

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

August 4, 2020
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
Virtual Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Ma, Commissioners Amirfaiz, Jain, Kline, Mansfield, Mercer,

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Piper

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Christy Stangland, Toni Esparza, Department of Parks and Community Services; Councilmember Nieuwenhuis

GUEST SPEAKERS: None

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Ma who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Piper who was excused.

Chair Ma 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, certain provisions in the Commission's bylaws needed to be suspended temporarily, including the provision concerning the ability of Commissioners to participate remotely, and the provision concerning the Commission's process for accepting communication from the public. In order to allow the Commission maximum flexibility to structure its agendas during the time period meetings are held remotely, the provisions in the bylaws related to the order of business also needed to be temporarily suspended.

According to the Commission's bylaws, if a procedure such as rule suspension is not addressed by the bylaws, the Commission may rely on the City Council Rules of Procedure, Resolution 8928. Section 13 of Resolution 8928 allows a City Council procedural rule to be temporarily suspended.

A motion to suspend, until such time as the Human Services Commission is no longer holding its meetings remotely, the provisions of Article V, Section G of the Commission's bylaws concerning remote participation by commissioners, in order to allow all Commissioners to participate fully in this meeting, was made by Commissioner Kline. Absent any objections, Chair Ma declared the motion adopted and the provisions in the bylaws to be suspended.

A motion to suspend for the August 4, 2020, meeting only the provisions in Article VI and Article VII of the Commission's Bylaws concerning oral communications from the public and to allow for public comment to be provided in writing and read during the Human Services Commission meeting, was made by Commissioner Kline. Absent any objections, Chair Ma

declared the motion adopted and the provisions in the bylaws to be suspended.

A motion to suspend until such time as the Human Services Commission is no longer holding its meetings remotely the “Order of Business” provisions in Article VI, Section D of the Commission’s bylaws was made by Commissioner Kline. Absent any objections, Chair Ma declared the motion adopted and the provisions in the bylaws to be suspended.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. June 30, 2020
- B. July 7, 2020
- C. July 21, 2020

A motion to approve the minutes for all three meetings as submitted was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Amirfaiz and the motion carried unanimously.

4. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano said a written communication was been received from Sophia Way and signed by the executive director. The letter stated that when Covid-19 hit the agency had already approved its \$2.5 million annual budget. Their expenses related to the pandemic, however, are anticipated to result in an increase of \$650,000 to the budget. In funding the agency, the city has provided more than 1100 women the shelter, safety and stability they need. Thirty percent of the women are over the age of 55; 48 percent are women of color; 46 percent have some form of disability; 70 percent report incidents of domestic violence as a contributing factor to their homelessness; and 92 percent have an annual income of less than \$40,000.

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

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said the Council held an affordable housing strategy study session in July. He said one of the goals of the strategy is to increase affordable housing density through city incentive programs. The Council discussed one of the 21 action items, Action C-1, that focuses on increasing development of affordable housing on land that is public or owned by a non-profit or faith-based organization. Amending the Land Use Code to make the overall development process more efficient and predictable for non-profit developers was discussed. There will be outreach to the public and the Planning Commission will be involved, but the code amendments could be ready for final Council adoption as early as the first quarter of 2021. The current projections place the potential for new affordable homes at 200 to 1000 units over the next ten years by implementing C-1. The focus will be on households earning less than 50 percent of area median income.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said the East Main development issue has been before the Council on numerous occasions. Two study sessions were held in July to consider a Land Use Code to the area, which is just east of the downtown. The Council reinforced its commitment to the transit-oriented development vision and highlighted the policies that are related to affordable housing as well as pedestrian and bicycle connectivity as important elements to the area. The draft Land Use Code amendment will be presented to the Council in September.

