

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

May 14, 2024  
6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers  
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Malakoutian and Councilmembers Hamilton, Lee, Nieuwenhuis, Stokes and Zahn

ABSENT: None.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m., with Mayor Robinson presiding.

2. Roll Call; Flag Salute

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo called the roll and all Councilmembers were present. Mayor Robinson led the flag salute.

(a) Bike Everywhere Month Proclamation

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian read the proclamation recognizing May 2024 as Bike Everywhere Month in Bellevue. He urged all residents to consider bicycle commuting and recreational bicycling to enjoy the health, economic and environmental benefits.

(b) National Police Week Proclamation

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis read the proclamation declaring May 12-18, 2024, as National Police Week in Bellevue. He encouraged all residents and businesses to recognize and express appreciation for law enforcement officers for their public service. He remembered Officer Jordan Jackson and Detective Thomas Wray, two Bellevue Police Department officers who lost their lives in the line of duty.

Major Alycia McKinney thanked the Council for the proclamation and for recognizing Bellevue's and all fallen officers.

(c) Affordable Housing Week Proclamation

Councilmember Stokes read the proclamation recognizing May 13-17, 2024, as Affordable Housing Week in Bellevue and encouraged everyone to commit to actions and efforts to ensure that Bellevue residents can live with dignity and safety in healthy and affordable homes.

Sabrina Velarde, Housing Stability Program Coordinator, Community Development Department, thanked the Council for the proclamation.

Patrick Tippy, Affordable Housing Program Manager, A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH), said he and ARCH staff are pleased to be in partnership with the City to implement the Housing Stability Program prioritizing very low-income households. He said they look forward to expanding housing options and making Bellevue an inclusive and affordable community.

3. Approval of Agenda

→ Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

4. Oral Communications

City Clerk Arredondo said the total time for oral communications is for a period not to exceed 30 minutes and topics must relate to City of Bellevue government. Persons speaking to items on the agenda will be called first and if time remains, others will be called. The presiding officer is authorized to give preference to individuals who have not spoken to the Council within the past 60 days or who are speaking to items that will come before the Council in the upcoming 60 days.

- (a) Cameron Kast, a Bellevue resident and daily bike commuter, expressed support for the Vision Zero program. He said the lack of adequate cycling infrastructure in Bellevue has put him in harm's way more than once or prevented him from visiting certain areas of the community. He encouraged urgency, financial investment and political will to eliminate all street fatalities.
- (b) Sandy Shettler, co-founder of Tree Action Seattle and a medical social worker, said studies indicate that urban trees are strongly linked with positive public health outcomes. She encouraged the Council to support Bellevue's proposed tree code. She said Bellevue can learn from Seattle's mistakes. Last May, the City of Seattle passed a new tree ordinance that allows all trees to be removed in return for in lieu fees when properties are developed. She said Seattle is ranked fifth in the nation's urban heat islands. She expressed concern about the removal of healthy mature trees. Ms. Shettler said Bellevue's proposed tree code will ensure that every home has access to large shade trees through a tree credit formula. It contains thoughtful provisions and requirements that are backed by experts and supported by Tree Action Seattle. Ms. Shettler said Bellevue lost 65 acres of trees from 2019 to 2021. She urged the Council to support the new tree code.
- (c) Khaiersta English, founder of Trees 4 Livability, said she was speaking on behalf of 1,768 individuals who have signed their petition, 55 volunteers, six Board members and 12 community partner organizations. She said their tree code study recommended changes including minimum tree density requirements, encouraging the right tree in the

right place, and balancing the needs for low-cost housing and home development with the need to preserve the tree canopy. Ms. English expressed support for the proposed tree codes to be discussed on May 21.

- (d) Lee Sargent thanked the Council for their work and expressed support for the proposed tree codes. He noted the important role of trees in reducing outdoor temperatures and preserving a strong quality of life.
- (e) Alex Tsimerman, representing StandUp America, expressed concern that someone is trying to poison him. He commented on his disagreements with Councilmembers.
- (f) Joe Kunzler urged the Council to adopt the City of Redmond's rules regarding public participation in Council meetings. He expressed concern about certain language directed against Councilmembers. He said he appreciated the Council's commitment to allowing and facilitating public comment. Mr. Kunzler thanked the City for creating the light rail police unit and thanked Councilmembers for their public service.

