

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

September 8, 2020
6:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting
Bellevue, Washington

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

ABSENT: None.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m., with Mayor Robinson presiding.

2. Roll Call

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo called the roll. All Councilmembers were present and participating remotely.

(a) Childhood Cancer Month Proclamation

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis read the proclamation recognizing September 2020 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in Bellevue.

(b) National Recovery Month Proclamation

Councilmember Zahn read the proclamation recognizing September 2020 as National Recovery Month in Bellevue and encouraging the public to observe the month with appropriate programs, activities, and ceremonies to support this year's theme: "Rising Above It All: Wellness, Resilience and Recovery."

3. Approval of Agenda

Mayor Robinson noted the need to amend the agenda to add one item under the City Manager's Report and to move Agenda Item 8(f) from the Consent Calendar to Agenda Item 12, Other Ordinances, Resolutions and Motions.

- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve the agenda, amended to add Agenda Item 6(b), Council's Pledge, and to move Agenda Item 8(f) to Agenda Item 12, Other Ordinances, Resolutions and Motions. Councilmember Robertson seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

4. Oral Communications

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo said that no one signed up to comment to the Council.

5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions: None.

6. Report of the City Manager

(a) Amazon Donation

City Manager Brad Miyake announced that Amazon will donate \$1 million over the next four years to Bellevue's human services funding.

Brian Huseman, Vice President of Public Policy, said Amazon is excited to be moving to Bellevue, where Jeff Bezos originally started the company. He said Amazon will bring 25,000 jobs to Bellevue over the next few years. He noted Amazon's commitment to donate \$1 million to Bellevue's Human Services Fund and welcomed suggestions from the Council for other ways it can work with the City.

(b) Mayor's Pledge Regarding Public Safety Practices

City Manager Miyake recalled the four elements of the Mayor's pledge, endorsed by Council, to review public safety practices: 1) Review the Bellevue Police Department's use of force policy, 2) Engage the community by including a diverse range of input, experiences and stories, 3) Report the findings of the review to the community and seek feedback, and 4) Reform policies as appropriate. He said staff is moving into the review and engagement phase of the pledge, which will lead to a report of the potential reforms for consideration. The objective of the work is to understand how policing practices can continue to be improved to ensure that people of color are safe and respected. Mr. Miyake said that City staff and the Police Department have focused on building relationships within the community. However, it is important to continue to engage with the public. He said that part of the Police Department's mission is to ensure that people are safe and feel safe in Bellevue.

Mr. Miyake said the City hired the Office of Independent Review Group (OIR) to review relevant Bellevue Police Department policies. The five-member consultant team has a combined experience of nearly 100 years in reviewing law enforcement practices. The team members have broad, well-respected expertise and experience, including substantial experience regarding police and criminal investigations as well as critical incident reviews involving the shootings and deaths of individuals while in police custody. The consultants have conducted evaluations of oversight systems and entire policing operations and are capable facilitators of public forums. Mr. Miyake

briefly highlighted the criteria used in selecting the consultant firm. He said staff would continue to update the Council over the coming weeks.

7. Council Business and New Initiatives

There was no discussion.

8. Consent Calendar

- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve the Consent Calendar, with the exception of Agenda Item 8(f), which has been moved to Agenda Item 12(a). Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion to approve the Consent Calendar, as amended, carried by a vote of 7-0, and the following items were approved:
 - (a) Council Minutes
Minutes of July 27, 2020 Regular Meeting
Minutes of August 3, 2020 Regular Meeting
Minutes of August 24, 2020 Special Meeting
 - (b) Resolution No. 9814 setting a time and place for a public hearing to consider the release of a restrictive covenant affecting the property located at 600 124th Avenue NE, commonly known as Residence East, which is owned by Alpha Supported Living Services, who currently operates a group home on the property for individuals with developmental disabilities.
 - (c) Ordinance No. 6525: 1) amending the 2019-2025 General Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan to create a new project entitled, Mobility Implementation Plan (CIP Plan No. PW-R-204), with initial funding of \$245,000 and decreasing the budget for the Bellevue College Connection Project (CIP Plan No. PW-R-201) by \$93,000; and 2) amending the 2019-2020 General CIP Fund appropriation to increase by \$152,000.
 - (d) Motion to approve payment of claims and payroll for the period July 1, 2020 - July 31, 2020.
 - (e) Ordinance No. 6526 authorizing and providing for acquisition of interests in land for the purpose of constructing the 130th Avenue NE - Bel-Red Road to NE 20th Street Project (CIP Plan No. PW-R-170); 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.
 - (g) Resolution No. 9818 authorizing execution of an amendment of the Professional Services Agreement with Cascadia Law Group PLLC, outside counsel for the

City in the appeal of the City's Phase II NPDES stormwater permit in an amount not to exceed \$188,205 plus applicable taxes.

