

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION  
MINUTES

September 8, 2021  
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Virtual Meeting

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Alex O'Reilly, Christy Stangland, Toni Esparza, Megan Farwell, Department of Parks and Community Services; Major Mark Tarantino, Police

GUEST SPEAKERS: Amber North, Catholic Community Services; Sarah Kendall, LifeWire; DeAnn Adams, Friends of Youth; Alisa Chatinsky, Sophia Way; David Bowling, Congregations for the Homeless

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair Kline who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present.

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. July 7, 2021

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

B. July 20, 2021

Chair Kline noted the second paragraph under item 2, roll call, on page 1, "Chair Kline" should read "Vice Chair Piper."

A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Commissioner Piper. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mercer and the motion carried without dissent; Commissioner Ma abstained from voting.

4. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS – None
5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS – None
6. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Human Services Manager Alex O'Reilly reported that due to the increased number of staff, the Commission meeting coordinators will be rotated so that they all do not have to attend every meeting.

7. INFORMATION FOR THE COMMISSION

A. Update on Eastside Shelters Serving People Experiencing Homelessness

Ms. O'Reilly introduced Ms. DeAnn Adams, Chief Program Officer for Friends of Youth.

Ms. Adams stated that Friends of Youth operates two shelters, one in Redmond and one in Kirkland. The Kirkland shelter is licensed and serves minors ages seven to seventeen. The Landing shelter in Redmond serves young adults between the ages of 18 and 24. Friends of Youth also provides a variety of services and programs for youth, young adults and their families that are experiencing challenging circumstances, including homelessness, foster care, mental health, and substance abuse issues. The agency was established in 1951 and is currently celebrating its 70th year.

Ms. Adams noted that the agency offers some additional safety net support services for minors as part of the national Safe Place network, which is a crisis hot line for minors experiencing safety situations which are preventing them from going home. By calling the hot line they can get connected immediately with someone who will help them find a safe location.

The Landing operated initially as an emergency shelter seven days per week accommodating up to 20 young people. It also provided drop-in services during the daytime for four or five days per week. While at the shelter, the youth were provided with basic needs and connected with other support services aimed at moving them from crisis to stability. When Covid hit in March 2020, it quickly became clear that the drop-in hours were inadequate. At the same time, many public spaces were closed and the number of youth with no place to go increased. In partnership with local municipalities and other funders, Friends of Youth changed the nature of its services to a 24/7 model.

Covid has made the services offered by Friends of Youth more difficult to deliver. Connecting young people with jobs is much more difficult. Volunteers can no longer be in the space. The public health recommendations around social distancing limited the number of youth who could be in the space. The amount of time dedicated to cleaning and following all Covid precautions and protocols ballooned. At the same time, youth were presenting with increased behavioral health needs, including mental health challenges and substance abuse issues. Friends of Youth worked diligently to bring on staff who were willing to work under the trying circumstances. The need to bring in folks with enhanced clinical and therapeutic skills became clear. The number of mental health crises and escalated situations are triple what traditionally have been seen within the shelter space. Retaining staff has proven to be difficult as they face burnout and seek other employment opportunities, and staffing shortages are at such a critical level that the difficult decision had to be made to temporarily suspend services at The Landing for youth over the age of 18.

Ms. Adams stressed the importance of the community engagement element. She said the

demands on the staff in the space have increased by virtue of not being able to have the additional support of volunteers. There has been an increased engagement with law enforcement around how to meet needs as the level of crisis has risen.

Along with the increase in mental health and substance abuse challenges has come an increase in overdoses and suicidal ideation. More client tragedies have been experienced across the agency than have been seen in the last six years. The agency is still working through the very real impacts of the pandemic. Through it all, however, there is a high level of resiliency on the part of the youth and the staff alike. Every opportunity is being sought to support staff and their wellness as well as the youth who are served.

Ms. Adams said Friends of Youth is working in survival mode more than crafting new programs to implement in the coming year. The top priority is maintaining the staffing pool. The licensed Youth Haven shelter for folks under the age of 18 has had to limit the number of persons in the space in order to line up with the Covid precautions, but the shelter has remained open. Hopefully going forward the youth will be allowed to go back to school.