The Council continues to get updates on the city’s economic development plan, with a specific focus on the efforts to support businesses, art organizations and workers as they

navigate and recover from the economic impacts of Covid-19. Unemployment in Bellevue is over ten percent and there are particular impacts in retail, hotel accommodations and the food services industries. The recommended workforce recovery strategies include providing information and resources for unemployed individuals; fostering retraining for in-demand careers after the pandemic recovery; and diversity-focused workforce solutions. More than half of the businesses in east King County reported a need for layoffs or a drop in staff hours. The arts and entertainment community has been hit hard and lasting structural impacts are expected. The recovery strategies being explored include enhancing Bellevue's leading position in the digital creative sector and creating links with the traditional creative sector. The city's economic recovery strategies also include helping businesses adapt and create new models for success through the transition back to growth, including in retail and tourism.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said the Council received a report on the Neighborhood Enhancement Program, a \$5 million program that distributes funds to two distinct neighborhood areas annually for local improvements. Residents submit ideas for small to moderate improvement projects and vote on them. The city received over a thousand submissions for project ideas, processed roughly 4000 voting ballots, and is currently looking to complete or implement 24 projects.

With regard to the East Link extension, which is the 14 miles of light rail extending from the International District in Seattle to the Redmond Technology Center station in Redmond. The line is more than 75 percent complete and construction is on schedule despite impacts to the operations due to Covid-19. The operations and maintenance facility in Bellevue will be substantially complete by September, and the southern end of the site on which construction equipment is being stored will be surplused once construction is complete and could be used for transit-oriented development with an eye particularly on affordable housing.

The Council had its first public hearing on the city's 2021-2022 budget and the 2021-2027 Capital Investment Program. The city's current budget assumptions are based on three possible scenarios that were shared with the Council on June 22. The city will take the least optimistic scenario on which to build the budget. The projection is that there will be about an eight percent impact on the general fund, which is a shortfall of between \$12 million and \$16 million. The next public hearing on the budget will be in September. The city manager's preliminary budget will be presented to the Council in October and final adoption of the budget is slated for December.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis reported that the Council received an update on the Bellevue Aquatic Center. Three options have been developed, all of which are still on the table. A staff-driven process is under way to look at three different sites around the city: Lincoln Center, Bellevue College and Airfield Park close to I-90.

Finally, Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis reported that the city received some good news, namely that from the CARES Act \$221,000 in grants were made available to small businesses. The funds will be distributed to 37 different qualifying companies. With regard to the Human Services Commission, he stated that the city will be receiving \$4.3 million as part of the CARES Act, and \$500,000 of it will be earmarked for the human services fund for allocation to the areas of food and security and safe housing.

6. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Assistant Director of the Department of Parks and Community Services Toni Esparza said the additional \$500,000 to the human services fund includes a deadline of October 31 for spending the funds. The plan presented to the Council by staff was to have the staff form recommendations from currently contracted providers for food scarcity and to bring them to

the Commission on August 18 for review and endorsement. Of the total, \$200,000 will go toward emergency financial assistance. An RFP will be released for new providers working in that area in order to reduce the workload for providers and to diversify the providers in the community. The RFP will close on August 19 and recommendations will be brought to the Commission in a special meeting the last week of August.

There was consensus on the part of the Commissioners to schedule the special meeting for August 27.

7. INFORMATION FOR THE COMMISSION

A. Discussion of 2021-2022 Human Services General fund – Round 2: Goal #5

Ms. Catalano explained that during Round 2 the Commission would begin the process of assigning preliminary funding amounts to individual programs. She stressed that during the first pass through the applications during Round 2, it was not necessary to keep track of whether or not the funding recommendations exceed the available budget amount; that work will occur after all of the applications in each goal area have been reviewed in Round 2.

The Commissioners were informed that the total budget available for 2021-2022 was \$3,908,600, an increase of 3.23 percent over the 2020 budgeted amount for a total increase of \$122,375. The total amount requested by the applications is \$7.5 million.

It was noted that in working through the applications, the Commission could elect to preliminarily fund the applications at their full requests, apply the 3.23 percent COLA increase, fund the applications somewhere between the COLA and the full requested amount, or not to fund the application at all.

