

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

February 8, 2021
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 6:01 p.m., with Mayor Robinson presiding.

2. Roll Call; Flag Salute

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

(a) Commendation of Dr. Don Davidson's Public Service

Mayor Robinson noted the recent passing of Dr. Don Davidson, a former Mayor and Councilmember, and read a commendation in his honor.

Councilmember Robertson commented on Dr. Davidson's support for managed growth in the Downtown and his love for the community. Ms. Robertson said Dr. Davidson was an avid fisherman who was passionate about water and environmental issues. Most recently he was serving on the Board of the Directors for the Eastside Heritage Center. Councilmember Robertson recalled Dr. Davidson's devotion to his family and thanked them for supporting his public service.

Councilmember Stokes recalled that he became involved with the King Conservation District through Dr. Davidson and ultimately served as chair of the group. Mr. Stokes noted Dr. Davidson's interest in fishing and his longtime service on the Salmon Recovery Council. He praised Dr. Davidson for his ability to work effectively with individuals representing different perspectives. Mr. Stokes said he learned a lot from Dr. Davidson and will miss him.

Councilmember Lee said Dr. Davidson loved Bellevue and its people. He attended the University of Washington and spent his career as a dentist while being actively involved on the City Council and in other community efforts. Mr. Lee thanked Dr. Davidson's family for their support of his public service. Mr. Lee recalled serving on the Council with Dr. Davidson at different times over the past 25 years. Mr. Lee noted Dr. Davidson's interest in fishing and environmental issues.

Mayor Robinson recalled Dr. Davidson's support for youth and his participation in Bellevue Youth Theatre productions.

Councilmember Lee noted that he and Dr. Davidson appeared together in *Singin' in the Rain* at the theatre.

Mayor Robinson thanked everyone for their comments and offered her condolences to Dr. Davidson's family and friends.

Ms. Robinson said the flag salute would be led by a video from Mrs. McKenna's second grade class at St. Louise School in Bellevue.

3. Approval of Agenda

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve the agenda, and Councilmember Lee seconded the motion.

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

- (a) Resolution No. 9892 authorizing payment of the legal expenses necessary to represent Councilmember Jennifer Robertson in judicial proceedings concerning the recall charges filed with King County Elections on February 1, 2021.

Councilmember Robertson recused herself from participating in this item and temporarily disconnected from the meeting.

City Attorney Kathy Gerla said that Resolution No. 9892 authorizes the payment of legal expenses to represent Councilmember Jennifer Robertson in judicial proceedings concerning recall charges filed with King County Elections on February 1, 2021. Pursuant to state law, a local government may pay the necessary expenses of defending an elected official in a judicial hearing to be held in King County Superior Court, to determine the sufficiency of the recall charge. Ms. Gerla said that Councilmember Robertson has requested a defense, and the legislative authority of the local government must approve the payment of the legal defense costs. Resolution No. 9892 provides the needed legislative approval for the payment of legal expenses, including for any appeal. Ms. Gerla said that if the Council approves the resolution, she is prepared to approve the payment of those costs, which is the last step necessary for the costs to be authorized by the City.

City Attorney Gerla said the Council's consideration of this resolution is not a statement about or a vote on the merits of the recall charges. It is the court's role to decide whether the recall charges, on their merits, satisfy the criteria necessary for filing a recall petition. The vote on the resolution is whether to authorize the payment of Councilmember Robertson's legal defense costs.

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve Resolution No. 9892, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

Councilmember Stokes noted the importance of ensuring that all Councilmembers have equal access to the court process designed by the legislature to protect against frivolous or false charges.

→ The motion carried by a vote of 6-0.

Councilmember Robertson rejoined the meeting.

4. Oral Communications

- (a) Diana Thompson asked the City to oppose state legislation that will either restrict or prevent cities from making decisions on housing and zoning issues. She said the bills cover a number of topics including energy usage, residential parking, and the number of unrelated adults who can live in a housing unit. She expressed concern that the City and its residents will have significantly less input into zoning provisions under the proposed state laws. She said there is a proposal that would prohibit a city from requiring that a property owner live on their property when there is an accessory dwelling unit (ADU). She expressed concern about another proposal that would require allowing duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, and similar housing types in single-family residential zones.
- (b) Chris Buchanan, representing Downtown Action to Save Housing (DASH), said the organization's mission is to provide affordable housing for the local work force, families, and senior adults. She expressed support for the DASH Glendale CPA proposal and encouraged increased density to provide needed housing. She noted that work on the Wilburton subarea plan is temporarily suspended. She thanked Senior Planner Nicholas Matz for his technical assistance and for being a champion for affordable housing in Bellevue.

