

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION  
MINUTES

March 2, 2021  
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioners McClure, Mercer

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Christy Stangland, Toni Esparza, Michael Shiosaki, Department of Parks and Community Services; Major Mark Tarantino, Police; 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 Kline who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners McClure and Mercer, both of whom were excused.

Chair Kline 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, the Commission's by-laws regarding remote participation and the order of business were suspended until such time as meetings were no longer being held remotely.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. February 2, 2021

Chair Kline pointed out the minutes referred to "Chair Ma" instead of "Commissioner Ma" and asked that that be corrected.

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Piper. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mansfield and the motion carried unanimously.

4. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None

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

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis reported that the Fire Department's mobile vaccination program is continuing to vaccinate the residents and staff of adult family homes in the area. The teams are well ahead of the expected schedule and the talk is about expanding the scope of the

operation to include other vulnerable groups. At the time the Council was given an update, the teams had vaccinated more than 800 individuals in nearly 90 adult family homes. The next focus will be on giving those same folks the second dose of the vaccine, which is anticipated to occur by mid-March.

With regard to the city's snow response, Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said the crews did an amazing job. The road crews worked around the clock shifts starting the day before the storm and continued until several days after the storm in order to ensure that all roadways in the city were passable. Crews treated roads with more than 13,000 gallons of liquid deicer and 600 tons of road salt. A new tool called an automatic vehicle locating technology was used for the first time. The tool shows in real time the locations of snowplows throughout the city.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said the Council was briefed in February about several affordable housing topics. The Council unanimously approved an interest statement providing a framework for using a tenth of a percent sales tax for affordable housing and behavioral health services, in line with adoption by the state of HB 1590. A portion of the tax revenues will be focused on those earning between zero and 60 percent of area median income in historically underserved populations, including those with disabilities, families experiencing homelessness, senior citizens and veterans. The Council also unanimously adopted the recommendations of the Planning Commission for two Land Use Code amendments designed to provide opportunities for new housing units and increased housing choices, both in response to the city's Affordable Housing Strategy. The amendments included removing the three-year wait period to establish an accessory dwelling unit in a new single family home, and allowing Unit Lot Subdivisions in land use districts where multifamily development is currently permitted. The ADUs help to provide for housing type diversity, and the Unit Lot Subdivision approach minimizes the barriers for infill development by providing an alternative to condominium development, thus broadening home ownership opportunities.

Also in February, the Council received a report from A Regional Coalition for Housing and reviewed the recommended funding allocations to regional affordable housing projects. Three projects were recommended for funding totaling \$5 million spread across 15 ARCH jurisdictions. Bellevue's portion of the total is a bit over \$600,000. Altogether the funding will address 467 units of long-term affordable housing in the region, including 95 units in the Eastgate area of Bellevue designed for individuals experiencing homelessness. City staff and ARCH will be providing a subsequent update on questions related to community outreach and some site safety and security issues.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said the Councilmembers got the chance to review the construction progress for the Eastrail project. The full corridor is 42 miles long, seven of which are in Bellevue owned primarily by King County except for a section that is owned by Sound Transit. Bellevue has budgeted about \$2.5 million for Eastrail improvements in the CIP in addition to the previous contributions totaling about \$130,000. To date, King County has completed an interim gravel section of the trail from the South Kirkland park and ride to SR-520. The Washington State Department of Transportation is currently constructing a section of the trail from Renton to Coal Creek Parkway as part of the I-405 project. Future improvements include a ped/bike bridge over NE 8th Street and rehabilitation of the landmark Wilburton trestle.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said the Council issued a proclamation remembrance for the more than 300 Japanese American residents of Bellevue who were interned in camps during WWII, a proclamation regarding Black History month, and a proclamation celebrating the Lunar New Year. The Council also took the opportunity to mark and honor the many years of service by former mayor and Councilmember Don Davidson who passed away in February.

## 6. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Grant Coordinator Dee Dee Catalano informed the Commission that the city received notice that its 2021 CDBG entitlement amount will be \$829,022, which is slightly less than what was received in 2020.

Parks and Community Services Department Director Michael Shiosaki thanked Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis for a comprehensive update on what is happening in the city. He also took a moment to thank the Commissioners for taking on such a heavy workload. The additional funds that have come to the city have added to the work.

