Slough Environmental Forum, and other education and outreach events (e.g., Arbor Day and tree planting events). Ms. Ewing said staff anticipates presenting the plan during the Mercer Slough educational event.

Mayor Chelminiak noted that this work is included in the preliminary budget. Mr. Cummins confirmed that the budget includes \$100,000 for planning and \$210,000 for implementation over the next three years.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis, liaison to the Environmental Services Commission, thanked staff for the presentation and expressed support for setting measurable goals. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. Ewing said the public input will be compiled and summarized for consideration by staff and the Council. She noted that an AmeriCorps member will be involved in outreach and public engagement, including with youth and volunteers. Mr. Nieuwenhuis encouraged staff to include environmental experts in the stakeholder outreach.

Responding to Councilmember Lee, Mr. Cummins said that the update process will involve evaluating the progress and objectives of the 2013-2018 ESI Strategic Plan to develop the next five-year plan. In further response, Ms. Ewing said staff will provide an update on their evaluation of the plan early next year.

Councilmember Zahn expressed support for the proposed work plan. She noted that the Bellevue Star Community Assessment brochure indicates that Bellevue has achieved a four-star rating. She suggested that one of the goals could be to achieve a five-star rating. Noting the K4C joint letter of commitment, Ms. Zahn asked about the City's guiding principles as it partners with other agencies and groups. She encouraged alignment between all of the City's efforts that affect environmental stewardship. Ms. Ewing confirmed that updating the ESI Strategic Plan provides the opportunity to refine and align goals across all of the initiatives and implementation efforts.

Councilmember Stokes thanked staff for their work. He observed that the process is similar to how the City handles the Affordable Housing Strategy and other plans, which is to set and periodically review goals and accomplishments, and to make adjustments as appropriate. He suggested an enhanced focus on regional efforts that will have a positive impact on Bellevue. He said he likes the idea of involving youth, and he noted that Bellevue has a strong environmental community. He expressed support for the proposed work plan.

Councilmember Robertson expressed support for the work plan and budget. She said it is important to routinely update the ESI Strategic Plan because it sets the policy of the City for external communications and it guides the City's internal operations related to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. She said the plan documents the City's policies, including how the City can use the plan to incentivize private sector actions. She encouraged sharing the update process with the Boards and Commissions, business organizations, and neighborhood groups. She suggested providing a link to the survey through the MyBellevue app, and she requested comment fields for each multiple choice question.

Mayor Chelminiak expressed an interest in knowing whether increasing the tree canopy from 37 percent to 40 percent reduces greenhouse gas emissions. He cautioned against making assumptions and following trends without sound data on the environmental impacts. Mr. Chelminiak recapped the Council's interest in goals and outcomes that are detailed and measurable. He noted that King County planning policies set goals for greenhouse gas emissions. He said climate change is real and local governments should continue to show leadership.

Mr. Chelminiak said the City's ESI program originally looked at things that local government should and could do. He suggested encouraging others to also take actions, including home renovations to improve energy efficiency.

(c) Discussion of Preliminary 2019-2020 Operating Budget and the 2019-2025 Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan

City Manager Brad Miyake noted that this is the fourth budget discussion with the Council.

Finance Director Toni Call reviewed the budget calendar, noting that the third and final budget public hearing would be held on November 19. Budget adoption is anticipated for December 3. Ms. Call said the 2019-2020 General Fund budget includes new investments in public safety, funding for LEOFF I benefits, a one-percent property tax increase in both 2019 and 2020, and revisions to the fire inspection fee beginning in 2020.

*[Mayor Chelminiak left the meeting temporarily at 7:45 p.m.]*

Police Chief Steve Mylett highlighted elements of the Police Department's budget proposal. He described the difficulty nationwide in recruiting and retaining police officers due in part to the competitive job market and retirements. He noted that the increase in unprovoked attacks on law enforcement, issues of trust, and the increased scrutiny of police actions are factors as well.

Chief Mylett said Bellevue is committed to community policing, which is a strategy of policing that focuses on building ties and working closely with members of a community. The philosophy includes allowing time for officers to proactively engage with the public to build trust. Chief Mylett noted the industry standard that patrol officers should spend approximately 30 minutes of an hour on proactive patrol and 30 minutes per hour on reactive patrol in order to realize the results and benefits of community policing.