Commissioner Amirfaiz asked what happened to the residents of The Landing when that shelter was closed. Ms. Adams explained that the shelter is closed for the traditional shelter and drop-in hours, but case management staff are maintaining by-appointment support. Staff are still on site, and they have worked with other partnering agencies to connect young people with shelters and support, though mostly not on the Eastside.

Chair Kline asked what the ratio is of males to females in the shelter. Ms. Adams said generally there are more males than females by about a factor of two.

Assistant Director of the Department of Parks and Community Services Toni Esparza asked how minor youth access the shelter available to them. Ms. Adams said the shelter is primarily for young people who are not connected with the King County Department of Children, Youth and Families. Using the self-referral process, a young person can call the 24/7 intake line, as can parents or school counselors and mental health therapists. There are clear protocols in place for obtaining parental consent when possible and safe.

Ms. O'Reilly introduced Ms. Sarah Kendall, the Homelessness Services Manager for LifeWire.

Ms. Kendall said she oversees the shelter, transitional and rapid rehousing programs for LifeWire. She said My Sister's Home is the shelter program and it is located on the Eastside. The program serves the adult survivors of domestic violence, both males and females and those who are not anywhere on the gender spectrum. The list of those served includes survivors with dependents, multigenerational households, and those who are documented and undocumented. There are no program fees, and the shelter units are set up as individual apartment units in a larger apartment complex. Folks are able to work with a primary advocate toward achieving their housing goals by alleviating their housing barriers. They are also assisted in addressing their needs in regard to their domestic violence situation and any legal or mental health needs. On average the program allows survivors to stay for 30 to 90 days, though there is some flexibility and during non-Covid times the average stay was closer to six months. Covid has changed the landscape of the work by increasing the need in the community and decreasing available resources. For each shelter opening, there are some 30 to 40 referrals, and the referrals are for those who are experiencing increased safety issues, including many who are still living with their abusers due to not having any other options.

During the pandemic folks have been staying for nearly a year on average. Those who do exit find it difficult to find options to exit into. Many are attempting to enter into the rapid re-

housing resources that are becoming available.

Ms. Kendall stated that across the spectrum of services offered by LifeWire, the agency is seeing an increased need and increased safety barriers for those trying to access services. The legal advocacy team has seen an exponential increase in the number of requests for services; the same has been true for the mental health team. There continue to be concerns around system capacity and secondary trauma issues. The agency has worked to restructure its services to make sure it is providing the best quality of services to providers while also trying to maintain capacity and boundaries for the staff.

There has been an immense increase in the financial needs of the survivors of domestic violence in the community. The amount of flexible funding that has been distributed over the last fiscal year increased by a factor of four using Covid grants. The funds have been used for rental assistance and to help pay utility bills, for child care, and to buy food among other things.

Ms. Kendall explained that King County's new domestic violence centralized helpline is available for any survivor to access. By calling a single number, survivors can get connected with the help they need. Domestic violence agencies will no longer have individualized 24-hour help lines. A single standard referral form will be used by all the domestic violence agencies.

Chair Kline asked if the new referral line is being coordinated by the same folks who coordinate other shelters in King County. Ms. Kendall said the domestic violence help line is operated by a team of domestic violence advocates. All gender-based domestic violence agencies will receive referrals from the help line entry point. The service only recently went live and to date only LifeWire and New Beginnings have fully routed their services through it. The new help line includes a new database for gender-based domestic violence agencies to access.

Chair Kline said she was surprised, given the difficulties experienced with the regular centralized referral line, that the domestic violence agencies would choose to move toward a centralized intake system. Ms. Kendall said the various domestic violence agencies saw the difficulties faced by domestic violence survivors who simply were handed a pamphlet listing several agencies and numbers to call in a time of crisis. Survivors were having to call every single agency in their quest to find a shelter resource. The centralized help line was created to give survivors a single number to call to receive services.

Commissioner Amirfaiz asked about the language capacity of the help line. Ms. Kendall said the advocates have access to a translation service that covers a large number of languages.

Ms. O'Reilly introduced Ms. Amber North, Program Director for New Bethlehem Programs at Catholic Community Services.