9. Public Hearing

- (a) Public Hearing and Action on Resolution No. 9816 authorizing the execution of documents necessary to release a portion of an existing sewer easement and a portion of an existing water easement located at 515 116th Avenue NE that have been declared surplus to the City's needs and are no longer required for providing continued public utility service; the granting and recording of such documents being deemed in the best interest of the public.

City Manager Miyake introduced the staff report regarding proposed Resolution No. 9816.

Ira McDaniel, Real Property Division Manager, said the resolution authorizes the execution of the documents needed to release a portion of an existing sewer easement and a portion of an existing water easement located at 515 116th Avenue NE. He noted the locations of the new water and sewer easements to replace the portions to be released.

- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to open the public hearing, and Councilmember Zahn seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

No members of the public commented on the proposed action.

- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to close the public hearing, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.
- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve Resolution No. 9816, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

- (b) Public Hearing and Action on Resolution No. 9817 authorizing the execution of documents necessary to release the existing water line easement located at 1111 118th Ave SE, which has been declared surplus to the City's needs and is no longer required for providing continued public utility service; the granting and recording of such release being deemed in the best interest of the public.

Mr. McDaniel said Resolution No. 9817 authorizes the execution of the documents needed to release an existing water line easement located at 1111 118th Avenue SE. The property is being redeveloped and the easement is no longer needed.

- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to open the public hearing, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

No members of the public commented on the proposed action.

- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to close the public hearing, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.
- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve Resolution No. 9817, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

10. Study Session

(a) Economic Development Update

Jesse Canedo, Chief Economic Development Officer, introduced staff's update regarding economic development activities, especially actions in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. He noted that development and construction continues, and the downtown office vacancy rate remains at 3.9 percent. He said Amazon, Microsoft and Salesforce intend to start returning employees to the office in January 2021. Google plans to move toward a return to the office in June 2021. Mr. Canedo said a number of companies have indicated they anticipate a hybrid approach of employees working both in the office and remotely.

Mr. Canedo recalled REI's announcement in August regarding the company's plans to sell its Spring District campus. On July 24, Neiman Marcus announced the permanent closure of its Bellevue store. Mr. Canedo said restaurants continue to struggle.

Kris Goddard, Public-Private Partnership (P3) Manager, highlighted community efforts to provide personal protective equipment (PPE). He thanked the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce for its partnership with the City, King County, and Amazon to provide PPE and cloth face coverings to local businesses and residents. Mr. Goddard said five new sidewalk cafes with 45 seats have opened citywide, and five more restaurant openings are pending. Five new Main Street on-street dining spaces have been created as well. He noted the City's efforts to accommodate and support businesses.

Mr. Goddard highlighted staff's work with the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce and others to support and potentially accelerate economic recovery through the Eastside Together initiative. He said the City and the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA) are partners in the Heart of Bellevue campaign designed to connect and promote local businesses in downtown Bellevue and

to encourage placemaking activations, small business engagement, and social media engagement.

Bellevue businesses received 4,087 Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans through the U.S. Small Business Administration. Nine Bellevue businesses received state Working Washington Grant funding. Mr. Goddard said that more than 200 businesses have applied for the City's business relief grants, and 471 businesses have received assistance through the Business Impact NW partnership. Mr. Goddard noted that more information is provided on the City's website at www.bellevuewa.gov/bizresources.

Mr. Canedo said staff will continue to update the Council regarding economic development activities and the City's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that the Bellwether 2020 exhibit will be held in a virtual format.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff for the presentation.

Councilmember Lee commended staff's work with the community. Responding to Mr. Lee, Mr. Canedo said the City has a strong partnership with the Greater Seattle Partners (GSP), which continues to market the region as a good place for business. In further response, Mr. Goddard commented on the City's efforts both locally and regionally. Mr. Lee said it would be helpful to know how much of the business recruitment is due to the City's efforts.

Councilmember Zahn expressed support for staff's efforts with Eastside cities and business groups, including the Eastside Together initiative. She said the recovery of small businesses is a critical factor in overall economic recovery and in providing the quality of life desired by Amazon and other employers. Ms. Zahn noted that fall is approaching. She asked whether alternative dining strategies have been developed for local restaurants. She is pleased to see low office vacancy rates. However, she noted that the demand for affordable housing and transportation options will continue to increase with ongoing development. Referring to the focus on downtown restaurants, Ms. Zahn asked whether neighborhood restaurants have taken advantage of alternative dining configurations utilizing outdoor spaces.