City Clerk Arredondo noted that the Council may listen to comments regarding its decision to fund Councilmember Robertson's legal fees but may not hear comments regarding the merits of the recall petition itself.

- (c) Heidi Dean expressed support for DASH's efforts to provide and preserve affordable housing. She noted that she emailed the Council about her concerns regarding the process for naming the new park in Newport Hills. She said a number of residents were unhappy and felt that disrespect was shown to Mr. Shannon O'Neill and his family. Ms. Dean said Mr. O'Neill is a respected and beloved community leader. She expressed concern that the

Parks and Community Services Board essentially ignored the suggestion to use his name and instead focused on a person who already has a school named after them and who has no connection to the Newport Hills neighborhood. Ms. Dean expressed concern that there was a lack of equitable treatment in considering the proposed names. She urged the Council to consider Newport Hills residents and their input for naming the park.

5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions

- (a) Parks and Community Services Board Quarterly Update (Q4/2020)
[Written report in packet.]

Mayor Robinson noted the written quarterly report from the Parks and Community Services Board in the meeting packet.

Councilmember Zahn thanked the Board members for their hard work and commitment to Bellevue's parks. She noted their recent decision to begin providing quarterly reports to the Council.

6. Report of the City Manager

- (a) Update on Advanced Meter Infrastructure (AMI) Project

City Manager Brad Miyake introduced an update regarding the Utilities Department's advanced meter infrastructure (AMI) project.

Brian Bartle, Deputy Director, Utilities Department, recalled the approval of the AMI project in 2016 and the selection of Itron in 2018 to deploy the AMI system. The Council authorized the first amendment to the contract through the approval of Resolution No. 9692 on December 2, 2019. This amendment modified the smart meter approach from using pole-mounted collectors to a cellular solution.

Mr. Bartle said the pandemic presented challenges for the AMI project schedule in 2020 due to business closures that affected the procurement of the cellular transmitters. Although the availability of transmitters is being delayed by approximately six months, the City has developed a workable strategy to compress the installation schedule and complete the project by mid-2022, as envisioned in Amendment 1. Approximately 90 percent of the commercial meters citywide have been changed to AMI meters.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff for their work and their ability to adjust the project during the pandemic.

7. Council Business and New Initiatives: No Discussion.

8. Consent Calendar

- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis 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) Council Minutes of January 19, 2021 Regular Meeting
 - (b) Ordinance No. 6566 authorizing and providing for acquisition of interests in land for the purpose of constructing the 124th Avenue NE - NE 12th Street to NE Spring Boulevard Project (CIP Plan No. PW-R-169); 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.
 - (c) Resolution No. 9889 authorizing execution of an agreement in the amount of \$126,000, plus all applicable taxes, with All Angles Consulting for work with the City Manager's Office to support city process improvement and innovation initiatives.
 - (d) Resolution No. 9891 authorizing execution of an interlocal agreement between regional law enforcement agencies to provide independent investigation services in the event of an officer-involved use of deadly force in King County.

9. Public Hearing: None.

10. Study Session

- (a) Crossroads Mini City Hall Update

City Manager Miyake introduced staff's update regarding the Mini City Hall at Crossroads Shopping Center.

Mike McCormick Huentelman, Assistant Director, Community Development Department, noted the role of the Mini City Hall in providing culturally competent information and referral services to residents.

Ying Carlson, Mini City Hall Supervisor, said the Mini City Hall was established in 1996 to reach out to Bellevue's increasingly diverse communities. The office provides customer service in a number of languages and is involved in a number of partnerships with nonprofit organizations, the libraries, and others. The Mini City Hall serves approximately 20,000 visitors per year and responds to approximately 40,000 requests in a typical year. Requests include assistance with paying a utility bill, multilingual services, and referrals to social services, including in domestic violence situations.

