

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on January 4, 2022.

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

November 16, 2021
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Kline, Commissioners Amirfaiz, Ma, Mansfield, McClure, Mercer, Piper

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Dee Dee Catalano, Christy Stangland, Toni Esparza, Ryan Walker, Department of Parks and Community Services; Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis

GUEST SPEAKERS: Monik Martinez, Cintia Valenzuela, 4Tomorrow; Angie Hinojos, Carlos Jimernez, Centro Cultural Mexicano; Jennifer Karls, Nura Adam, Immigrant Women's Community Center; Nickath Sheriff, Khizer Sheriff, Muslim Community Resource Center

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Kline who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners Mercer and Ma, both of whom arrived at 6:03 p.m.

Chair Kline stated that because in-person meetings are prohibited by the Governor's emergency order, the Commission will be holding its meetings remotely for an unknown period of time. As a result, the Commission's by-laws regarding remote participation and the order of business were suspended until such time as meetings were no longer being held remotely.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. October 26, 2021

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

4. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis reported that along with staff and Chair Kline he participated in interviewing candidates to fill the upcoming open slot on the Commission. The next step will be to finalize a selection and forward it to the City Council for approval.

6. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS – None

7. INFORMATION FOR THE COMMISSION

There was consensus to revise the agenda to move item 7B ahead of item 7A.

B. Issues and Trends for Immigrants and Refugees

Monik Martinez, founder and director of 4Tomorrow, thanked the Commission for supporting the organization and helping it to grow and support the community. She said the organization serves and supports underserved youth and families with a focus on the Latinx community in East King County. One way the community is served is through the King County Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance program which helps residents pay past-due rents up to nine months and three months future rent. 4Tomorrow has been able to serve more than 1300 households through the program. The American Rescue Plan Act has also allowed the organization to serve Bellevue residents by paying past-due and future mortgage payments. The program also provides move-in assistance to those experiencing housing instability.

Cintia Valenzuela with 4Tomorrow noted that the agency started its life service program during the summer and to date 59 families have been recruited. In all, 234 families have been served, including children, youth, and families. The life service program works one-on-one with participants to create measurable and trackable goals that can be achieved within four months. Each client gets four hours of virtual support. The agency also provides clients with flexible emergency financial assistance for housing stability using multiple programs in order to ensure that life service participants stay housed. To date eight life services families have been helped using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. The agency also provides care coordination around mental health issues and to date have made referrals for 16 families to outside organizations. A lot of barriers are being seen in regard to accessing mental health resources, especially for the Spanish-speaking community. The agency has also been able to help 14 families with immigration support, connecting them with resources in the community.

With regard to the mental health service program, Ms. Valenzuela said the agency connects with individuals and does a lot of work around outreach. A recent virtual event included 51 participants. This was significant in that it was the agency's first conversation with the community about understanding mental health. Stigmas around mental health continue to exist and she said it was good to see the community make an effort to educate themselves on the topic. The presentation, like all the courses offered by the agency, was in Spanish.

Ms. Martinez said the agency is passionate about its anti-racism program. The program was started through a contract with King County to provide an assessment of the community's feedback on the proposed action to address racism as a public health crisis. The feedback has been positive. The agency has since joined the East King County Coalition Against Hate and Violence and has actively been reporting incidents. Their youth have been actively engaged to advocate against systematic racism in schools and the community. The Boom Experience is co-hosted by the agency with the equity department of the Bellevue School District. Monthly events are being held for students of color in the Bellevue School District. The Right to Breathe Partnership is relatively new and is doing great advocacy work within the city's police departments in East King County.

Ms. Valenzuela said conversations have been held around the topics of Covid health and the vaccine. For many in the Latino community the topics are taboo, and the focus is on letting people know what the vaccine is, what it does, and to diminish fears around it. A few outreach events have been held to talk to community members. In partnership with King County, conversations have also been held virtually and the events have been well attended. Participants include healthcare workers that speak Spanish and who identify as Latinx. The agency also facilitates connecting people to where they can get their vaccine shots.