Human Services Manager Alex O'Reilly pointed out that a column had been added to the spreadsheet titled "If Other Funding Source." She stressed that staff did not currently have knowledge of any other funding source, but noted that sometimes additional funding does become available. The column is intended to list monies the Commission would allocate to an agency in the event additional funds materialize.

Chair Ma began the review with the applications in Goal 5. There was agreement to review competing applications within each goal area together.

- 88. AtWork! – Community Inclusion
- 89. AtWork! – Community Liaison
- 99. HERO House – Supported Employment

Chair Ma recommended the 2019 award without a COLA for Application 88. He pointed out the low number of residents served and said while the program is excellent, the city's limited resources should be spent in other areas. He voiced support for Applications 89 and 99 but also recommended the 2019 award without a COLA for both. With regard to Application 89, he said the work the program intends to do is inhibited by the fact that basic needs are not being met for the client population.

Commissioner Kline concurred. Commissioner Mercer recommended a COLA increase. She said there is a clear need relative to basic needs, but there is also a need for employment services for the disabled, without which they could easily be isolated. She said she would do the same for Applications 88 and 89.

Commissioner Amirfaiz agreed with the notion of including a COLA for the three

applications.

Chair Ma pointed out that Application 89 is a program for disabled persons who have retired and are no longer working. Commissioner Mercer said if she had to pick one of the three applications to assign reduced funding, Application 89 would be the one she would choose. She noted that in years past the Commission's default position was to give each application a COLA unless there was a clear reason not to.

Commissioner Kline agreed the default position should be COLA. Commissioner Mercer proposed putting an asterisk on Application 88 for a possible reduction from COLA should the need arise.

There was consensus to mark Applications 88, 89 and 99 for a COLA increase, with an asterisk on Application 88.

- 90. Bellevue College – Head Start
- 93. Bellevue School District – Early and Extended Learning Program
- 94. Boys & Girls Club – Project Learn
- 95. Child Care Resources – Financial Assistance
- 96. Child Care Resources – Homeless Child care Program
- 97. Child Care Resources – Information and Referral/Tech Assistance
- 105. Kinderling Center – Child Care and Preschool Consultation

Chair Ma recommended fully funding Application 90. For Application 93 he recommended more than a COLA increase and proposed \$160,000 and pointed out how important child care is for families.

Commissioner Mansfield said his kids have used the Bellevue School District program in the past. The program is dwindling within the district even though everyone is clamoring for it. He agreed with the \$160,000 recommendation. He said he would agree to give even more if funds are available.

Chair Ma suggested funding application 94 more than COLA but less than the full request. He suggested \$90,000. The program is being adjusted to meet the need during Covid-19. There is a clear need for activities and child care during the pandemic. He said if there are additional funds, he would give the application even more.

Commissioner Mansfield agreed. He said Wednesday in the school district is a big Boys & Girls Club day for after-school programs. The need will continue to be high during the pandemic as people look for work.

Commissioner Kline agreed that child care and early learning programs are ripe for additional funds. She said she was inclined to fund the three Child Care Resources applications at the full ask level. She said she was more flexible in regard to the other applications.

With regard to the Child Care Resources applications, Commissioner Mercer said like Commissioner Kline she would put more into those applications, giving each their full ask. She said she would consider a different number for Kinderling.

With regard to Applications 95, 96 and 97, Chair Ma pointed out that Bellevue College, Bellevue School District and the Boys & Girls Club are direct providers of child care, whereas Child Care Resources works to provide financial assistance. Commissioner Mercer explained that Child Care Resources works to accredit child care organizations around the area and focuses on a certain population of homeless families. In many ways they get the most at-risk

students into child care. The other three programs are broader in funding their slots.

Commissioner Mansfield said he could see both ways of thinking. He pointed out that Application 97 was 18 percent less than before, and the three Child Care Resources applications collectively represent only a 12 percent increase. He said he could support funding all three applications at their full amounts.