5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions

- (a) Parks and Community Services Board First Quarter 2024 Report [*Written report*]

6. Report of the City Manager: None.

7. Council Business and New Initiatives: None.

8. Consent Calendar

→ Deputy Mayor Malakoutian moved to approve the Consent Calendar, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

→ The motion to approve the Consent Calendar carried by a vote of 7-0, and the following items were approved:

- (a) Ordinance No. 6788 authorizing and providing for acquisition of interests in land for the purpose of constructing the Bogline Sanitary Sewer Replacement Project (156th Avenue SE and SE 11th Street); providing for condemnation, appropriation, taking of land and property rights necessary therefore; providing for payment; directing the initiation of appropriate proceedings in the manner provided by law for said condemnation; and establishing an effective date.
- (b) Ordinance No. 6789: 1) awarding Bid No. 24011, 123rd Avenue SE Improvements - SE 60th Street to Newcastle Way (CIP Plan Nos. PW-M-1, PW-M-7, PW-R-199, PW-W/B-76 and W-16), to Northwest Cascade, Inc. as the lowest responsible and responsive bidder in the amount of \$3,068,556.82, plus all applicable taxes and 2) authorizing execution of a grant agreement (and supplements if necessary) with the Washington State Transportation Improvement

Board (TIB) to accept grant funds up to \$600,000 in Complete Streets Program funding to support construction of the 123rd Avenue SE Improvements Project; 3) amending the 2023-2029 CIP to increase the budget for Neighborhood Sidewalks Program (CIP Plan No. PW-W/B-76) by \$600,000; and, 4) amending the 2023-2024 General Capital Investment Program (CIP) Fund to increase the appropriation by \$600,000.

9. Public Hearings: None.

10. Study Session

(a) Procurement Diversity Inclusion Plan Update and Program Phasing 2024-2025

Acting City Manager Diane Carlson introduced staff's update regarding the Procurement Diversity Inclusion Plan and program phasing. She said staff has been working over the past year to solicit stakeholder feedback regarding the program.

Ira McDaniel, Director of Asset Management, Finance and Asset Management Department, said the Procurement Diversity Inclusion Plan is intended to help remove structural disadvantages for small and diverse businesses that would like to work with the City. He said this helps to make the economy stronger and more inclusive and provides the ongoing benefit of increasing the pool of vendors and depth of competition. He said the plan is a direct result of the Council Vision indicating that Bellevue welcomes the world and diversity is our strength.

Mr. McDaniel said the plan was created in 2016 as a product of the Diversity Advantage Plan. From 2017 to 2020, the City hosted annual events, sponsored booths at regional forums, held lunch and learn sessions and worked to incorporate a commitment to equity in the City's contracting process. He said the City has not experienced the growth in the use of small and diverse businesses that it would like to see. However, staff continues to compile data on sub-consultants and City credit card purchases. Mr. McDaniel said two staff positions were included in the 2023-2024 budget for the apprenticeship program and the Procurement Diversity Inclusion program.

Mariel Sacayan, Program Administrator, said that following her joining the City in August 2023, staff restarted the cross-departmental Procurement Diversity Inclusion working group. Stakeholder sessions were held in October and November of 2023 and staff used that input to develop a list of actions and to update the plan.

Ms. Sacayan said the outreach sessions were advertised via social media, newsletters and direct invitations to more than 600 vendors who are registered on the City's public purchase portal. Approximately 20 individuals representing a diverse group of businesses (e.g., information technology, general services, food and beverage, etc.) participated in the stakeholder sessions. Almost all of the vendors indicated that the registration system is confusing and not user-friendly and that the technical assistance resources are difficult to understand and need to be updated. The stakeholders requested more networking events and opportunities to share resources and build stronger relationships. Ms. Sacayan said additional stakeholder feedback focused on leveling the

playing field through clear and timely communication about opportunities to both small and large businesses.

Ms. Sacayan said the goals of the Procurement Diversity Inclusion program are to provide technical assistance, improve transparency and data reporting, cultivate strong and lasting relationships and to enhance procurement practices with a focus on ensuring equity. Key actions for 2024 include implementing regular office hours with Tabor 100, a nonprofit association of entrepreneurs and business advocates, redesigning registration materials, publishing a newsletter, hosting and attending more events, improving data collection and reporting, and implementing a new small public works process. Ms. Sacayan said the City is hiring a program analyst to implement a robust data reporting system. The next stakeholder outreach sessions are planned for May 20, in person at Tabor 100, and May 22 via Microsoft Teams.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff for the presentation.

Councilmember Zahn thanked staff for their outreach efforts and relationship building. She said she would like to see the data regarding the City's spending with small and diverse businesses broken out by type: goods and services, consulting, and public works. She said it would be interesting to know both the sizes of the businesses and the dollars spent with them.

Councilmember Lee said he has been interested in expanding the diversity of vendors for a long time and he is disappointed that the City's spending with diverse small businesses has not increased. He commented on the importance of small businesses to the economy and to providing opportunities for minorities, including women. He encouraged continued outreach and efforts to establish a larger and more diverse pool of vendors.