Ms. Martinez said the challenges being faced in the community include the fact that historically big systems have not worked for the little people. Often big programs can be very inequitable, making it necessary to advocate within the community. There is often a lack of access to technology such as computers and phones. There are also not that many flexible funding sources that can be used for whatever families need.

Ms. Valenzuela said another challenge is not being given access to a tech person to help with Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP) applications. There are at times glitches in the system which prevents the agency from processing applications. Once applications are completed, however, people are very happy and grateful.

Ms. Martinez said the creation of culturally sensitive and responsive programs to address some of the barriers has been a success. By working closely with the families, it has been possible to identify barriers in terms of immigration status, language, lack of education and knowledge of systems. The agency is grateful to have ARPA, which is a faster process with fewer steps and fewer people involved, making it easier to get people through a lot more efficiently. The eviction moratorium has ended and a lot more eviction notices are being issued. The agency is working closely with ELAP, the Bellevue Conflict Resolution Center and other providers to maintain housing for the community.

Ms. Valenzuela highlighted the success of the life service program. She said the program was built virtually and successfully recruited 59 participants, who in turn are constantly referring people they know from the community. Housing has been secured for all participants through the end of the year. It is comforting to know that the families will not be evicted or become homeless.

Commissioner Amirfaiz asked for a quick description about the typical client who presents with mental health problems. Ms. Valenzuela said the assessment she conducts over the phone includes a series of questions, one of which is specific to mental health. The participant is then given the opportunity to say whether or not they have been experiencing mental health issues. Often that requires explaining exactly what mental health is, how it affects people, and what the symptoms are. Often people allow that they have experienced mental health issues but indicate they are not ready to seek out mental health services. Most who present with mental health issues are facing anxiety specific to housing, basic needs, and jobs.

Commissioner Ma asked about the ELAP application that has been a barrier for many. Ms. Martinez said the application is part of the King County system and the barrier primarily lies in the fact that it is new and has kinks to work out, all on the county's side and having to do with technical issues. Many from the community do not have access to computers and the application is not easy to fill out via their smart phones if they have one. Many do not have an email address which is what the database requires. The outreach and assistance element involves working with clients in filling out the applications.

Chair Kline ask for a brief response from Ms. Martinez regarding how 4Tomorrow was formed and about her background. Ms. Martinez said she studied psychology in college and ended up working for the Bellevue School District as the family engagement specialist. She

said that is where she became immersed in the Latino community in Bellevue. She said she started seeing a lot of underserved youth and families and that led her to create 4Tomorrow as a support system and a way to connect people to resources. The agency was formed in 2019 and the full-time staff are all paid, though there are also some part-time individuals.

Angie Hinojos, executive director and founder of Centro Cultural Mexicano, introduced Carlos Jimenez, co-founder and director of policy and community services. She said the agency has six paid staff members and is continuing to grow. The agency serves the entire community with a particular emphasis on the Latino and Spanish-speaking community, immigrant communities and low-income individuals. Outreach is being carried out with the indigenous Meso-American communities. The organization was founded to provide an inclusive space where the Latino community and others can connect. It is a place to access services and educational opportunities. The ultimate goal is stability and empowerment for the community. Art and culture are utilized as powerful tools of engagement given that they facilitate deeper connections between people. People are generally more open to making connections with each other across communities, and with needed services. People may come to enjoy traditional music and food, but they often leave with information about vaccinations or having received a vaccination; information about rent assistance; or a myriad of other services. Disparate communities are connected together in ways that promote conversation, reflection, facilitate a deeper understanding of each other, and foster respect and lasting positive change.

Ms. Hinojos said the agency provides a variety of programs, including rent assistance. Over the course of the pandemic, the agency has provided almost \$3 million in rent assistance, and \$467,000 in Bellevue ARPA funding. In addition, \$120,000 of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding has been provided to clients in Bellevue. Beyond just rent assistance, the funds have been used for mortgage and move-in assistance. Calls have been received from all around the region asking about the innovative program.

