

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

September 22, 2020
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Christy Stangland, Department of Parks and Community Services; Deputy Mayor 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.

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 September 22, 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 – None
4. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None
5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis noted that Amazon recently announced that they would be leasing an additional two million square feet of office space in downtown Bellevue, and adding another 10,000 jobs in addition to the 15,000 jobs that were announced in February. Additionally, the company indicated it would be donating \$1 million to the city’s human services fund over the next four years.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said the city’s economic development team has done a lot of great work relative to a Covid-19 response. More than 4000 businesses in Bellevue have received Paycheck Protection Plan loans to help offset financial impacts due to the pandemic, and more than 100 businesses in the city have received help from Business Impact Northwest in the form of technical assistance in navigating the various assistance programs. To date, more than 200 businesses have applied for Bellevue’s business relief grants.

The Council on a vote of 6-1 voted to continue with the commissioning of a large iconic public art piece that will be situated in the northeast corner of Downtown Park where the main new entrance to the park will be located on the corner of NE 8th Street and Bellevue Way. The final design was approved in 2019 and construction has been going on for some time in the park.

The Council recently received an update from the City Manager regarding the public safety pledge the Council agreed to back in June. An independent third-party review group called the Office of Independent Review was tapped to do the evaluations of police operations and public reform. Their work will get under way soon.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis reported that the Council signed onto the environmental stewardship plan and voted to sign an updated climate commitment known as the King County Cities Climate Collaboration. That commitment reflects a lot of new state laws and updated science relative to greenhouse gases emissions.

Finally, Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said the Council directed staff to prepare legislation to adopt the 2021 ARCH administrative budget.

6. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS – None
7. INFORMATION FOR THE COMMISSION
 - A. Round 3 of 2021-2022 Human Services Application Review

Chair Ma said a public hearing on the Commission’s preliminary recommendations was scheduled for October 6. He said the Commission would vote on its final funding recommendations following the public hearing and forward the packet to the City Council for

adoption.

Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano said it had been confirmed that the Commission's presentation of its final funding recommendations would be on November 2. She added that during the meeting the Commission would be asked to draft the rationale for funding or not funding the various applications.

Ms. Catalano also reported to the Commissioners that in reviewing the spreadsheet following the Commission's meeting on September 15 she found a few discrepancies. For three applications, the spreadsheet listed flat funding when in fact the Commission had recommended fully funding the three requests, namely Teen Link, Bellevue College Head Start, and YWCA Employment Services Program. By changing those to their full request, the recommended allocations exceeded the available funds by \$7603. She said the recommendation of the staff to address the overage was to reduce the recommended full funding of \$14,000 for the King County Bar Association application to \$8558. Because the Commission also recommended \$115,000 for Eastside Legal Assistance Program (ELAP) for legal services, including \$50,000 new, the Bar Association application could be reduced to only a COLA increase. Additionally, the application for NAMI In The Schools could be reduced from the full request to \$7839. Those two changes would address the \$7603 overage.

Human Services Manager Alex O'Reilly informed the Commissioners that she had been mistaken in regard to the information she shared with the Commission previously about the additional legal services money coming to King County. She said the funds are CARES Act dollars, and they have not been allocated to the King County Bar Association. Rather, they are coming through the King County Dispute Resolution Center, which is a mediation program. Bellevue has a mediation program as well and she said she reached out to the program director and learned that some of the funds flowing through King County will be used to launch a pilot program in Bellevue to reach out to and engage in negotiation landlords and tenants prior to issuance of an eviction notice. The program will involve trained mediators. While the program will certainly benefit Bellevue residents, it will terminate on December 31, 2020, unless additional funding is identified for extending it.

Commissioner Kline asked for clarification for why staff chose the King County Bar Association and NAMI In The Schools applications for balancing out the \$7603 budget overage. Ms. Catalano said they were chosen because the Commission had previously flagged NAMI In The Schools for a possible funding reductions, and the King County Bar Association application was chosen because of the Commission's previous conversation about how much had already been awarded to legal services through ELAP.

Commissioner Amirfaiz voiced concern about taking funds away from NAMI In The Schools, a program that provides mental health services to students. She allowed, however, that such services are also being provided by Youth Eastside Services and Asian Counseling and Referral Service, so indicated she could accept the staff recommendation. Commissioners Jain, Mansfield, Piper, Mercer and Chair Ma noted their support for the staff recommendation as well. Commissioner Kline gave her preliminary approval but wanted to preserve the flexibility of making additional adjustments in working through the rationale for each application.

The Commissioners focused next on the rationales for the new program applications earmarked to be funded, beginning with Attain Housing, Stable Home Program. Chair Ma said the decision to fund the emergency financial assistance program was based on the clear need to keep people in their homes. He said the same rationale applied to LifeSpring, Emergency Rent Assistance. For LifeSpring, Food Assistance for Children, the rationale for funding the program was the need to keep residents and families fed. For Congregations for

the Homeless, Housing Navigation, the rationale was to support affordable housing solutions. For ELAP, the rationale was the desire to fund the pilot program in order to have an attorney dedicated to Bellevue working to keep people in their homes. The rationale for the Latinx program was to fill the gap created by the loss of Chinese Information and Service Center's Latinx cultural navigator program. For MAPS-MCRS, Information, Referrals and Resources, the rationale was to provide culturally appropriate human services to more Bellevue residents and targeting underserved populations and to make sure funds are distributed on an equitable basis. The rationale given for the Youth Eastside Services, Latinx Programs, was to provide culturally appropriate support services, and targeting underserved populations and to make sure funds are distributed on an equitable basis. For Bridge Disability Ministries, Meyer Medical Equipment Center, the rationale was targeting underserved populations, people with disabilities. The same rationale was given to Bridge of Promise, Bridge Academy.