Ms. North said New Bethlehem Programs serves families experiencing homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness on the Eastside. She said the programs have been expanded to include the New Bethlehem Place shelter, the family portion of the shelter for families and women. Also on the site is the New Bethlehem Day Center and the New Bethlehem extension program.

Ms. North shared with the Commissioners five trends and how the challenges have been met over the last year. She said the first trend involved social distancing in a congregate setting which proved to be nearly impossible. Giving people a private space proved to be absolutely crucial, so the move was made away from congregate shelter on the floors of churches to

sheltering in hotels. The program continues to the present, beginning at the Redmond Inn and currently the Baymont Inn in Kirkland. When New Bethlehem's Place was originally opened, the intent was to serve up to two families in a single unit, but it was quickly realized that there would need to be a single family per unit, creating a demand for more locations. The day center, which had been slated to move to the Kirkland site, was maintained in a separate location for unsheltered families seeking hygiene services and connection to resources. The need to accommodate all families seeking services and resources became the impetus for New Bethlehem Programs. Covid outbreaks have been contained by keeping families to their own rooms where a positive test result has come back.

The second observed trend has been the massive increase in mental health needs. There has been a lot of domestic conflict and domestic violence. There has been a spike in youth mental health needs as kids lost the stability of going to school. The conflicts of marriages breaking up and kids struggling with anxiety and depression have been seen in the family shelters at an intense rate. The onsite mental health program includes an education coordinator and youth services staff.

The third trend has been the degree to which parents are risk averse when it comes to stepping into employment and housing. They really want to know that if they take those steps, they will be connected to all necessary safety net supportive services. There is a clear desire on the part of families to be able to remain on the Eastside. To that end the focus has been on increasing the number of partnerships on the Eastside.

The families receiving services are disproportionately black, indigenous and persons of color. While not a new trend, there has been an increase in the percentages during the pandemic. The trend has made it more necessary to be intentional about the staff hired and increasing language abilities.

Finally, everyone at Catholic Community Services has been talking about how shelter work is actually community health work. Much has been learned about identifying Covid symptoms and other health concerns, building and monitoring trust with parents, connecting with Public Health, and daily cleaning routines. The agency is working closely with Healthpoint's outreach coordinator. In addition to learning how to help families isolate from others, it has also been necessary to learn how to help family members isolate from one another when a family member tests positive. Clearly in order to maintain the standard services and to keep doing family shelter requires more staff, more partnerships, more services onsite, and more funding.

Ms. O'Reilly introduced Ms. Alisa Chatinsky, Executive Director of Sophia Way.

Ms. Chatinsky said it has been a difficult year for everyone. She said her staff have been working tirelessly to keep women safe and healthy through it all. The city has been an integral partner since the inception of Sophia Way whose focus is on shelter, safety and stability. The shelter element is predicated on making sure everyone has their everyday needs met, including a place to rest and sleep, nourishing food and access to the basic necessities. Safety is addressed by providing a warm and safe environment along with caring and compassionate staff. All of that leads toward moving people into the stability of transitional, supportive, or permanent housing.

In 2020 in the midst of Covid the agency conducted a gathering to which many city representatives were invited. The focus was on strategic planning and the result was a new vision and mission and new values, all drawn from interviews with staff, clients, other providers, donors, and funders. The vision is that all women will have a place to call home, and the mission is that Sophia Way will be a place of hope and change for women. The values

are built around the following words: welcoming, dignity, supportive, compassionate, and inclusive.

Ms. Chatinsky said most people are surprised to learn that 30 percent of the women served by Sophia Way are over the age of 55. Forty-eight percent are women of color; 46 percent have some form of disability; 70 percent report sexual or domestic violence as a contributing factor; and only eight percent have an annual income exceeding \$40,000.

Two shelters, both supported by the City of Bellevue, have been operational during the pandemic. Helen's Place and Sophia's Place both are operational 24/7. The Day Center at Sophia's Place provides walk-in services from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. every day. Helen's Place shares space at the Kirkland Place for Families and Women. It opened in August 2020 and has a capacity of 40 under the Covid restrictions. Currently there are 28 individual carrels where the women can sleep and store their belongings. There are 12 additional beds with under-bed storage. Those served receive three meals a day, have access to showers and laundry facilities, can use the computers and the wi-fi network, and have access to case management services. Sophia's Place, located in Bellevue at St. Luke's Lutheran Church on NE Bellevue Way, has 21 individual carrels to sleep and store belongings. Those served receive meals; have access to the day center services; and receive case management. The day center sees about 30 walk-ins per day.