The Police Department has 12 vacancies, and an additional five separations of employment are anticipated by the end of the year. Chief Mylett said it takes up to one and a half years to train an individual for an entry level sworn officer position, which includes a typical wait of 4-6 months before entering the academy. He said the Police Department continues to recruit for lateral officers. He noted that the City received 21 lateral officer applications since the Council voted the previous week to allow offering a significant hiring bonus to qualified lateral applicants.

Chief Mylett described the staff enhancements included in the Police Department's budget proposal: 1) reassign three sworn officer positions and hire civilian staff to replace them (Public Information Officer, Crime Prevention Officer, and Court Liaison Officer), 2) add four Police Support Officers (civilian positions), and 3) add a three-year limited term employee as the new Homelessness Outreach Coordinator. The Police Department hired a consultant earlier this year to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the department. Chief Mylett said the report will be completed early next year.

Councilmember Stokes thanked Chief Mylett for the presentation.

Councilmember Robertson said she looks forward to reviewing the consultant's report when it is released next year. Chief Mylett said staff will use the staffing study as a platform to build a strategic plan reflecting the Police Department's needs. Responding to Ms. Robertson, Chief Mylett confirmed that the budget proposal covers the 17 vacancies.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked Chief Mylett for the presentation and acknowledged his comments about the challenges for police officers. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Chief Mylett said Bellevue will follow the City of Redmond's model for the Homelessness Outreach Coordinator. Redmond's coordinator has developed metrics to be used to evaluate the success of the program, which Bellevue will use as well. Chief Mylett said the approach will allow officers to get to know the individuals they serve and to refer them to services before there is a need to call 911. In further response, Chief Mylett said the department will continue to look for efficiencies, including the potential for more civilian positions.

Councilmember Zahn said that public safety is a key reason that people want to live and work in Bellevue. She said she is pleased with the increase in lateral applicants, and she hopes to increase the diversity of officers. Chief Mylett concurred, noting that the Police Department does not reflect the community's demographics. He said the department has six advisory councils to address issues related to ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, and religion, and they have been good allies in trying to recruit officers. He said the challenge is that there is a shrinking pool of individuals interested in being police officers, especially in minority communities. Ms. Zahn noted that she recently toured the homelessness outreach office in Los Angeles, which has reported good success in getting to know and help individuals experiencing homelessness. Chief Mylett said Redmond has experienced great success as well.

*[Mayor Chelminiak rejoined the meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m.]*

Councilmember Lee thanked Chief Mylett for the focus on increasing diversity within the Police Department. Mr. Lee expressed support for hiring the consultant and said he looks forward to the report.

Councilmember Stokes said he supports the budget and staffing proposal, and he appreciates the emphasis on increasing diversity within the department. He noted the value of proactive outreach to assist individuals experiencing homelessness.

Mayor Chelminiak noted that Congregations for the Homeless conducts outreach and works with police officers when needed. Responding to Mr. Chelminiak, Chief Mylett said the department has discussed the potential for a referral bonus and will study that issue further.

Fire Chief Jay Hagen introduced discussion regarding a budget proposal requesting two new Fire Prevention Officers. He noted that the growth in Bellevue, including high-rise development and future light rail, highlights the need to maintain fire and life safety. He commended the City for supporting the Fire Department through the accreditation process five times. He noted that the Bellevue Fire Department maintains a Class 2 rating, which is the highest in the state.

Chief Hagen described the significant growth in the number of fire inspections since 2007. Every building was inspected on an annual basis until 2015, when the Fire Department began conducting inspections every two years for most buildings. Multifamily buildings without fire alarm or sprinkler systems continue to be inspected on an annual basis.

The proposed budget includes the addition of two Fire Prevention Officers beginning in January 2019 to maintain the service level of inspections every two years. The proposed fee would begin in January 2020, which will allow time for the Fire Department to educate and prepare the community for the new fees. Chief Hagen said the costs for fire inspections and plan reviews up to the point of the issuance of a certificate of occupancy are financed by the Development Services Enterprise Fund. Inspections beyond that point are currently covered by the General Fund instead of through an inspection fee.

The financial objectives for the fee are to remain competitive within the region, be predictable and understandable to customers, support the citywide cost recovery goal, and align with industry standards. The fee amount is calculated by a formula utilizing a base rate, square footage, and occupancy factors. Exemptions to the fee are government agencies, 501(c)3 nonprofit agencies, and businesses with less than 1,000 square feet. Chief Hagen provided examples of fee calculations for different types of structures.