There was agreement to fully fund Application 90; to fund Application 93 at \$160,000; and to fund Application 94 at \$90,000. There also was consensus to fully fund Applications 95, 96 and 97.

Commissioner Mercer pointed out that Kinderling is focused on identifying kids with disabilities, not on providing child care. They work closely with the Bellevue School District. She said given the challenges in child care and early learning, she would prefer to focus in those basic needs areas and would be inclined to put less money into Application 105.

There was agreement to give a COLA increase to Application 105.

- 91. Bellevue College – Center for Career Connections
- 102. Hopelink - Employment
- 103. IKRON of Greater Seattle – Integrated Employment Services
- 106. YWCA of Seattle-King-Snohomish – Eastside Employment Services

Chair Ma recommended giving Application 91 more than just a COLA increase and proposed \$32,000. He said the program is a valuable service that is open to the public. For Applications 102, 103 and 106 he proposed just a COLA.

Commissioner Kline said she leaned toward giving just a COLA for all four applications. Ms. O'Reilly pointed out that the ask for Application 106 is less what a COLA would work out to be. She suggested simply giving the application its full request. Commissioner Kline concurred.

Commissioner Mercer said she would put more into Application 102 but would give only a COLA to Applications 91 and 103, and the full request for Application 106. With Covid-19 where it is, employment is a huge thing. It is true that giving more to the basics is important, but employment is also facing a crisis and it needs to be addressed with funding.

Commissioner Amirfaiz agreed with the recommendations of Chair Ma.

Chair Ma said he would be okay with just giving each a COLA increase, and full funding for Application 106. He agreed that employment is important but pointed out that currently there is a general lack of jobs. The programs are helping people find jobs, but more should be earmarked for basic needs programs.

Ms. O'Reilly suggested the employment subset of applications could be marked informally as an area to look at if more funds are identified.

There was agreement to award a COLA increase for Applications 91, 102 and 103, and the full request to Application 106. There also was agreement to put an asterisk with the employment applications.

- 92. Bellevue College – Preparing for Work
- 101. Hopelink – Adult Education
- 104. Jewish Family Service – Refugee and Immigrant Services

Chair Ma suggested a COLA for Applications 92 and 101 but flat funding for Application 104.

Commissioner Mercer agreed with the need to be careful about adding funds from the general fund for Application 104 to ensure the use of CDBG funds for the program.

There was agreement to give a COLA increase to Applications 92 and 101, and to hold the funding for Application 104 flat.

100. Hopelink – Financial Capabilities

Chair Ma said he liked the idea of providing people with financial education, but the greater need is in the area of basic needs. He proposed not funding the application. Commissioner Mansfield agreed that while financial education is important, there are more important emerging needs.

Commissioner Kline noted she had not recommended carrying the application forward into Round 2. She agreed that the program is good and the service is needed, but suggested it will go on even if the city does not fund it. Commissioner Mercer concurred and suggested the program is not necessarily best funded by the Commission. The economic development division is looking at things like developing small businesses and the program may be a good fit with the broader scale of economic development.

There was agreement not to fund the application.

The Commissioners moved onto the applications in Goal 4.

- 70. Asian Counseling and Referral Service – Whole Health Oriented Mental Health Program
- 73. Crisis Connections – Crisis Line
- 74. Crisis Connections – Teen Link
- 78. IKRON of Greater Seattle – Behavioral Health Services
- 83. NAMI Eastside – Individual and Family Support, Education Programs, and Resource and Referrals
- 84. NAMI Eastside – NAMI In the Schools
- 86. Therapeutic Health Services – Alcohol/Drug Treatment

Chair Ma proposed giving a COLA increase to each of the applications. Commissioner Mansfield agreed, as did the other Commissioners. Commissioner Mercer added that she would look at the Crisis Clinic applications for potentially giving them more.

Chair Ma stressed the importance of mental health programs and allowed that there has been an increase in mental health issues among the youth in the community due to Covid-19. He said he would include an asterisk in Application 74.

Commissioner Mercer said she could be persuaded to fully fund Application 74. The other Commissioners said they would be fine with that, and with including an asterisk with the application.