Ms. Chatinsky said during the pandemic the focus has been on keeping the women safe and healthy. To date there have only been two cases of Covid and no resulting outbreaks. The operation was at Temple B'nai Torah before moving to St. Luke's. Covid necessitated a move into the Red Lion hotel before the move back into the shelters. The Covid guidelines are strictly followed. Sadly, there can be no in-shelter or office volunteer support. About half of the staff have been vaccinated. There is no vaccine mandate for either the staff or the clients. Everyone is provided with good information and public health visits about once a month to provide both testing and vaccinations.

Last year 538 unduplicated women were served by the shelters. That translates into over 14,000 bednights and almost 48,000 donated meals. Going forward the strategic priorities are to increase the number of women's housing, to participate in permanent supportive housing projects, and to develop a robust mental health program.

Chair Kline asked about the move to the Red Lion Hotel. Ms. Chatinsky explained that the temporary emergency shelter operated from Temple B'nai Torah while the new shelter was under construction. When everything locked down, everyone was moved to St. Luke's, during which time about 100 women per day were utilizing the services. Public health determined there was inadequate space at St. Luke's and they facilitated the move to the Red Lion Hotel. Most slept on mats on the floor; private rooms were only given to the women who were already staying at Sophia's Place and who were higher functioning.

Commissioner McClure asked which of the different services offered by Sophia Way is the most difficult to fund. Ms. Chatinsky said currently it was Sophia's Place, the extended stay shelter. Emergency shelter is typically the most difficult to fund, followed by day center services.

Human Services Planner Christy Stangland asked if the agency is on track to find permanent housing for 100 women in 2021 given the current climate of the rent moratorium which has resulted in less movement. Ms. Chatinsky said the agency is working with the county and has some move-in vouchers and rapid re-housing funds. Things are moving in the right direction though it remains to be seen if the goal will be achieved.

Answering a question asked by Chair Kline, Ms. Chatinsky said not everyone does well in a shelter. It can be very traumatic for some even though they want to be housed. The outreach program works to find out exactly what the clients want, even if that means not officially entering the shelter program.

Ms. O'Reilly introduced Mr. David Bowling, Executive Director of Congregations for the Homeless.

Mr. Bowling said Congregations for the Homeless operates primarily in the City of Bellevue. He said the mission of the agency is to partner with men in the community to help create a path from the street to stable living. The values on which the program operates are dignity and respect, relationships, community, and empowerment. The emergency shelter program at Lincoln Center opened for year-round operations a couple of months before the pandemic hit. Close to a thousand men per year come through the shelter. About 1500 men are served annually through all of the agency's programs. Predominantly, the clients are single men experiencing homelessness, but there are some programs that also serve women and families.

The agency has an outreach worker who works closely with the city. The program engages with men, women and families and helps connect them with services aimed at helping them become stabilized. Where the outreach worker encounters a homeless male, he will be directed to find help at the emergency shelter, which sees up to 145 people per day during the winter months. At the shelter there are showers, laundry facilities, and meals. Some case management is offered as well as supportive services, including mental health services that have been expanded due to HB 1590 dollars. The housing navigation person helps clients look at all available options and helps in navigating the system. The agency has 90 permanent housing units on the Eastside, of which 70 units are tied to the coordinated entry system for all funded by King County. Also available are 30 units tied to the One And Up program for men who do have incomes but need light-touch case management. The overall goal is to help people move into stable housing.

Of those served by Congregations for the Homeless, 55 percent identify as people of color. Forty percent identify as disabled, though the actual number is likely much higher. Forty-three percent of the men are over the age of 45, and 90 percent have strong roots in King County.

Mr. Bowling said a lot has happened during Covid. He said Congregations for the Homeless expanded its services and served more people per night than ever before. With the support of the city and other cities in King County, the agency opened a hotel program that housed up to 25 different men at a time, including the most medically vulnerable. There is also a 35-bed rotating shelter that for a time expanded to 24/7 operations. Congregations for the Homeless partners with public health to test for Covid infections and to offer vaccinations.