The agency has been active in Covid outreach and education. Early on in the pandemic there was a recognition that advocacy would be needed. The data was clear that the Latino and Spanish-speaking communities across the state were being shut out of the vaccine phasing plan. Even as the state celebrated reaching the 70 percent vaccinated milestone, the Latino community was not even close to that number and still is not. A proposal was put together for the Redmond vaccination site run by Microsoft, Evergreen, Overlake, and Seattle Public Health/King County which resulted in directly facilitating 15,000 vaccinations of Latino community members in East King County.

Ms. Hinojos shared that as a result of the work done by the agency during the pandemic, Governor Inslee appointed her to the Pandemic After-Action Review Task Force to represent the Latino community. Additionally, a statewide coalition consisting of more than 40 Latino organizations has been formed to advocate for pandemic equity. The agency is still actively working to see the community vaccinated, and all of the agency's events feature available vaccinations. At the most recent outdoor event, 500 people attended and 41 were vaccinated.

The agency also provides business support where there is a great need on the Eastside for microbusinesses and small businesses to access information, funding, opportunities, and support around compliance with state requirements. The focus is on connecting small businesses to the resources they need in their own language.

On the education front, the agency recognizes that education is necessary to getting the communities to a place where they can attain wealth and have opportunities and choices. Wealth leads to empowerment and education is the key. The agency is working with the Latino Center for Health at the University of Washington on some special projects. Two high

school interns are working with the organization and indeed youth are involved in everything the agency does, sometimes paid and sometimes on a volunteer basis. The agency also has good relationships with Bellevue College and Cascadia College and works jointly on various projects with them.

Ms. Hinojos stated that arts and culture is the mechanism that allows for reaching the community. The agency has built an incredible amount of trust with the Latino community in East King County. There is no other organization operating in East King County that does what Centro Cultural Mexicano does. People walk in the door from all over East King County every day because they know they will make contact face-to-face with a person and have their needs met. The agency produces more than 25 cultural events annually, and the average attendance is around 300 people per event. At every event information is provided about services. The agency's success has been in providing opportunity and access for the community. The agency collects data, look at existing data, and analyzes it to identify issues, and then looks for solutions before advocating for implementation of the solutions.

In terms of access to services by the community, Ms. Hinojos said having a physical space is a big part of the answer. Many call, many just stop by. The relationships generated are built on mutual respect and trust. The challenges lie in the fact that things are happening so quickly, especially through Covid. It has been a devastating time and there is a lot of trauma in the Latino community. The needs are sometimes so acute that it is difficult for community members to get their heads around even asking for help or finishing an application. The staff spend a lot of time talking and explaining with the aim of making sure the clients know the available services are for them. The agency is currently operating in Bellevue near Mini-City Hall, but a new space is being sought.

Carlos Jimenez with Centro Cultural Mexicano said his focus with the agency is on policy. He said he works closely with the state legislature to promote legislation that will benefit the Latino community. The agency was formed in 2018, and the organization is very happy to be able to work with the city on innovative programs that are being watched by folks from across the country.

Jennifer Karls, president of the board and co-founder of Immigrant Women's Community Center, noted that she was joined by Nura Adam, co-founder and executive director, and Zarby Kakar, refugee support coordinator. She explained that the organization, formed in April 2020 and granted non-profit status, has as its mission to provide community building, training, and direct services, primarily for immigrant and refugee families. Their focus is to promote financial independence, emotional health, and physical wellbeing. The work being done by Ms. Adam predates the formation of the organization; the great need in the community triggered the process to formalize the work being done to make it more sustainable in order to help more families. The work empowers women through education, support, and helping them navigate complicated systems in order to meet the needs of their families. Resources are focused on trying to fill the gaps, and the agency partners with community organizations that provide things like rental assistance and employment services. The staff help the families find and connect with the services that they need.

