

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

August 5, 2019
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

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

ABSENT: None.

1. Call to Order

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

(a) Bellevue Sister Cities Association (BSCA) Exchange Student Introduction

Councilmember Zahn, liaison to the Bellevue Sister Cities Association (BSCA), welcomed the students and noted that she has visited both Yao, Japan and Kladno, Czech Republic. She thanked the BSCA staff and volunteers who participate in the program.

Councilmember Robertson said she has visited all four of Bellevue's sister cities. She noted that two of her children have participated in the student exchange program.

Inta Gotelli, BSCA Board member, said this is the 50th anniversary of Bellevue's Sister City relationship with Yao. A delegation from Yao will visit later this year to celebrate the milestone. She noted that the student exchange program began in 1977 with Yao. Students spend 3-4 weeks together in one city, and then travel back together to the other city.

Maddy Robertson, a Newport High School student, introduced Clary Koláčová, a student from Kladno. Maddy commented that she enjoyed spending time with her host family and visiting Prague and Berlin. Clary said she has been in Bellevue for one week and has so far enjoyed local sightseeing and a trip to Ocean Shores. Maddy noted their plans to visit the San Juan Islands and to spend time at the Bellevue Collection.

Ms. Gotelli introduced Daryl and Evan Glatz, Bellevue High School students who grew up in Japan and participated in the Yao exchange program. Evan introduced Riko Fujita and said he

enjoyed spending time with his host family and learning about the history and culture of the region. Riko said she has enjoyed rafting and visiting the mountains in Washington.

Daryl said he stayed with Kanon Kinoshita in Yao, where he enjoyed learning more about the history of Japan, including the tombs in the Osaka area.

Mayor Chelminiak thanked everyone for hosting and participating in the program.

2. Executive Session

At 6:16 p.m., Mayor Chelminiak invited the guests to pose for photos with the Council. He noted that the Council would then recess to Executive Session for approximately 20 minutes to discuss one quasi-judicial matter.

At 6:46 pm, Mayor Chelminiak extended the Executive Session to 7:00 p.m. The meeting resumed at 7:00 p.m.

3. Study Session Items

(a) Update on Diversity Advantage Plan

City Manager Brad Miyake introduced the annual update on the Diversity Advantage Plan.

Elaine Acacio, Diversity and Inclusion Program Administrator, noted the importance of shared definitions for access, equity, inclusion, opportunity, and cultural competence. She said the City has expanded the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network (BDAN), created employee resource groups, adopted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan, and invested in improving language access. The Diversity Advantage Plan organizes recommendations into seven areas: 1) cultural competence in the community, 2) cultural competence in city government, 3) economic development, 4) human services, 5) public safety, 6) civic engagement, and 7) education.

Yuriana Garcia Tellez, Diversity Outreach and Engagement Administrator, highlighted the community engagement activities, including partnerships with BDAN, the Bellevue Essentials course, and the Police Department's five advisory committees. She said the Police Department is considering the creation of a youth advisory committee. Phase 1 of the Cross-Cultural Programming Public Outreach Study was completed this year. The study assessed the City's current programs and needs, and more than 600 public comments were received. The results of the study were presented to the Council in May 2019.

Ms. Garcia noted the City's ongoing programs to highlight diversity including the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day celebration, Welcoming Week, the Cultural Conversations program, and the Youth Link Board's Unity Through Diversity event. Additional activities include the Race and Equity Summit, Bellevue School District Boom and Shout Experience, Bellevue College Pride event, Cultural Crossroads Festival, and the Tasveer South Asian Film Festival. Local

partners include Bellevue College, Bellevue School District, Wrap-Around Services program, and the Eastside Pathways program. Regional partnerships include the Eastside Race and Leadership Coalition, Eastside Immigrant and Refugees Coalition, Census 2020 Communities Count Committee, and the Governing for Regional Equity and Inclusion Conference.

Ms. Garcia noted a focus on emerging issues related to the support of immigration resources, Know Your Rights initiative, solidarity with the Muslim community, and community meetings held by the Police Department and Neighborhood Outreach staff. She said local government plays a vital role in protecting vulnerable populations.

Ms. Acacio said the foundations of cultural competency include training and development, cross-departmental diversity liaisons, and the creation of department work plans that address diversity. Additional programs include the Diversity Talent Hiring Initiative and employee resource groups. Citywide initiatives to remove barriers and create opportunity include the Procurement Diversity Inclusion Plan and enhancements to language access resources.

Blayne Amson, ADA/Title VI Program Administrator, highlighted a number of items. He recalled that staff presented the 2019 ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan to the Council on January 14, 2019. In the area of Title VI compliance, the diversity team worked with Transportation Department staff to create a training that provides a general overview of the Civil Rights Act and the implications for the City. Mr. Amson noted that the Universal Design manual provides best practices for accessibility in training, meetings, and events. Activities slated for 2020 include the Cross-Cultural Feasibility Study, exploration of cultural liaisons program, expansion of training options, performance measures, and ADA/Title VI community engagement. Staff will continue to implement the ADA plan and departmental work plans.

Mayor Chelminiak thanked staff for the update and noted that the diversity initiatives are more important than ever.

Deputy Mayor Robinson said the Council's goal is for all residents to feel welcome, included, and safe, and to feel that they have an equitable opportunity for a high quality of life. She said she appreciates staff's good work to support that goal. She requested more information regarding the ableism, allyship and disability justice item.

Councilmember Zahn commented on the importance of a sense of belonging within a community. She expressed an interest in the training provided to City employees. She noted that she and Councilmember Lee attended the Governing for Regional Equity and Inclusion Conference.

Responding to Ms. Zahn, Ms. Garcia confirmed that some members of the community have indicated they do not feel safe reporting crimes. She said the City wants to ensure that it is providing the trust and the resources to encourage people to communicate with law enforcement.

Councilmember Robertson thanked staff for their positive and proactive approach. She suggested sharing the universal design manual for meetings and events with groups that meet in City Hall and with other entities that host meetings (e.g., Meydenbauer Convention Center and hotels). She

suggested providing information on universal design building concepts to permit applicants as well.

Councilmember Robertson cautioned about the growing anti-Semitism in the country. She said she does not want to see any bias against individuals in the community based on race, ethnicity, or religion.

Councilmember Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for the update and for their numerous initiatives. He suggested exploring opportunities for partnerships with the business community. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. Garcia said there are currently 23 members in the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network (BDAN).

Councilmember Lee thanked staff for their work and for the new language translation tools available at City Hall. He noted the need for more gathering places in the community. Mr. Lee commented on the importance of supporting outreach efforts related to the 2020 Census.

Councilmember Stokes noted his past legal experience related to civil rights law. He thanked Deputy Mayor Robinson for advocating for hearing loop technology in the Council Chambers and other meeting spaces. Mr. Stokes concurred with Councilmember Nieuwenhuis' suggestion to explore partnerships with businesses. He noted the private fundraising efforts related to the men's homeless shelter as an example.

Mayor Chelminiak thanked everyone for their work and commended the City's leadership in the area of diversity and inclusion.

4. Discussion of Upcoming Items: None.

At 7:55 p.m., Mayor Chelminiak declared recess to the Regular Session.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC
City Clerk

/kaw