Councilmember Hamilton thanked staff and said he was impressed with the work to date. He encouraged working with potential vendors to provide them with some tools, for example, a pricing tool. He suggested exploring practices that would benefit small businesses including expedited payment terms and a staff person for new vendors to contact during their initial contract phase. He expressed support for staff's plans for ongoing monitoring and assistance.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis said he appreciated the leadership of Councilmember Lee and Councilmember Zahn related to procurement diversity. Mr. Nieuwenhuis said that many of the action items reflect what the Human Services Commission did to create a more level playing field for grant applicants, including technical assistance. He thanked staff for the stakeholder outreach and encouraged continued communications and engagement. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. Sacayan said staff anticipates returning early next year to provide the next update to the Council.

Councilmember Stokes expressed support for the Procurement Diversity Inclusion program and continued efforts for improvement and increased utilization. He suggested learning from the past while focusing on the future.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian thanked Councilmember Zahn and Councilmember Lee for their advocacy of the program. Responding to Mr. Malakoutian, Mr. McDaniel said one new practice

under consideration is to create a direct purchase with vendors rotation process, and to expand that from small public works to other types of procurement. Ms. Sacayan said staff is also looking at establishing better evaluation criteria for all departments to enhance uniformity in evaluating vendors.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian asked whether there are performance metrics to measure the success and impact of the updated Procurement Diversity Inclusion Plan over the next two years. Mr. McDaniel noted staff's interest in a more detailed analysis of the City's spending with small vendors and in looking at the number of new vendors who register. He said more data collection is needed to develop useful targets. He said staff will be developing outcome metrics for the action items identified for 2024.

Mayor Robinson expressed enthusiasm for the program and noted that she recently met with members of the Filipino Chamber of Commerce where they discussed how difficult it is to submit bids for jobs, especially for small businesses. Responding to Ms. Robinson, Ms. Sacayan said finance staff will partner with community development staff to identify additional opportunities for working with small diverse businesses, including through Startup 425. In further response, Ms. Sacayan said she will be available to assist potential and new vendors through the procurement process. She said they will hold workshops to allow vendors to learn from each other as well.

(b) 2024-2025 Federal Legislative Agenda

City Manager Carlson introduced staff's presentation regarding the 2024-2025 federal legislative agenda.

Katie Kuciemba Halse, Acting Assistant Director, Intergovernmental Relations, said staff is seeking Council feedback and approval of the 2024-2025 federal legislative agenda. She said the Council's federal agenda has been developed in partnership with multiple City departments and through feedback with federal lobbyists and staff. She said staff focused on projects and programs that are likely to be funded in the near term, including projects that might be shovel-ready but need additional funding.

Ms. Halse said Bellevue has been successful with a number of programs and grants over the past year. The City received \$1.43 million for smart initiatives in early 2024 and \$2.78 million in late 2023 for Safe Streets and Roads for All. For the FY 2024 appropriations process, the City benefited from three federal funding programs: Bellevue and Redmond electric fire engine and charging infrastructure, Bellevue Police Department body worn cameras program, and digital equity for affordable housing.

The FY 2025 appropriations process is underway and Bellevue submitted three requests. Ms. Halse said the U.S. Congress will allow the consideration of these programs but are quite strict in how they consider them. Requests include a follow-up submittal regarding the electric fire engine, the Lake Washington sanitary sewer lakes project, and a submittal for the Grand Connection I-405 crossing.

Genesee Adkins, Chief of External Affairs, said staff incorporated feedback from the Council and the City's federal consultants that the structure the City has used for the state legislative agenda would be a good model for the federal legislative agenda. She said the 2024-2025 agenda includes: 1) a section to outline priority issues to elevate during the coming year, 2) additional areas of federal interest, and 3) a broad, flexible reference to the City Council Vision and Goals and to the Strategic Target Areas to consider emerging opportunities consistent with that vision.

The priority issues for 2024-2025 are: 1) transportation and mobility (i.e., Eastrail, Grand Connection crossing and Smart City technology), 2) essential and sustainable infrastructure (i.e., funding for utility infrastructure, reduction of climate pollution and affordable/free internet access and connectivity, and 3) housing and safety net programs (i.e., Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and resources for working families). Ms. Adkins said the City received a Smart City grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to address pedestrian safety.

Ms. Adkins said City officials, including Mayor Robinson and Deputy Mayor Malakoutian, will travel to Washington, D.C., in early June. The appropriations process will proceed through the summer and fall and additional visits with congressional staff are anticipated during the August recess. Ms. Adkins requested Council approval of the federal legislative agenda.