Ms. Adam said the agency has a case management team that is focused on empowering the immigrant and refugee community in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways. The families are helped with their basic needs, and they are connected with legal, mental health and other resources. The focus is on bridging the gaps. Where there are resources available in the community through community partners, the agency collaborates with them in getting clients connected to those resources. There are some 80 different nationalities associated with the organization. It has become a third place where people meet, come to know each other, become connected, and network. A great deal of effort has been and is being put into Covid

information and outreach. The organization partners with other organizations in making Covid referrals for vaccinations. Doctors and public health officials are regularly invited to speak virtually to the community to directly answer questions.

Continuing, Ms. Adam said the organization is also part of the anti-racism project and works with community partners to find solutions to all forms of bias. Their healing circle community support space offers the community the opportunity to come together to talk about any present issues. At the most recent gathering, the focus was on issues pertaining to Covid and the stress experienced by those who are unable to get vaccinated. One woman shared that she was not able to be vaccinated for health reasons and how that has affected the family's financial income given that she is no longer able to work as a medical interpreter. Another community member talked about how important it is for everyone to be vaccinated given the fear of catching the virus.

Ms. Adam said there are numerous barriers faced by the agency. The staff take the time to listen and allow people to express their discomforts and stress levels. A safe space is created in which the community can come together and share.

The last Monday of every month is a community gathering that includes storytelling in which first-generation immigrants talk about their journeys in coming to the United States. They relate their experiences and their expectations, and their children talk about their own experiences.

Peace building is a big part of the agency's services. There are mediation services offered as well as conflict resolution services and healing circles. The goal is to give the families the tools and skills they need to grow and reach their potential.

Workshops and training programs offered focus on emerging needs in partnership with other community providers. There are cultural sensitivity training programs for new refugees as well as for providers, including schools and workplaces.

Ms. Adam said she defines success as seeing the transformation of immigrant and refugee families; connections made in the community; individual networking; and the connections made to services the agency does not provide, such as legal and mental health services. The fact that the organization is fairly new is one of the challenges faced. Lack of resources for needed case management support is a challenge as the served community grows fast. Over the course of only three weeks, 42 new families were added, mostly refugees from Afghanistan and Syria. The goal of adding one family per week has increased to five to eight families per week. Generous donations of gift cards, food and furniture have helped meet their needs. The agency works with the families in terms of employment and schooling and provides them ORCA cards and training on how to take the bus. The families are not left on their own until they reach their potential. There are also challenges around the fact that families come to the Eastside with language and cultural issues. The agency's case managers share the same cultures and as such can easily make connections.

One large challenge has been the fact that the system is difficult to navigate for new non-profits. Given the agency's focus on serving the community, complicated systems often mean hiring someone to do the paperwork, or just letting some grants go.

Ms. Kakar said she is Afghan American, and also a refugee having arrived in Seattle during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. She said she knows what it means to be a refugee. She said she contacts new families as soon as information is received. She said she introduces herself and, in every case, there is a sigh of relief that the new families can speak with someone who speaks their language and dialect. The biggest challenge continues to be finding

affordable housing. Each family is empowered so that each can empower the next family that comes into the community. No matter the hurdles or challenges with new families coming in, the focus is always on serving them with compassion, respect, and humanity, and most of all with kindness.

Commissioner Amirfaiz noted that VOLAGs, or Voluntary Agencies, are responsible for resettling refugees for up to six months and she asked how IWCC collaborates with the VOLAGs. Ms. Kakar said she was in contact earlier in the day with a family that was asking for housing. She said she called their case worker to make sure the family is already on one of the agency's lists. If they already have a caseworker assigned to them, the first step is to find out what has already been provided to the family and what is still needed. Immigrant Women's Community Center is a gap-filler. She said the agency collaborates with IRC, Jewish Family Services, Lutheran Community Services, and other agencies depending on who a family's caseworker is with. Families often come with only the clothes on their backs, and Immigrant Women's Community Center provides them with warm clothes along with blankets and food.