Similar to other agencies, Congregations for the Homeless has experienced a reduction in volunteer support during the pandemic. That has necessitated getting very creative and spending much more money on meals and supplies.

There has been an increase in the number of clients who are struggling with mental health issues, some of which are significant due to the loss of places to go, support systems and relationships. Many chose to cope via alcohol and substance use. As the eviction moratorium is being lifted, there has been an increase in the number of clients and people are being turned away every night.

Mr. Bowling said staff burnout has become an issue, making staff retention difficult. The agency has struggled to attract qualified staff, an issue being faced by many non-profits in the region. With the extra Covid funding, the agency has been able to maintain a Covid pay level;

without it, more staff would likely be lost.

The future of Congregations for the Homeless involves a state-of-the-art shelter in Bellevue, replacing the Lincoln Center facilities. To be located in Eastgate, the 100-bed shelter will serve an average of 125 per day. The building will include space for administrative offices and supportive services. The county had a ten-acre site which Congregations for the Homeless could not afford and did not need, but what has arisen is a partnership arrangement that will include over 360 units of workforce housing affordable to those at 60 percent of area median income and below. There will also be 95 units of permanent supportive housing on the site serving both men and women. Congregations for the Homeless wants to expand its On And Up Housing program given the clear need. One exciting development is the expansion of the mental health and addiction services and programs offered.

Chair Kline asked about the timeline for when the new Eastgate facility opens. Mr. Bowling said if all goes well, the facility should be opening in the first quarter of 2023.

The panelists were thanked for their participation and for the information shared.

## 8. OLD BUSINESS

Chair Kline asked for an update on the contract with Communities Rise. Ms. O'Reilly reminded the Commissioners that the Amazon funds provided to the city will be received in 2022. To date the staff have been in touch with Communities Rise staff, who are already engaged in doing some informal outreach to the Eastside community. There is not a signed contract yet because the funds have not been officially added to the mid-biennium budget, and that will not happen until December. The details for accepting agencies into the program will be worked out during the contracting process.

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Esparza informed the Commissioners that President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) on March 11. The legislation allocates \$1.9 trillion in aid across a variety of programs to address the impacts of Covid. The legislation specifically earmarks \$350 billion to state and local governments. Of that amount, Bellevue will receive \$20.1 million in two tranches, the first of which has already been received. The Council adopted a resolution on June 14 that accepted the funds, and on July 26 there was a presentation on the needs in the community, following which the Council direct staff to return on August 2 with legislation to include a budget amendment and authorization to implement spending totaling \$8 million from the first \$10 million. Of the \$8 million, \$7 million was earmarked for housing and rent eviction, \$500,000 was earmarked for workforce programs and resource navigator assistance, and \$500,000 for small business rent relief. The data presented to the Council in August indicated that in Bellevue approximately 2000 households were considered very likely to be evicted within the next two month, and approximately 5600 households were considered somewhat likely to be evicted within the next two months. The average debt was estimated to range from \$4000 per household to \$11,000 per household, which means that just for the 2000 households likely to be evicted the total debt totaled between \$8 million and \$22 million. The data was drawn from the US Census Bureau and an overlay of Bellevue demographics, and from the National Equity Atlas and the King County Bar Association. The upcoming end of the eviction moratorium and the Governor's bridge made housing a high priority. While there are other needs in the community, the decision was made to focus on a housing first approach.

Continuing, Ms. Esparza said there are specific categories of eligible funding for the dollars. Bellevue's use is tied to the category of states responding to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses and non-



profits, or aid to industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality. The program approved by the Council for residents is expected to include the current and all past-due rental, mortgage, or move-in assistance, and up to three months of upcoming rent for households that have experienced negative economic impacts from the pandemic and are low- or moderate-income. Since January 2020 the human services team has conducted four RFPs that contained elements of eviction prevention or rent assistance. The funding for the RFPs was drawn from the Human Services Fund, CDBG-CV3, CARES 1 and 1590 funds. The pool of providers was increased to a total of 14. Rather than conducting another RFP, outreach has begun with those providers.