Commissioner Amirfaiz noted that Application 84 also serves younger people. She proposed fully funding that program. Chair Ma said his concern was that the program does not provide direct treatment to the youth beyond education via PowerPoint presentations. Commissioner Amirfaiz said education is often what leads young people to seek services and as such the

program has value.

Commissioner Mercer agreed that additional education would be useful and said the program is one she would be willing to give more funding to. She stated, however, her concern that organizations that provide services in the schools will struggle to fulfill their mission in the coming year due to Covid-19. She said if she had to advocate for one program over another, she would advocate for Application 74 ahead of Application 84.

Human Services Planner Christy Stangland pointed out that there are applications for youth behavioral health under Goal 2. She suggested that at some point the Commission may want to consider all of those applications together before making a final funding decision.

Ms. O'Reilly shared with the Commissioners the fact that staff reached out to all of the applicants to hear from them how they plan to deliver services in the age of Covid-19. Each applicant was asked to answer two key questions by August 3. She said the answers received had not yet been compiled. Once that work is done they will be shared with the Commission.

Commissioner Mercer said the reality is that the Commission rarely adds funds to applications later on in the process. She said if the Commissioners feel more should be given to Application 84, it should be marked for full funding with an asterisk for possible reduction later. Commissioner Kline agreed, but suggested the odds of the application coming through with full funding in the end is very high.

There was consensus to give a COLA increase to Applications 70 and 73, full funding for Application 74, a COLA increase to Applications 78 and 83, full funding to Application 84, and a COLA increase to Application 86.

- 71. Bridge Disability Ministries – Meyer Medical Equipment Center
- 77. HealthPoint – Medical Care
- 81. International Community Health Services – Medical
- 87. Washington Poison Center – Emergency Services

Chair Ma said Application 71 is a good program and one he uses all the time in his professional capacity. He said, however, that he did not necessarily believe the city should be funding it in the current environment. He said he supported fully funding Application 77 but would not fund Applications 81 or 87 at all during the current situation.

Commissioner Kline said she would support funding Application 71. The program has been on the cusp for the last two cycles. Disability is an area of need and the program is a good one given that many with disabilities are struggling financially.

Commissioner Kline asked if staff had reached out to International Community Health Services about the minimum level of funding for Application 81. Ms. O'Reilly said she had and that she had included their response in the staff review. Their answer was that the agency usually avoids applying for grants below \$40,000 to \$50,000 per year.

Commissioner Mercer said she felt strongly about not funding Application 81. Commissioner Jain concurred, as did Commissioner Amirfaiz.

Commissioner Mercer said she would be comfortable funding Application 71 with \$5000, fully funding Application 77, and not funding Application 87.

Commissioner Kline said International Community Health Services is a great partner in Bellevue, but the fact that they need a minimum amount to make it work does weigh heavily

on the side of not funding them at all given the limited amount of funding available. The fact that the organization is very large and that it is only asking for funds for general services should not be a detriment to the overall organization.

Commissioner Mansfield said he was fine with \$5000 for Application 71. He said he would like to see Application 81 funded but could not see how that could happen at their minimal funding level. Commissioner Jain agreed.

Commissioner Mercer agreed with Commissioner Kline. She said International Community Health Services is a very large organization and it takes a larger amount of money to make a difference for them. They are not seeking funding from any other Eastside city, and the request is not targeted enough to tick all of Bellevue's boxes. She agreed with not funding Application 81.

Commissioner Amirfaiz said for an organization as large as International Community Health Services, \$40,000 or \$50,000 would be a drop in the bucket, whereas \$5000 to a smaller agency like Bridge Disability Ministries can make a big difference.

Chair Ma said he understood the comments made about International Community Health Services, but he pointed out that the organization is on the front lines in terms of dealing with the pandemic. The Commission should consider supporting Application 81 in the future by adding an asterisk to it.