Ms. Carlson said the Mini City Hall was forced to close in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and staff transitioned to providing remote assistance. While the number of individuals seeking assistance has decreased due to the lack of physical access to the office, the percentage of individuals seeking human services has increased from 57 percent in 2019 to 70 percent in 2020. She noted the importance of maintaining the Mini City Hall's reputation as a safe and trusted place. Based on the impacts of the pandemic, requests for assistance and referrals relate to isolation and language barriers, loss of income and unemployment, legal assistance (including for immigration issues), affordable housing and homelessness, and rental and utility assistance. Many of the individuals and families seeking help have never accessed government assistance in the past.

Ms. Carlson said the City established the COVID-19 Resource Navigator and Resource Guide to provide referrals to community resources, help residents navigate government systems and programs, and to provide the opportunity to speak to a person for customized assistance. Appointments are available in English, Mandarin, Cantonese, Somali, and a number of other languages. The guide is online and a paper form is being distributed to schools, grocery stores, and other public places. Ms. Carlson highlighted the community resource map online tool that helps individuals find the type of services they need. She said individuals are able to connect to the navigator from the MyBellevue app.

Ms. Carlson said staff believes that building community and enhancing connections is especially important now given the isolation during the pandemic. The Mini City Hall will continue to support vulnerable and underrepresented populations, explore new community partnerships, publicize and enroll individuals in the utility rate reduction program, and to support the rent negotiation program.

Councilmember Barksdale thanked staff for developing and providing the navigator and resource guide, welcome guide for new residents, and the community resource map for locating services. Responding to Mr. Barksdale, Ms. Carlson said Mini City Hall staff is in regular contact with the Human Services Division of the Parks and Community Services Department. She confirmed that the City collects data regarding the types of requests it receives. The information is shared with human services staff and reflected in the Human Services Needs Update.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked staff for their extensive efforts to continue to reach out to the community during the pandemic. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. Carlson said the most requested type of assistance is rent and utilities financial assistance. She said many households are behind on their rent. She noted that legal assistance, referrals for immigration issues, and access to health care continue to be frequent requests as well. She said the City is partnering with community health services and nonprofit organizations to provide referrals and to help individuals enroll in health care where possible. In further response to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. Carlson confirmed that the majority of individuals requesting assistance call the Mini City Hall versus submitting requests through the MyBellevue app. She noted that many already have relationships with and trust City staff.

Councilmember Stokes spoke to the importance of being accessible to the community and listening to their concerns, requests, and feedback. Ms. Carlson confirmed the importance of active listening and proactive outreach. In further response to Mr. Stokes, Ms. Carlson said the significant increase in requests for rental assistance highlights the need for staff to explore partnerships with social services agencies that can help in that area. Councilmember Stokes thanked staff for their good work at the Mini City Hall.

Councilmember Robertson noted that the Mini City Hall was established approximately 25 years ago. She expressed appreciation for the new resources and services guide and the welcome guide for new residents. She recalled the former community policing center at Factoria Shopping Center and suggested this would be a good time to work with the owners of the mall as they redevelop to explore opening a second Mini City Hall. Ms. Robertson encouraged staff to distribute information at community centers, libraries, and other “third places.”

Responding to Ms. Robertson, Ms. Carlson said Mini City Hall staff works closely with staff in City Hall to coordinate public contacts and requests for information and assistance. Ms. Carlson said the City recently enhanced its tracking system for documenting requests to expand and be more specific about the types of assistance requested. Councilmember Robertson said she would be interested in reviewing the data as part of the next budget discussion.

Councilmember Zahn thanked staff for their outreach, relationship building, and data collection in working with the community. She suggested exploring opportunities for partnerships and grants with private companies.

Responding to Ms. Zahn, Ms. Carlson confirmed that staff does receive frequent calls regarding access to the coronavirus vaccine. Ms. Carlson noted that many individuals have limited or no computer literacy and are not able to research or navigate vaccination eligibility or accessibility. She said City staff assist individuals over the phone when possible to walk them through the process of accessing online information. In further response to Ms. Zahn, Ms. Carlson confirmed that working with the community through the challenges of the pandemic and listening to heartbreaking stories can be stressful for staff. She and Mr. McCormick Huentelman are working to develop training for staff to address how they can take care of themselves as they extend their support to the community. Ms. Carlson noted that while the pandemic is temporary, it is likely to be with us throughout the coming year.