Fire Marshal Ken Carlson said that the comparison of fees with other jurisdictions indicated that the service level varies based on the complexity of the building types, age of the community, and fire inspection model. Cost recovery approaches for the inspection fee vary and include the annual business license fee, participation in a Regional Fire Authority, fire inspection fee, and support through the General Fund. Mr. Carlson said the fee proposed for Bellevue is similar to the approach of the cities of Olympia, Tacoma, and Vancouver.

Councilmember Zahn thanked staff for the presentation and concurred that prevention is the key to fire and life safety. Responding to Ms. Zahn, Mr. Carlson said the cost recovery fee applies to the eight Fire Prevention Officers, including the two new positions. In further response to Ms. Zahn, Ms. Call said the collection process for the fire inspection fee has not been determined.

However, it will likely be incorporated into the Development Services fee program. Responding to Ms. Zahn, Fire Marshal Carlson said staff proposes reviewing the fees every two years with the Council.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked Chief Hagen for his leadership of the Fire Department.

Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Mr. Carlson said a comparison of cities found that some jurisdictions charge hourly inspection fees. However, the fee approaches in Olympia, Spokane, Tacoma, and Vancouver are similar to staff's proposed program for Bellevue. Chief Hagen said staff's recommended model meets the Fire Department's cost recovery objectives. In further response to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Chief Hagen said the department has not conducted formal outreach to the business community. However, they will present the information to the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce later that week. He said there have been informal conversations with the business community. However, the Fire Department was hesitant to conduct extensive outreach until the Council made a decision on the proposal.

Councilmember Robertson said she supports the cost recovery model. She questioned how it compares to cities that charge hourly rates. Mr. Carlson said the Fire Department looked at the full cost of the program in developing the cost recovery objectives. He said the inspection of a high-rise building can extend over several days. For multifamily buildings, the City inspects only the common areas. Ms. Robertson said she likes the idea of a predictable fee based on square footage. However, she cautioned that individuals could complain if the time spent on inspections does not correlate relatively closely with the actual time spent.

Councilmember Stokes expressed support for the proposal, noting that the purpose of inspections is life safety and the protection of property. He concurred with Councilmember Robertson's concern about the accuracy of fees. However, Mr. Stokes said he also thinks it is best to keep the fee structure as simple and straightforward as possible.

Responding to Mayor Chelminiak, Fire Marshal Carlson said the inspections provide the opportunity to educate businesses and multifamily occupants about fire safety. If the common areas total less than 1,000 square feet, multifamily buildings are exempt from inspection fees.

Mayor Chelminiak noted general Council support for the proposal and said that the related ordinance will need to be adopted with the adoption of the overall City budget.

Mayor Chelminiak noted ongoing discussions about proposed renovations to the Lincoln Center men's homeless shelter and suggested saving a place in the operating budget to address that proposal. Councilmember Robertson suggested that the City should be able to modify the budget for that work as needed.

At 8:48 p.m., Mayor Chelminiak declared a short break. The meeting resumed at 9:00 p.m.

Ms. Call introduced discussion regarding the 2019-2025 General Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan, which totals \$693 million. She noted new investments related to transportation and mobility, affordable housing, Smart City connectivity, the Environmental Stewardship Initiative (ESI), the Grand Connection project, and the Bellevue College Connection project.



Transportation Director Dave Berg said the CIP Plan continues the City's activities related to maintaining the existing transportation infrastructure including the overlay program, major maintenance, traffic safety, and minor capital projects (e.g., signals, lighting). He said the City typically receives grant funds for the overlay program.

As the second component of the transportation CIP Plan, Mr. Berg highlighted the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan projects in the BelRed corridor (i.e., 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, and Spring Boulevard). The third component of the transportation CIP Plan is levy projects including neighborhood sidewalks, neighborhood safety, bicycle facilities, Smart Mobility, congestion relief, and maintenance.

The fourth category, additional project funding, includes LED street light conversion, design and right-of-way (ROW) acquisition for the Bellevue Way HOV project, and the design of the 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue Stage 4 project (Spring Boulevard to Northup Way). Mr. Berg said the City is researching grant funding for the Bellevue Way HOV project. The fifth component of the transportation CIP Plan is new investments, which include neighborhood congestion management projects, 150<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE and Newport Way improvements, West Lake Sammamish Parkway Phase 3, and the Bellevue College Connector.

Responding to Councilmember Robertson, Mr. Berg said the City is currently using neighborhood transportation levy funds for Smart Mobility projects. He said staff will provide an update early next year regarding the next levy projects and Smart Mobility efforts. Ms. Robertson expressed support for the transportation CIP Plan. She said it would be helpful to be able to sync the levy project list with the overall transportation CIP project list.