Councilmember Lee expressed appreciation for the efforts of staff and the City's lobbyists. He expressed support for the top three priority areas. Responding to Mr. Lee, Ms. Adkins said the application for congressional spending included \$2.5 million for final design of the Grand Connection I-405 crossing. Mr. Lee noted additional transportation needs including I-405, I-90 and SR 520 improvements, mobility in and out of downtown Bellevue, mobility in the BelRed corridor and the Vision Zero program. He said he would like to see funding for one or two congestion relief projects involving transportation technology. He noted that King County recently met with congressional delegates regarding wastewater infrastructure.

Ms. Adkins said the City has been coordinating closely with King County to support utility infrastructure. She said the language reflected in the Council's legislative agenda mirrors the language used by King County. Councilmember Lee suggested collaborating with the National League of Cities (NLC).

Regarding transportation, Ms. Adkins said staff tried to avoid making the federal legislative agenda too long. She noted that page 4 of the agenda refers to the importance of the I-405 corridor and its interchanges at SR 520 and I-90. She said the majority of federal transportation funding is included in the bipartisan infrastructure law. Some of that funding is provided to federal agencies and available for grants and the other portion of that funding is processed through the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). WSDOT incorporated that money into the Move Ahead Washington package and the City received some of that funding in 2022. Ms. Adkins said the next state legislative agenda will reflect I-405 as a top priority for federal funding that is funneled through the state and the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC).

Councilmember Zahn expressed appreciation for staff's work and concurred with the top three areas of focus reflected in the agenda. She observed that some of the items listed are new

requests and some items reflect funding that has already been granted. She encouraged a strong focus on the City's requests.

Regarding the LIHTC, Councilmember Zahn expressed concern that Washington state property values are higher than many states and therefore might not receive as much funding. She suggested encouraging an expansion of the tax credit that brings more money into Washington state.

Ms. Zahn referenced language in the agenda about environmental health and workforce development and asked if there are specific requests within those categories. She said she did not see anything in the agenda regarding economic development and human services. She expressed support for working with the NLC.

Ms. Adkins said the legislative agenda was intended to reflect a mix of requests, priorities and acknowledgements of recent federal funding and grants. She said staff reviewed past legislative agendas and moved economic development items to individual categories.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis said he did not see any references to the arts in the legislative agenda, which he believes is a critical piece of the City's economic development plan.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis asked whether there are any requests or proposed legislation addressing child care. He said that is one of the top expenses for middle class and lower income families in Bellevue. Ms. Adkins confirmed that there are pending opportunities. She said Senator Patty Murray is one of the sponsors of the Child Care for Working Families Act that was introduced this spring. There is also bipartisan interest in revisiting and potentially extending the child tax credit.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis asked whether additional funding is needed for the police body cameras program or other public safety needs. Ms. Adkins said staff is communicating with the U.S. Department of Justice regarding additional grant funding. Ms. Halse said that process was initiated recently and is in addition to the appropriation that has already been awarded.

Regarding the arts, Ms. Adkins said that references to the arts in previous legislative agendas referred to supporting investments in capacity building for economic development partnerships. She said she was unsure about the availability of direct grant opportunities and would consult with arts and economic development staff.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Ms. Adkins said staff can revise the federal legislative agenda based on tonight's discussion and bring it back next week for Council action.

Councilmember Hamilton commended staff for their strategic approach and for introducing priorities early in anticipation of future funding requests. He said the three broad focus areas provide the opportunity for adding specific items as they arise. He expressed support for working with the NLC and accessing their resources. He said he was prepared to approve the agenda tonight if the Council was ready to do so.



Councilmember Stokes expressed support for the federal legislative agenda and said he was ready to approve it tonight.

Deputy Mayor Malakoutian thanked staff for the comprehensive overview of the legislative agenda and asked about any key lessons from last year's session. Ms. Adkins said the previous agenda was structured around the Council's Strategic Target Areas. She said the City's federal legislative consultants suggested featuring the top priorities on the first couple of pages. She said Ms. Halse and others have been successful in forming and expanding effective partnerships with other cities and government agencies, nonprofit organizations, business organizations and other private entities. Ms. Halse said the Council and department staff are critical partners as well, and department staff meet every three weeks to discuss federal funding opportunities.

Mayor Robinson said she hears comments from the community about the importance of the LIHTC. She noted topics raised tonight (i.e., arts, police funding, child care, economic development) and asked staff whether it would be more effective to add them or to leave the legislative agenda as it is. Ms. Adkins said child care is included in the reference to resources for working families. She suggested that staff revise the agenda before final Council action.

11. Land Use: None.
12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions: None.
13. Written Reports
  - (a) Intergovernmental Affairs Monthly Update
  - (b) Update on Vision Zero Program

Responding to Mayor Robinson, City Manager Carlson confirmed that the Vision Zero report includes proposals for consideration during the budget process.

14. Unfinished Business: None.
15. New Business: None.
16. Executive Session: None.
17. Adjournment

At 8:11 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared the meeting adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC  
City Clerk

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