Ms. Nickhath Sheriff, co-founder and CEO of MAPS/MCRC, introduced Co-Founder and Executive Director Mr. Khizer Sheriff.

Mr. Sheriff explained that Muslim Community Resource Center (MCRC) is the social and humanitarian arm of Muslim Association of Puget Sound (MAPS). The agency started with the mission of sharing love for humanity. The agency serves the greater Seattle area through a portfolio of interconnected services. Over the years MAPS/MCRC has become a platform for bringing the community together to serve humanity. Though the organization is Muslim, it does not discriminate, and more than 70 percent of the people served are not Muslim. The office is located in Redmond.

Mr. Sheriff said all of MAPS/MCRC's programs are interconnected. When someone comes asking for food, it is realized that hunger is just the tip of the spear. The person likely has many other needs, such as legal assistance, healthcare, housing, and rental support. Where the organization is unable to provide services, it connects clients to other organizations. The range of programs centered on food include serving hot meals at different shelters to providing food cards and non-perishable food. In just the last year more than 5000 families were provided with non-perishable. Every Ramadan care boxes are provided and during the last event more than 2000 were distributed. For Thanksgiving the agency will be providing hot meals to anyone in need of a meal. In addition to food cards, the agency distributes gas cards and during Covid they were in demand.

MAPS/MCRC operates an online clinic through Telehealth. During the last year more than 400 free medical and wellness consultations were offered remotely via a dedicated team of volunteer doctors. The organization was the first to step up and provide vaccinations through a partnership with Albertsons pharmacies, and with King County Public Health. Surgical masks and supplies have been supplied during the pandemic. The wellness seminars and emotional wellness clinics have been well received. The presenter brings to the table a mix of spiritual aspects along with clinical aspects. Over 300 hours of wellness seminars have been provided in addition to one-on-one counseling.

In terms of housing and rental support, which has been a pillar of the services offered by MAPS/MCRC, Mr. Sheriff said during 2020 the agency handed out over \$750,000 for rental and utility assistance. He said the agency has a furniture warehouse from which it furnishes needed items to immigrants and refugees, many of whom are referred by other organizations. More than 250 homes have been furnished from the warehouse. The organization also provides emergency motel stays, particularly for women fleeing domestic violence The

organization also runs a transitional housing program for single women. The six units are socially and culturally appropriate safe spaces. There are currently 15 women in the program.

Mr. Sheriff said the agency also has a program for seniors called Golden Times. The unique program used to be held in person, but now everything has moved online. Amazingly the seniors have become Zoom savvy and they dial in weekly for personal interaction with others.

MAPS/MCRC has been in the immigrant and refugee business for a long time and as such has the necessary infrastructure in place and knows how to work with people who are in need. There is a robust intake process in place as well as a solid case management process to quickly respond to needs. There are more than 400 families from Afghanistan in the area and the agency works closely with them and with local Afghan organizations. It is anticipated that there will be more than 2,000 new individuals moving into the area in the next year. So far about 250 families have been assisted with food, 150 families have been assisted with rent, and a number of them have had their homes furnished from the agency's warehouse.

Mr. Sheriff said MAPS/MCRC works in partnership with the King County Bar Association and the Neighborhood Clinic Program, as well as the Middle Eastern Law Association, to provide free legal counsel. During Covid the services have all been moved online. More than 200 hours of pro bono legal consultation has been provided.

Mr. Sheriff said MAPS/MCRC is volunteer driven and has strong community engagement. In just 2020, more than 30,000 volunteer hours were offered. The only payroll is for 1.5 FTE for case management. Community support and grant funding is what keeps the organization operating.