Responding to Councilmember Zahn, Ms. Call said the debt service of 25 percent includes the repayment of TIFIA loans and other debt. In further response, Mr. Berg said the City estimates an annual savings of \$150,000 for electricity following the conversion of street lights to LED technology. He said the payback period is approximately 10 years.

Councilmember Lee noted the importance of neighborhood safety and congestion relief projects.

Responding to Mayor Chelminiak, Mr. Berg said the funding currently available for the Bellevue Way HOV lane project is \$4.4 million, and the proposed CIP Plan includes an additional \$5 million. Mr. Chelminiak said he continues to have concerns regarding the project cost and environmental impacts.

Responding to Councilmember Stokes, Mr. Berg confirmed that the transportation levy project list is reflected in two line items in the budget (i.e., congestion relief and all other levy projects). Mr. Stokes said he liked the idea of keeping the levy projects separate in order to maintain a strong focus on them.

Patrick Foran, Director of the Parks and Community Services Department, introduced discussion regarding park CIP projects. The construction of Surrey Downs Park, funded by the park levy, will be completed by the end of the year. He noted that the park provides a buffer between light

rail and the adjacent neighborhood. He recalled the completion of the circle and the Inspiration Playground at the Downtown Park in July 2017. Additional park levy projects include the Downtown Park Northeast Gateway to be completed in 2020, as well as Airfield Park in the Eastgate/Lake Hills area. Airfield Park covers approximately 27 acres, and the master plan was completed in 2008. The budget proposes \$10 million in levy funds for Phase 1, which includes design, development, permitting, and the construction of infrastructure over the former landfill on a portion of the site. Mr. Foran said the City hopes to use the \$10 million to leverage additional funding.

The CIP Plan includes \$9 million toward the implementation of the Meydenbauer Bay Park master plan approved in 2010. The project involves grant funding as well. Neighborhood parks in the CIP Plan include Bridle Trails and Newport Hills. The latter park covers approximately 10 acres, and much of it is heavily forested.

Mr. Foran provided an update on the feasibility work related to the regional effort to create an aquatics center. He said the Council will be asked on November 19 to approve the consultant contract intended to study the scale and scope of the program, schematic design, site analysis, capital and operating costs, operational and governance models, and public outreach. He said staff is pursuing partnerships and has been working with the Bellevue School District, Bellevue College, health care providers, and potential corporate sponsors.

Responding to Councilmember Nieuwenhuis, Mr. Foran said that construction of the Bridle Trails neighborhood park is anticipated to occur in 2022. The construction of the Newport Hills neighborhood park is slated to begin in 2020. Mr. Foran noted that the Parks and Open Space Plan identifies nine neighborhoods.

Responding to Councilmember Robertson, Mr. Foran said the budget funds all of the recommendations of the Parks and Community Services Board. In further response, he confirmed that staff will evaluate usage patterns and other aspects of Meydenbauer Bay Park's operations following Phase 1 to inform the continued development of Phase 2.

Ms. Robertson expressed support for moving forward with the feasibility study for the regional aquatics center. Mr. Foran said the Bellevue School District plans to include its portion of funding in the 2020 school levy package. Councilmember Robertson thanked the Parks and Community Services Board and staff for their work.

Responding to Councilmember Zahn, Mr. Foran said the Inspiration Playground in Downtown Park is designed for all ages and abilities. He said the most popular activity at the park is walking on the circular path.

Ms. Zahn encouraged staff to consider alternative delivery methods for the development of parks. She noted that the City of Spokane is constructing its riverfront park through the design-build approach, which can expedite projects.

Councilmember Lee expressed support for the Park CIP Plan and the development of neighborhood parks.

Responding to Mayor Chelminiak, Mr. Foran said the current park levy allocates funds through 2025, and the City will continue to collect the capital funds until 2028. The operating levy will be ongoing.

At 9:59 p.m., Councilmember Stokes moved to extend the meeting to 10:30 p.m. There was no second to the motion.

(d) Utilities Department 2019-2020 Budget and Utility Rates

*[Item postponed.]*

5. Council Discussion of Upcoming Items: None.

6. Continued Oral Communications: None.

At 10:00 p.m., Mayor Chelminiak declared the meeting adjourned.

Kyle Stannert, CMC  
City Clerk

/kaw