Ms. O'Reilly reminded the Commissioners to think about putting numbers in the additional funding column for those applications the Commission would fund if additional dollars are found. She suggested doing that concurrent with reviewing the rationale statements.

Commissioners Jain and Amirfaiz said they would like to add funding to Families of Color.

Commissioner Kline said she would be inclined to put additional funds into the homelessness and shelter applications. The other Commissioners concurred. Commissioner Kline proposed for Congregations for the Homeless the difference between the recommended amount and their 2020 award, including the Council's one-time funding, which would be \$338,576. For Congregations for the Homeless, Rotating Shelter, the Commission put \$16,073 in the column, which is the difference between the recommended funding and their full request. The same reasoning was used to add \$5292 to Friends of Youth, Drop-In Services; \$60,711 for Friends of Youth, Youth and Young Adult Shelter; \$32,998 for LifeWire, Emergency Shelter; \$66,270 for Sophia Way, Helen's Place; and \$135,114 for Sophia Way, Sophia's Place.

Commissioner Kline suggested that if additional funding becomes available and the Commission is asked to choose from among all applications in the additional funding column, priority should be given to the two Sophia Way applications and the men's day shelter, all of which are expanded programs for the current funding cycle. Commissioner Mercer agreed. She said she wanted to be careful to spread funds around a little bit. Chair Ma suggested all shelters and day centers should be given priority.

Commissioner Amirfaiz proposed adding \$5000 in the additional funding column for Families of Color Seattle, Parent Groups. The other Commissioners agreed. The rationale agreed to was to further funding in an equitable manner, specifically to Black families where there is a lack of other programs funding the population group.

With regard to the rationale for Congregations for the Homeless, Chair Ma said there is not enough money to give them their full request and still be able to fund the continuum of services.

The rationale given for not funding Congregations for the Homeless, On and Up Housing, was that the Commission chose to fund the agency's other new program instead given the lack of money, and because the program served only a limited number of residents served.

For MAPS-MCRC, Food and Gas Card Distribution, the rationale for not funding the application was that the program is not an effective use of money for the goal area given all the other needs, and that the program has a limited impact.

The rationale given for not funding MAPS-MCRC, Housing Single Women, and Mary's

Place Seattle, A Place to Call Home, was that the programs serve a limited number of Bellevue residents and they have a limited impact.

Limited funding available to support the new program given the need to fund the enormous gaps in requests for multiple needs was the rationale given for not funding Camp Kindness Counts, Youth and Family Wellbeing. The same rationale was applied to KidsQuest, Sensory Access Programming; MAPS-MCRC Refugee and Immigrant Assistance; One Love Foundation, Washington Cities Program; Alpha Supported Living Services, Alpha Health Services Program; International Community Health Services, Medical; Washington Poison Center, Emergency Services; Hopelink, 21-22 Financial Capabilities; Assistance League of the Eastside, Operation School Bell; and Chinese Information and Service Center, Russian Senior Day Program.

Commissioner Amirfaiz pointed out that it would take another \$1.5 million to fully fund all the requests. She said all of the programs are worthy and if there was enough money, the Commission would fund them all. Having limited funding makes it necessary to prioritize. Ms. O'Reilly said that is a very graceful way of stating the dilemma the Commission faced. She said it can be expected that agencies that did not get funding will come back during the next funding cycle.

For Kinderling Center, Families in Transition, Commissioner Mercer said the program is important to families that have children with autism and other things. It is the program that gets children evaluated before preschool. When they are old enough, the Bellevue School District takes over. Ms. O'Reilly pointed out that Kinderling's infant mental health program was also not funded. Commissioner Mercer proposed putting \$30,000 in the application's additional funding column. The rationale given for the proposed additional funding was that the Commission would like to support families in homelessness and people with disabilities.

Commissioner Amirfaiz proposed adding an amount to the additional funding column for Assistance League of the Eastside, Operation School Bell, to bring their total to their full request. Commissioner Kline pointed out that the Commission had elected not to do the same for other homeless-related programs and said she did not see a compelling reason to single out Operation School Bell. There was agreement not to include funds in the additional funding category.

Chair Ma asked if any Commissioner wanted to move funds from one application to another within the preliminary funding recommendations. None did.

Ms. Stangland pointed out that there were applications in Goal 4 and Goal 5 to which the Commission had initially given a COLA increase and later reduced that to flat funding. She asked if there were any inclination to add funds to the additional funding category for any of those applications. No Commissioner recommended doing so on the strength of the argument that flat funding was necessary in order to address the funding deficit.

A motion to approve the preliminary funding recommendations was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piper and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Ma took a moment to congratulate the Commission on a job well done. Ms. O'Reilly concurred and on behalf of the staff said the depth of conversation and the thoughtfulness with which the Commission applied all manner of considerations, including the equity lens, had been remarkable.

Ms. Catalano echoed those comments. She said with so much incivility in the world, it was refreshing to observe the way the Commissioners discussed the issues and even voiced

disagreements in a very civil and respectful manner.

Ms. O'Reilly said the next steps would be to make sure all of the wording is correct, after which the final recommendations document will be provided to the Commissioners and then to all of the applicants. She said the public hearing had been slated for October 6.

Commissioner Kline asked how the public hearing would work mechanically. Ms. Catalano said anyone wanting to speak will be directed to sign an online form. The agenda for the meeting will include instructions for how to do that. Speakers will join the Zoom meeting and they will be called on one by one. Each will be given three minutes to speak.

Ms. O'Reilly added that permission has been granted by the City Manager's Office for boards and commissions to begin using the video feature in Zoom for all meetings.

8. OLD BUSINESS – None
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 Piper and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Ma adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date