In terms of successes, MAPS/MCRC has been able to provide socially and culturally appropriate services at a grassroots level. Anyone who comes seeking help is either given the help they need or connected with other resources. On the challenges side, there continues to be a high level of need and a lot more client demand. The agency is working hard to coordinate efforts with the resettlement agencies and with other organizations to avoid duplicating efforts while provided people with the services that they need. Another challenge is the issue of emotional wellness, which continues to be a huge need. The funding recently awarded to the agency by Bellevue for mental health and wellbeing was very much appreciated.

Chair Kline thanked all of the panelists for sharing their information.

A. Parks & Open Space System Plan Update 2022

Parks Planner Ryan Walker stated that the Department of Parks and Community Services conducts a number of planning efforts, including the Human Services Needs Update and the Recreation Program Plan. The Parks & Open Space System Plan relates to park lands, including the trails and open spaces and their facilities. The plan is not directed at where every playground will be located, rather it is focused on underserved communities and where more parks and critical trail connections may be needed in the future. The underlying framework for the work comes from the city's Comprehensive Plan and the department's strategic plan.

The Parks and Open Space System Plan is the guiding document for the acquisition of land and the development and enhancement of facilities. The plan houses the city's big ideas relative to parks and open space. It has a 20-year time horizon and is updated every six years to respond to changes in the community. The plan is a requirement for parks accreditation purposes and in order to be eligible for some grants.

The planning process includes a public outreach effort, which is currently underway, and which will be wrapped up during the fall months before moving into the draft plan review process. Adoption of the updated plan by the City Council is anticipated to occur in the spring of 2022.

The community profile section of the plan looks at trends in terms of demographics and factors such as housing in the community. It looks at the current system inventory, the underlying policies, and levels of service. It also considers physical attributes such as walkable access. One of the city's level of service objectives is to have all residents within a third of a mile from a park or trail facility entrance. Currently, about 73 percent of residents fit within the objective. The plan also looks at capital project objectives, which are the recommendations in the plan that may ultimately get developed. There are funding and maintenance strategies outlined in the plan, and public involvement.

Continuing, Mr. Walker said there are a variety of focus areas contained in the plan. For each focus areas there are recommendations. As they gain momentum, the recommendations may get developed on their own and then budgeted and implemented. The list of focus areas includes open space, greenways, wildlife corridors and trails, all of which are centered on natural connections within the city. The goals and recommendations are to continue expanding and providing access to the facilities, and to look at the conservation of natural resources throughout the city.

The park facilities focus area is centered on the location of community and neighborhood parks and looks particularly at their distribution throughout the city. There are areas identified as having either a lack of park land or lack of access to park land. They include many of the growth corridors of Downtown, BelRed and Crossroads, as well as the I-90, Factoria and Eastgate corridors, and they are identified as areas of interest for expanding the system in the future.

The active recreation facilities section focuses on indoor and outdoor recreation. The section includes a variety of facilities, including the Surrey Downs Park, which was developed since 2016, the aquatic center feasibility update, and renovations to various facilities. Attention is given to where new sports facilities might go and putting those objectives into the plan.

The urban parks system element looks at some of the same areas, many of which are in underserved communities. As the areas grow there will be more of a need over time in terms of greenways and new park facilities. There have been quite a few Downtown Park improvements developing over the last few years, including expansions to the playground and completion of the circle. Facilities in Wilburton and Eastgate may be added to the updated plan.

The waterfront access section of the plan looks primarily at non-motorized access. There has been a lot of activity at Meydenbauer Bay Park over the past few years, and more is planned for the coming years. Small dock facilities will be outlined in the plan along with general points of access to waterfront areas.

Two of the focus areas work to tie the system together, specifically partnerships and historic, cultural and art resources.