Councilmember Lee thanked staff for their efforts through the Mini City Hall, particularly given the diversity in the Crossroads area. He commended the important role of the Mini City Hall in addressing and overcoming language and cultural barriers through its public outreach and assistance. He noted the importance of collecting data and continuing to update information and resources and to respond to changing needs.

Mayor Robinson said she is proud of Mini City Hall staff and their extensive work. Responding to Ms. Robinson regarding the interest in vaccinations, Ms. Carlson said staff is providing the information available to the public when they call and assisting them with accessing online information if they are not fully comfortable using a computer.

Mayor Robinson noted that Senior Planner Nicholas Matz is ending his long career with the City. She said he has been remarkably good for the community and she has enjoyed working with him.

(b) Overview of the 2021 Privately Initiated Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPAs) and Overall Process

City Manager Miyake introduced staff's overview of the 2021 privately initiated Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPAs).

Emil King, Assistant Director of Community Development, said the Comprehensive Plan reflects years of work, foresight, and thoughtful planning to guide the growth and development of the community.

Mr. King said this would be Senior Planner Nicholas Matz's last appearance before the Council as he has accepted the community development director position with the City of Normandy Park. Mr. King said Mr. Matz has been the staff expert on the Comprehensive Plan and active in working on annexations and the Great Neighborhoods initiative. He supported many Councilmembers on regional planning bodies and is well-liked in the community.

Mr. Matz said that two privately initiated Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA) applications were received by the September 15, 2020 deadline. The applications are evaluated during the threshold review phase, and the merits of the CPA proposals that are forwarded to final review are studied in greater detail. Both phases include a Planning Commission study and public hearing. The City Council establishes the annual CPA work program during threshold review when it selects the CPA proposals to be moved forward to final review. The City Council ultimately takes action on whether to approve the CPAs studied during final review. Mr. Matz said the Planning Commission's role is to study the CPA proposals, hold the required public hearings, and develop recommendations for the City Council to consider. He noted that information is posted at the locations affected by the proposed CPAs as well as provided online.

The 15 Lake Bellevue CPA application proposes a map amendment from BelRed-General Commercial (BR-GC) to BelRed-Office Residential (BR-OR-2) on a 2.8-acre site, and an amendment to Comprehensive Plan Policy S-BR-96 to provide maximum building height allowances. Mr. Matz said the 15 Lake Bellevue CPA seeks to create a larger footprint and increased density with commercial development and housing. The site is near the Wilburton light rail station on NE 8th Street and will be served in the future by Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) as well.

The Downtown Action to Save Housing (DASH) Glendale CPA application proposes a map amendment from Multifamily-Medium (MF-M) to Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU) on two parcels totaling 7.5 acres at NE 8th Street and 124th Avenue NE. Mr. Matz noted Ms. Buchanan's comments during earlier oral communications that DASH originally submitted the CPA application in 2018. At that time, the Council, Planning Commission, and staff recommended that the proposal would be considered as part of the Wilburton land use study process. Mr. Matz said Ms. Buchanan indicated that financing considerations made it more suitable for DASH to apply for the 2021 CPA work program.

Mr. Matz highlighted the CPA process. The Planning Commission discussed threshold review on January 27 and will hold the public hearings on March 10. The City Council will review the proposals in April, and those selected for final review will be forwarded to the Planning Commission for its final review study sessions and public hearings. Staff anticipates that the City Council will study the Commission's final review recommendations in the fall and take action by the end of the year. Mr. Matz noted that the 2021 CPA review will integrate the private and public CPA proposals to complete final review by July. This will provide sufficient time for the Council's review before the Great Neighborhoods planning discussions regarding NE Bellevue and NW Bellevue this fall.

Councilmember Barksdale, liaison to the Planning Commission, said he enjoyed working with Mr. Matz when he served on the Planning Commission.

Councilmember Robertson said she has worked with Mr. Matz over the past 18 years and he has ably supported her service on regional forums including the Growth Management Planning Council. She wished Mr. Matz well in his new endeavor.