Mr. Goddard said a virtual meeting was scheduled for the next morning to gather updated input from retailers and small businesses. He encouraged the public to support local businesses. Regarding restaurants and businesses citywide, Mr. Goddard said the City provides temporary use permits that allow businesses to modify their operations.

Councilmember Robertson thanked staff and the City's partners for their ongoing work related to the economic impacts of the pandemic. She expressed concern regarding the increased pressure on internet infrastructure, including service slowdowns, due to many people working and learning from home. Mr. Canedo said the issue has been discussed and the City is contemplating its role in supporting more robust service levels. Councilmember Robertson said she would like an update as those discussions move forward.

Ms. Robertson concurred with Ms. Zahn's suggestion to explore outdoor dining options for this fall. Noting that a permit is typically required for temporary covers, Ms. Robertson asked what

the City could do to streamline the process. Mr. Goddard said staff has been working extensively with local businesses to make it easier for them to adopt temporary strategies and modifications.

Councilmember Robertson asked whether there is a plan for public messaging when offices and more businesses begin reopening. Mr. Canedo said the Heart of Bellevue collaboration and the Eastside Together initiative are two of the efforts addressing marketing and economic recovery. Mr. Goddard said that COVID-19 safety information will be incorporated into the City's public education campaigns.

Councilmember Robertson encouraged everyone to continue wearing face masks and taking precautions to avoid spreading the coronavirus. Looking ahead to budget discussions, she said she wants to ensure that the City continues to provide support for the capital projects needed to support economic activity and growth.

Councilmember Stokes thanked staff for the presentation. He expressed support for allowing modifications that help businesses to continue operating. He noted the potential for business opportunities along the East Link light rail alignment. Mr. Stokes encouraged outreach to the arts community and said he is pleased that the Bellwether 2020 exhibit will go forward. He said he is optimistic that the community will get through the pandemic and its impacts by working together.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked staff and concurred with the comments from his colleagues. He said he went to a restaurant on Main Street and the outdoor dining provided a festive atmosphere. He urged residents to continue to support local restaurants and businesses. He thanked the City's economic development staff for working hard to help the business community. Mr. Nieuwenhuis acknowledged the uncertainty regarding the future of the pandemic and the economy.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis said he shares Councilmember Stokes' concern regarding the arts sector and its ability to recover after the pandemic. Mr. Canedo said that arts organizations and creative businesses are eligible for small business grants. He said the City is also expanding its PowerUp capacity building program to help arts organizations understand how they can improve their business practices. Mr. Canedo noted that Scott MacDonald, Arts Manager, has been meeting with arts organizations to discuss their needs. Mr. Canedo said staff is participating in biweekly calls with the Eastside Arts and Culture Coalition, and the City is partnering with other Eastside cities to conduct an arts participation survey of the community. The purpose of the survey is to collect information that will help arts organizations design their programming, whether virtual or in-person events. Mr. Canedo said the next Wintergrass Festival will be held in a different, virtual-based format. Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said it is good to prepare now for what can be done to help arts organizations, festivals, and events recover following the pandemic.

Councilmember Barksdale said he wants to be sure the City is reaching out to all communities within Bellevue. He encouraged providing grants to child care businesses. Responding to Mr. Barksdale, Mr. Canedo said the application deadline for small business grants is September 17, and the grants will be awarded through a lottery system. He said child care businesses have been discussed within the region. However, the City has not yet identified specific solutions.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis, liaison to the Human Services Commission, confirmed that the issue of child care has been discussed. Mayor Robinson suggested that human services staff and economic development staff work together to analyze child care as a community need as well as a local business in need of assistance.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff for their hard work and noted the success of the Main Street restaurant modifications. She asked about the planters near Fran's Chocolates and questioned whether they could be removed to allow more parking. Mr. Goddard said the planters provide a barrier between pedestrians and the street and improve the safety of the T-intersection. Ms. Robinson noted her interest in returning the space to parking usage.

Ms. Robinson said she shared Councilmember Barksdale's interest in the extent of staff's outreach citywide. Mr. Canedo said staff continues to explore opportunities across Bellevue. He recalled that there is a strategy in the Economic Development Plan Update that calls for creating more merchant associations and partnerships.