Mr. Walker said the public involvement aspect of updating the plan includes making presentations to the city's boards and commissions as well as through social media and other media. The public is invited to weigh in directly by filling out a survey that can be found at engagingbellevue.com. The data will be used to identify trends. A parallel survey effort is under way that is focused on a select sample of residents utilizing an equitable distribution

both by geography and demographics. The survey questions range from what the respondents like about the park system, what facilities should be added, how access to be parks can be expanded and made safer, and how parks can be made more welcoming to people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

Chair Kline asked what has been done about requesting input from human service agencies that deal with populations that traditionally are heavy park users. Mr. Walker said staff has worked with the neighborhoods group in the city's Community Development department to reach out to specific communities. He said he was open to hearing more about additional opportunities to reach out to specific groups.

Commissioner Amirfaiz said she visits Lakemont Park on a weekly basis and noted that there is a single memorial bench in the park where people often leave flowers. She said it is very tastefully done and represents a wonderful use of the park. She said she would like to see more of that type of thing.

Commissioner McClure said she lives across from Downtown Park and expressed her support for all the changes that have occurred there over the last few years. The city has done a great job of designing the space. She added that there are several memorial benches located in the park.

Chair Kline suggested reaching out to the Bellevue Network on Aging and organizations in the city that provide services to youth. It would also be good to reach out to those with disabilities. Mr. Walker said he has given presentations to both the Bellevue Network on Aging and Youth Link.

C. Approval of 2022 Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan

Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano sought the Commission's approval of the 2022 Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan. She said the action plan is the way the city communicates to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) how the entitlement funds will be spent. The plan is submitted to HUD once the actual entitlement amount is known. The plan is similar each year in that it reflects the goals of the overarching five-year Consolidated Plan that outlines the city's goals and objectives for CDBG dollars. The Annual Action Plan is specific as to how those goals are to be carried out each year. The expected resources in the plan is a combination of the estimated entitlement amount and the estimated program income or loan paybacks. The annual goals and objectives are drawn from the Consolidated Plan, and each project is tied to a goal.

Ms. Catalano said the meat of the plan, the part that changes each year, is the specific projects and how much is allocated to each. The Commission's recommendations were forwarded to the City Council and approved on November 8. The plan also outlines the requirements in terms of citizen participation and consultation.

A motion to approve the 2022 Annual Action Plan was made by Commissioner Ma. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mercer and the motion carried unanimously.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Chair Kline noted that the meeting would be her last as a Commissioner. She said her first round as a Commissioner ran from 2000 to 2006, then after being off the Commission for a few years she returned in 2015. She said it has been an honor to serve those who live and work in the city of Bellevue. She said she is proud of the impact the Commission has had over the years, not only in Bellevue but on the entire Eastside. It has been inspirational to work

with knowledgeable and dedicated staff over the years. It has also been inspiring to work with so many great organizations in the community and their tireless staff members, all of whom work to serve the less fortunate members of the community. The current group of Commissioners has expressed a willingness to change the status quo, to think outside the box and to demand to see results. The Commission is in good hands going forward.

Assistant Director of the Department of Parks and Community Services Toni Esparza took a few minutes to acknowledge Chair Kline's many years of service as a Commissioner and the great contribution made by her to the community. She said Chair Kline's tenure has modeled servant leadership, graciousness, and an inclusive spirit. She said Chair Kline will be deeply missed.

Ms. Catalano added that during the Covid years Chair Kline dedicated a great amount of time to the Commission and the staff to shepherd the work of the Commission. She agreed that Chair Kline's accountant eye will especially be missed.

Human Services Planner Christy Stangland shared that she had learned a great deal from Chair Kline. She said Chair Kline has mentored new Commissioners as they came onboard, especially through the funding process, and by so doing have helped them find their voices. She noted that Chair Kline has always made sure that every voice is heard and said she has been an amazing leader both in the role of Chair and in the role of a Commissioner.

Commissioner Mercer said she could not imagine the Commission without Chair Kline. In moving on, her experience and expertise will be greatly missed.

Commissioner Piper echoed what the other Commissioners and staff have said about Chair Kline being an incredible mentor. He said she would be sorely missed.

9. NEW BUSINESS – None

10. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Ma. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Amirfaiz and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Kline adjourned the meeting at 8:00 p.m.