Commissioner Amirfaiz said she would like to know how much money International Community Health Services received from in the form of the Payroll Protection Program, if any. Ms. O'Reilly said she would be happy to ask.

There was agreement to give \$5000 to Application 71, full funding to Application 77, and to not fund Applications 81 and 87.

- 76. HealthPoint – Dental Care
- 80. International Community Health Services - Dental

Chair Ma proposed fully funding Application 76 and holding funding flat for Application 80. He suggested dental care has stalled somewhat in the age of Covid-19. Commissioner Mansfield agreed with those recommendations.

Commissioner Kline said she would be more comfortable giving a COLA increase to Application 80. Commissioner Jain agreed with Commissioner Kline. Commissioner Mercer said she did not feel strongly either way relative to Application 80. Commissioner Amirfaiz agreed with giving a COLA increase to Application 80.

There was agreement to fully fund Application 76 and to give Application 80 a COLA increase.

- 68. Alpha Supported Living Services – Alpha Health Services Program
- 72. Bridge of Promise – Bridge Academy
- 75. Easter Seals Washington – Eastside Adult Services Center

Chair Ma recommended against funding Application 68. The agency receives a lot of funding from the state, and it has a large budget so the requested amount would be only a drop in the bucket. He also recommended against funding Application 72. The program provides great things, including music and art therapy, but he said he would prefer to put funding elsewhere. The city has funded Application 75 in the past and he said he was inclined to give it a COLA

increase. Commissioner Mansfield concurred.

Commissioner Kline agreed with the recommendation relative to Applications 68 and 72. With regard to Application 75 she noted the Commission had previously had some questions, particularly about why they had space available after having closed other locations.

Chair Ma read aloud the response the agency gave to the question of why the organization was marketing for more clients while other organizations are operating at capacity. The answer given was that comparisons could not be made with other organizations without having details of their operations. The Easter Seals program in Bremerton is operating at capacity, and the greatest difference between the Bellevue and Bremerton programs is the size of the facilities. Bellevue's facility and capacity is 30 percent larger.

Commissioner Mercer cautioned against funding a service that is actively seeking more clients, especially in light of the fact that there are other programs that are busting at the seams and cannot meet the demand.

Commissioner Kline argued that the answer provided by the organization did not adequately answer the question. The program provides scholarship funds to seniors or those with disabilities, and the fact that they have capacity that the agency is filling with fee-paying customers does not impact the fact that others need the help. She said she was comfortable with only a COLA increase.

Commissioner Mercer said she had not considered the fact that the program is generally a fee-based service. She said she thought Easter Seals was generally a non-profit and not necessarily a for-profit organization.

Ms. O'Reilly noted that in the application the point is made that low-income clients can receive a Medicaid reimbursement. Some of the requested funding would be used to make up the difference and as such the funds are the equivalent of a scholarship.

Commissioner Mercer said she was okay giving a COLA increase to Application 75 and not funding Application 68. With regard to Application 72 she noted the program works with the city at Highland Community Center. She said she was inclined to give the application \$5000. Commissioner Amirfaiz agreed.

Chair Ma agreed to fund Application 72 at the \$5000 level but said he would include an asterisk with the application. Commissioner Mansfield agreed.

Commissioner Kline said she was fine with the \$5000. She suggested the agency gets use of Highland Community Center at a free or reduced rate so in that regard they already are getting some support from the city. Commissioner Jain agreed. Ms. O'Reilly clarified that in fact the agency does not pay for use of the Highland Community Center. The city provides the space in exchange for the services.

There was consensus not to fund Application 68, to give Application 72 an allocation of \$5000 and include an asterisk, and to give a COLA increase to Application 75.

85. Sound Generations – Volunteer Transportation Program

Chair Ma recommended fully funding the application.

Commissioner Mercer questioned why the agency chose not to ask for more money.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly said staff will have at the next meeting information from the agencies about how they intend to deliver their services in light of Covid-19.

9. NEW BUSINESS – None

10. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Mansfield. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mercer and the motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Mansfield adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date