Responding to Ms. Robertson, Mr. King said that Wilburton planning continues to be a high priority for the City. Staff is wrapping up other projects before it shifts resources back to that effort, including the East Main Land Use Code Amendment (LUCA) and the Grand Connection design guidelines.

In further response to Ms. Robertson, Mr. Matz said that both of the sites represented by the CPA proposals are in the Wilburton area. He said the Citizen Advisory Committee's report on the Wilburton Commercial Area Study was instrumental in the 2018 work related to the DASH Glendale proposal. Responding to Ms. Robertson, Mr. Matz said the CPAs will lead to increased building heights and densities. Ms. Robertson said she would like to see a requirement for affordable housing to receive the increased density, if possible. She encouraged the Planning Commission to consider increasing the geographic scope of the CPAs if appropriate, especially if there are opportunities for affordable housing.

Councilmember Stokes thanked Mr. Matz for his work with the City and the community, and for his involvement with the Bellevue Youth Symphony. Referencing the CPAs, Mr. Stokes said it makes sense to consider the two proposals within the broader context of Wilburton area planning. He concurred with Councilmember Robertson's interest in incentivizing the development of affordable housing. He noted that the CPA subject sites are near transit services.

Councilmember Lee said he will miss Mr. Matz's knowledge and effectiveness in working with the community. Responding to Mr. Lee, Mr. King said staff has looked at the two CPA proposals and how they relate to the Wilburton plan. The DASH Glendale site is on the edge of the Wilburton area and the CPA application proposes a change from MF-M to NMU zoning. For the Lake Bellevue site, staff has reviewed the Wilburton vision and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that was created as part of the CAC's work. Mr. King said this is the beginning of the process and staff will have more to share over the coming months.

Councilmember Zahn thanked Mr. Matz for his contributions during his 31 years with the City and wished him well in his new job. Ms. Zahn said it would be helpful to look at all of the land use work coming before the Council, including the BelRed Look Back, Wilburton area, and East Main planning efforts, and to better understand the timing of the work program. Councilmember Zahn concurred with suggestions to encourage affordable housing in the new developments.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked Mr. Matz for his professionalism and service to the community. Mr. Nieuwenhuis concurred with his colleagues' interest in the BelRed Look Back, Wilburton area planning, and affordable housing. He said he looks forward to continued discussion in April.

Mr. Matz thanked everyone for their comments and said it has been an honor to serve in this community. He said he feels fortunate that he was able to learn from everyone, including Councilmembers, Planning Commissioners, stakeholders, and staff. He noted that the City of Normandy Park was incorporated in the same month and year as Bellevue.

Mayor Robinson expressed concern regarding the potential environmental impacts of development at Lake Bellevue. She noted that the DASH Glendale development is the only facility in Bellevue that provides independent and assisted living and accepts Medicaid patients. She looks forward to more housing options for senior adults to stay in Bellevue. Noting the location on an arterial and the access to transit services, Ms. Robinson said she would be open to higher building heights in order to maximize housing opportunities.

11. Land Use: None.

12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions

- (a) Resolution No. 9890 authorizing execution of the Eastside Public Safety Communications Agency (EPSCA) Second Amended and Restated Interlocal Agreement.

Mr. Miyake said that Resolution No. 9890 authorizes the second amendment to the Eastside Public Safety Communications Agency (EPSCA) Interlocal Agreement (ILA).

Fire Chief Jay Hagen recalled that the Council authorized the Puget Sound Emergency Radio Network (PSERN) ILAs in February 2015 and in October 2020. The members of EPSCA are the cities of Bellevue, Kirkland, Issaquah, Mercer Island, and Redmond. He said an EPSCA representative will be joining the PSERN Board, which currently has representatives from the City of Seattle, King County, and Valley Communications Center. Resolution No. 9890 approves the restated ILA and authorizes EPSCA's representation on the PSERN Board.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked Chief Hagen for the information. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Chief Hagen said he regularly attends the PSERN meetings and the partnerships between jurisdictions and agencies are strong.

→ Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to approve Resolution No. 9890, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

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

13. Unfinished Business: None.

14. New Business: None.

15. Executive Session

At approximately 8:03 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 30 minutes to discuss one item of pending litigation.

16. Adjournment

The Executive Session concluded at 8:37 p.m. and the meeting was adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC
City Clerk

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