Mr. Shiosaki said the six-year update of the Parks and Open Space System Plan would kick off in 2021. He said it will involve a lot of public involvement and he encouraged the Commissioners to get involved in the process.

Major Mark Tarantino, Police Department liaison to the Commission, reported that Chief Mylett recently held a virtual town hall meeting with the Asian/Pacific Islander community that was well attended. The topics addressed during the meeting mostly focused on human services issues, such as homelessness, panhandling, mental health and alcohol and drug addiction. There were some questions asked about the Eastgate homeless shelter.

## 7. PUBLIC HEARING

### A. Preliminary Funding Recommendations for Community Development Block Grant Funds to Prevent, Prepare For or Respond to the Coronavirus (CDBG-CV)

A motion to open the public hearing was made by Commissioner Piper. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mansfield and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Lalita Uppala, Executive Director of the India Association of Western Washington, thanked the Commission for recognizing the support services offered by the organization. She noted that in August 2020 the Commission provided the agency with \$95,000 to be used for rental assistance, and 100 percent of those funds were used for that purpose in helping 55 families from the Latinx, indigenous, Black and Asian communities living in Bellevue, all earning under 60 percent of area median income. While providing the assistance, the agency also made sure that the dollars were allocated across communities in conjunction with partner agencies to create a wide and deep impact. In November 2020 an additional \$5000 was allocated to the India Association of Western Washington to provide support to the Asian Indian small businesses in the city, and all of those funds were used to provide small businesses with assistance in the form of rent, remodeling and emergency health assistance, including to beauty salons, catering businesses and home-based businesses, 60 percent of which were led by women. She thanked the Commission for allocating funds to the agency, and the staff for their outreach and mentoring and for making sure they were constantly in communication.

Mr. Scott Schubert, Senior Director of Housing and Homeless Services for the YMCA Social Impact Center. He said in September 2020 the YMCA was awarded more than \$3.2 million to help with eviction prevention throughout the King County area, with a specific emphasis on youth and young adults. In collaboration with Youth Care, the agency distributed the funds, initially for a three-month period and then extending up to six months of rental assistance. By adding the additional months, the success rate was improved. In just four months, more than \$1.7 million was distributed to more than 350 households and 750 people. The agency is still in the process of distributing funds and anticipates being able to distribute an additional \$1.6 million by early to late spring. Seventy-three percent of the participants were female identified and over 80 percent identified as BIPOC. Forty percent were with child or pregnant. The vast

majority, 83 percent, of the households requested three-plus months of rental assistance. Those receiving six months of rent would have been higher had that been allowed at the beginning of the program. The average distribution was \$4589 per household. He thanked the Commission for choosing to fund the YMCA with CDBG-CV funds.

Ms. Nicole Lowe, Program Director for the Hunger Response programs at the YMCA of Greater Seattle. She said she has been working in food insecurity with youth and communities for almost two decades. In 2019 a decline in food insecurity was noted nationally and in Washington state. The pandemic then changed everything. Since March 2020, the YMCA has worked furiously to leverage partnerships, funding and whatever is necessary to feed as many people as possible. With food insecurity numbers on the rise, there is much more to do. The pandemic has change so much from the way the organization works to the way it programs. The proposed meal program is a model that meets families where they live, reduces exposure to Covid, and reduces food costs. With the proposed funding, the organization will be able to provide over 46,000 meals to families in need at three King County properties in Bellevue. Each of the properties had food support programs in place at the beginning of the pandemic, but those funds have been spent even while the need has continued. The organization works to provide donations where possible for the properties, but the results are inconsistent. The YMCA currently provides food access to 27 different King County Housing Authority locations and serves over 465,000 meals, double what was served in 2019. The funding will allow for expanding access to food for families and youth in Bellevue.

Ms. Lucy Pyeatt, Director of the Energy and Financial Assistance programs for Hopelink, said the Commission awarded Hopelink with \$106,000 in August 2020 in CDBG-CV funds for rental assistance to Bellevue residents effected by the Covid economic impact. Those funds all went directly to the community and 37 households were served by December, with an average per household of \$2900. With the city's committed funds, the Covid response funds and the CDBG funds, and with support from other funders, Hopelink served 314 Bellevue households with rental assistance, which is three times the number from previous years. In all, \$465,000 of rent was paid in the Bellevue community in 2020. Across north and east King County, Hopelink provided over \$1.4 million in financial assistance responding to Covid, serving 989 households in 2020. With the additional CDBG-CV funding, Hopelink will be able to continue addressing the sustained and high rate of need that is evident in the community. The Bellevue center logs anywhere from three to eight times the number of calls for assistance compared to non-covid years. Households are continuing to come to the agency seeking assistance for the first time, most all of which have exhausted every other available resource to sustain their housing stability. She thanked the Commission for its support in making a big difference.