11. Land Use: None.

12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions

- (a) Consent Calendar Item 8(f): Resolution No. 9815 authorizing the execution of a general services contract regarding fabrication and installation of a landmark artwork as part of the NE Corner Gateway of the Downtown Park with artists THEVERYMANY, LLC, in an amount not to exceed \$810,000 plus all applicable taxes to build and install artwork celebrating this key location of the Grand Connection and Downtown, and support the growth of tourism in Downtown Bellevue.

Mayor Robinson noted that Councilmember Lee requested pulling this item from the consent calendar for discussion.

City Manager Miyake said that proposed Resolution No. 9815 authorizes the execution of a contract relating to the fabrication and installation of a landmark artwork as part of the NE Corner Gateway at the Downtown Park.

Mac Cummins, Director of the Community Development Department, recalled Council discussion in February regarding the artwork. He said the art piece is an integral element of the overall park gateway at NE 4th Street and Bellevue Way NE. He said the selected design is the result of approximately two years of planning. He noted the objective of the Grand Connection and other initiatives to expand placemaking spaces in Bellevue. Mr. Cummins said that construction of the gateway project is underway.

Councilmember Lee said this is a great project and art is an important component of economic development. He said he fully supports the project. However, he is not comfortable with the timing given the economic conditions. Mr. Lee said there are many competing priorities and

significant budget constraints. Councilmember Lee said it would be helpful to have follow-up information from staff regarding the impacts of delaying the artwork installation.

Councilmember Barksdale said he appreciated Councilmember Lee's sentiments. However, he noted the Council's commitment to the arts and the positive role of public art in creating a sense of community and energy.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said he appreciated Mr. Lee's comments and agreed that there are many needs related to the economic impacts of the pandemic. However, the project has been budgeted and is underway. Mr. Nieuwenhuis said the project will enrich the experience of the Downtown Park and provide a gathering space. He said he shared Mr. Lee's interest in an analysis of the impacts of deferring the project.

Councilmember Zahn said the arts are valuable assets for a vibrant community. She noted that the Arts Commission fully reviewed the project, and the Council voted to support the project. She recalled asking in February about potential funding partners. She said there would inevitably be costs to delaying the project.

Councilmember Robertson expressed her enthusiasm for the artwork and noted that construction of the gateway project is underway. She said the artwork is a critical component of the overall design of the gateway and plaza. She said the project fulfills goals related to mobility, mental health, economic development, and community building. Ms. Robertson said the project creates a public gathering space and beauty in the urban environment. She encouraged moving forward to complete the project by next spring.

Councilmember Stokes concurred with Councilmember Robertson regarding the many benefits of the project. Mr. Stokes observed that it is important during challenging times to have uplifting elements in the community. He said the gateway project goes to the heart of why the Council supports arts and culture. Mr. Stokes said the Arts Commission and the Council thoroughly discussed and voted to support the project. He expressed support for moving forward.

Mayor Robinson concurred with Councilmember Robertson as well. Mayor Robinson cautioned against delaying the project, noting the incomplete project at the entrance to Meydenbauer Convention Center that was originally installed in 1993. Ms. Robinson said the City has committed to paying the artist for the gateway project, and the art piece has likely already been completed.

Mayor Robinson said she heard support from only three Councilmembers to request information from staff regarding the impacts of delaying the project. Therefore, she will not ask staff to come back for another session.

Mr. Cummins reiterated that the artwork is an integral element of the Downtown Park NE Gateway project. Otherwise, the project is essentially a concrete patio with no shade. He said that adding the artwork later would require demolishing and rebuilding the patio.

Michael Shiosaki, Director of the Parks and Community Services Department, said the gateway project connects the past vision of the Downtown Park with the future vision of the Grand Connection. He said the gateway project design integrates the landscape and art, and the art is not to be considered as a separate piece. Mr. Shiosaki said there will be one construction period to complete the plaza and art installation.

Mayor Robinson noted Councilmember Lee's past comments about public-private partnerships. She suggested that he work with Councilmember Stokes, liaison to the Arts Commission, to develop a framework for establishing public-private partnerships to meet arts objectives.

Councilmember Lee thanked Mayor Robinson for her comments. Mr. Lee reiterated his support for the gateway project as well as his concern about current budget constraints.

- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve Resolution No. 9815, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 6-1, with Councilmember Lee dissenting.

13. Unfinished Business: None.

14. New Business: None.

15. Executive Session: None.

16. Adjournment

At 7:53 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared the meeting adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC
City Clerk

/kaw