Ms. Angie Hinojos, Executive Director of Centro Cultural Mexicano, said the organization primarily works with the Latino community in King County. She said rent assistance has been distributed to more than 240 households during the pandemic. Food vouchers have also been distributed, and interpretation services have been made available to the community. Ninety percent of those served have not received assistance from any other sources. The organization's in-person and virtual events during 2020 included over 11,000 participants from all over King County and beyond. The organization is a trusted part of the community. Most of the households served are below 30 percent of area median income, and most are most comfortable communicating in Spanish. In-person help is offered to those who do not have access to technology or who have trouble navigating technology. The organization engages in direct in-person outreach as well as outreach via Spanish language radio, internet and TV. Agency representatives are available at times that are convenient to the community served, which is usually evenings and weekends. She thanked the Commission for recognizing the great need for rental assistance and said it will be an honor to serve the Bellevue community.

Ms. Catalano read into the record a written statement submitted by Congregations for the Homeless which thanked the Commissioners for their careful consideration regarding the allocation of the CDBG resources. The letter stated that during the past year the organization has seen an increasing number of men suffering with PTSD. Providing dedicated resources to support the men during the difficult time will create healthier individuals and will support the community through reduced public safety calls. The organization is proud to have served over a thousand men during the past year without a single life lost due to Covid. There is a clear need to continue serving the men with three nutritious and filling meals each day. The proposed funding will ensure that 125 men each day will be well fed, resulting in healthier individuals.

Chair Kline thanked the speakers for taking the time to offer their comments during the public hearing.

A motion to close the public hearing was made by Commissioner Mansfield. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piper and the motion carried unanimously.

## 8. DISCUSSION

### A. Finalize Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) CV3 Funding Recommendations and Vote on Final Funding Recommendations

No comments were offered by the Commissioners in regard to the preliminary recommendations.

Ms. Catalano pointed out that the rationale column of the spreadsheet describes the Commission's discussion at its previous meeting. She said it had been sent out to the applicants in advance of the public hearing.

A motion to approve the CDBG CV3 funding recommendations was made by Commissioner Amirfaiz. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mansfield and the motion carried unanimously.

The Commissioners were informed by Ms. Catalano that the recommendations would be presented to the City Council in study session on March 22, with final approval set to occur at a subsequent meeting.

### B. 2021-2022 Bellevue Human Services Needs Update Planning

Human Services Planner Christy Stangland explained that the Needs Update is a combination of quantitative and qualitative data from a wide variety of sources. It serves as an analysis of health and human service trends and issues that affect the quality of life of Bellevue residents, and as a forecast of the changes in human services. The Needs Update is one of the primary sources of data used by the Commission to guide funding recommendations. The staff use the report to guide their work in addressing changes in the needs of the community. The report is also widely used by many others, including agencies applying to the city for funding, other city departments, regional planning groups and other community groups.

Ms. Stangland said a variety of methodologies are used to gather the data. Because of the pandemic, the update will require adjusting several approaches, including a move to have virtual meetings instead of in-person community meetings. The phone and online surveys reach over 400 Bellevue residents and gather feedback about both community and household needs. The consumer survey asks consumers to highlight their needs. Traditionally surveys have been provided to a subset of providers to give to their clients, but absent providers engaging in in-person services, a new approach will be sought out. The provider survey

gathers useful data from the perspective of the providers in regard to needs and the services that are difficult to access. The community conversations involve community members from which information is drawn. The key informant interviews involve meeting with subject matter experts, and the faith communities discussions involve a select group of faith leaders. The staff also review reports, websites, and the American Community Survey and census data.

Most of the changes made for the 2019-2020 Needs Update will be retained, including clear headings with easily identifiable information; information at the beginning of each category explaining the importance of the area; highlighting the community voice in each section; incorporation of more graphs; the addition of hyperlinks in the endnotes; and the removal of any duplicative information. By way of adjustments for the 2021-2022 Needs Update, the special focus area will be the Covid pandemic. All of the chapters will include the intersection between each specific topic and race. Feedback from the Commissioners, the Council and other groups will also be incorporated.

Ms. Stangland reminded the Commissioners that the top items in the previous Needs Update were affordable housing, living wage, increase in homelessness, behavioral health, racial and ethnic discrimination, and transportation.

The process of gathering data will proceed through early summer. Data from the community surveys will be reported to the Commission in June or July. The draft report will be brought to the Commission in November, and the findings will be presented to the Council in January 2022. The finalized report will be distributed beginning in February 2022.

Chair Kline asked which groups were met with as part of the previous Needs Update process. Ms. Stangland said there were meetings with Bellevue College faculty and staff; Bellevue Fire Cares staff; the Bellevue Police Advisory Group for the Asian and Pacific Islanders; the Bellevue Park Rangers; the Bellevue Neighborhood Outreach staff; the Bellevue Community Centers staff; the Bellevue Downtown Library staff; consumers and staff of Friends of Youth, Sophia Way, and Catholic Community Services New Bethlehem Day Center; the Eastside Neighborhood Network; Bellevue Network on Aging; HERO House staff; Bellevue mini City Hall staff; the Bellevue Diversity Advisory Network; the Eastside Refugee and Immigrant Coalition; the Bellevue Youth Link council; the Bellevue School District Family Connection and McKinney-Vento staff; a Stephenson parenting group; Youth Eastside Services staff; and the King County Veterans Consortium.

Commissioner Ma asked if there is a way to capture data in regard to what different communities and providers see as specific resources that are lacking in the city to meet their needs. Ms. Stangland said that is addressed to some degree in both the consumer and the providers surveys. She allowed that a reworking of some of the questions would be useful in that regard.

Commissioner Ma highlighted the Asian/Pacific Islander community and noted the need to have their voice recognized in the Needs Update.

Commissioner Piper asked if the analysis portion relative to the intersection of the issues and race could be extended to include other layers, such as homelessness, mental illness, LGBTQ issues, veterans and senior citizens. Ms. Stangland pointed out that the Needs Update includes a chapter focused on homelessness, and some of the other areas are also touched on. She agreed that homelessness, for instance, could show up Goal 1 but also as an intersection in regard to domestic violence and behavioral health. Commissioner Piper said that would be useful to have, provided it does not get too cluttered.

Commissioner Amirfaiz asked if in addition to showing participants by race could it also be

done by socioeconomic and by immigration status. With regard to refugee and immigrant, she suggested having a conversation with Jewish Family Service and with Muslim Community Resource Center, both of which have big refugee programs. Ms. Stangland noted that refugee and immigration status is touched on in the population chapter of the Needs Update, but agreed the section could be strengthened given that there is more data available.

Commissioner Ma asked if data is received from law enforcement and first responders for the Needs Update. Ms. Stangland said her staff works with the police department in gathering data. Typically the data sought from them has been around the domestic violence numbers, but recently data was also collected on gang activity. Ms. O'Reilly added that there are typically talks with Bellevue Fire Cares and the Probation Department.

Major Tarantino said he would be more than happy to provide statistics to the process. He noted that the data for 2020 unfortunately show a rise in domestic violence incidents.

Commissioner Ma pointed out the need to highlight information about mental health issues and the intersection with homelessness.

Chair Kline asked if transitioning the consumer survey to an online format will result in a loss of some relevant data. Ms. Stangland said that question remains open. She said staff have been brainstorming and researching creative options that will make sure that voice will be loud. Starting the process early will be important to allow for any tweaks that may need to be made along the way.

Ms. O'Reilly added that there are some places that are still providing direct services, including the food banks and the Bellevue School District Family Connections Centers. She said staff would do everything possible to seek input from people directly.

Chair Kline suggested Bridge Ministries would be an organization to reach out to in regard to the disability population.

## 9. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly reported that she and intern Sara Holbrook have done a total of five key informant interviews over the last couple of weeks. The groups talked with have included NAMI Eastside, a McKinney-Vento staffer from the Bellevue School District, and the executive directors of India Association of Western Washington and Chinese Information and Service Center. The information gathered will be used both to inform the Needs Update and the HB-1590 workgroup.

## 10. NEW BUSINESS – None

## 11. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

## 12. ADJOURNMENT

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

Chair Kline adjourned the meeting at 7:07 p.m.

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Secretary to the Human Services Commission

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Date

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Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

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Date