Ms. O'Reilly said by working with the providers that already have programs in place will allow for expediting getting the funds out the door as quickly as possible. She stressed that the ARPA funds have a lot of regulations tied to them. The city's legal staff and several outside attorneys have been scrambling to understand them and to put language in contracts and other documents that will comply with the ARPA rules. Information has been sent out to the 14 providers the city is already contracting with explaining the opportunity to apply for the ARPA funds. The associated requirements for how the funds are to be spent were also outlined. The agencies were given a week in which to reply. Within that week, three of the agencies – Jubilee Reach, LifeWire and India Association of Western Washington – chose not to apply for the funds and they each cited different internal barriers. Applications were sent out to the 11 remaining agencies with directions to have them filled out and submitted within two weeks, and during that application period two additional agencies – Solid Ground and MCRC – also chose not to participate. The nine remaining agencies submitted applications.

Ms. O'Reilly noted the available funds awarded by the Council totaled just over \$6.6 million. The total of the submitted applications was less than the amount available, so each of the nine agencies can have their requests fully awarded. The award includes up to 15 percent for administrative costs. All of the applications were fully reviewed by staff, including a typical review of the budgets and audits of each agency. Each agency was deemed qualified to receive their requested funding. Some additional technical assistance will need to be provided to the agencies that have limited experience with managing federal dollars of any kind.

In addition to the funds the Council appropriated for human services, the Council approved funding to hire a limited-term employee to oversee the ARPA grants. A search is under way for a person who has extensive skills in managing federal grants.

Ms. O'Reilly said award letters have been mailed to each of the nine agencies and in the next week staff will be working on the contracts, each of which will have to be approved through the City Manager's Office.

Referring to the nine agencies, she said she was surprised to see that some large agencies that serve a lot of people submitted requests for not much money, and that some small agencies submitted requests for large amounts of money. Ms. O'Reilly noted that the agencies that submitted the largest requests have access to a large population of people who frequently feel trepidation or are not able to access traditional agencies. They provided estimates of how many they believe they can serve based on the level of debt many of their clients have. Attain Housing and Salvation Army, both of whom submitted applications for less funding, indicated a desire to be conservative in their estimates. The contracts being put together are for only one year to encourage getting the funds out the door as quickly as possible.

Chair Kline said she assumed the contracts were arranged on a reimbursement basis. Ms. O'Reilly said in conjunction with the budget office and the legal department, a new process has been created that will allow for advance payment. Some of the smaller agencies simply do not have the resources to allocate funds up front and then seek reimbursement. Under the

advance payment approach, the agencies can request up to 25 percent of their full award up front. Each agency would then be required to provide a monthly report to be reviewed by the contract coordinator. The reports will need to detail how their funds were spent and will need to include certification that their statements are accurate. Once their initial upfront allocation has been expended, another 25 percent can be requested. The upfront option would only be available for the ARPA funds, not for the general human services funds.

Chair Kline and Commissioner Piper said they had the same concerns voiced by Commissioner Amirfaiz.

Commissioner Amirfaiz pointed out that a number of the agencies, including the larger agencies, have consistently come to the Commission seeking money specifically to help clients with rental assistance. She said she was puzzled why their requests were so small in light of the fact that they have said they have the cultural competency, the language capacity, the reach, the bandwidth, and the clients, and only lacked the money. Now that the money is there, they have asked for only small amounts.

Ms. O'Reilly said she would bring more information to the next Commission meeting. She reiterated that the ARPA funds will require the generation of a considerable amount of paperwork, not only for submittal to the city but also with their clients and the landlords. For example, they will need to provide attestations from landlords in regard to the amount of back rental debt. A couple of agencies shared the information that accepting an additional amount of money would bring them above the limit of \$750,000 in federal dollars that triggers the need for a single audit, which is far more complicated and involved. That was the specific concern for India Association of Western Washington.

Ms. Esparza added that agencies have expressed concerns based on the fact that their staff are simply overburdened and do not feel like they can take on any more. Ms. O'Reilly said that was the argument made by some agencies, in particular those who indicated they would prefer to start from a more conservative stance.

Ms. O'Reilly allowed that some \$285,000 is yet to be allocated. She said the funds will need to be spent on rental assistance, mortgage assistance or move-in assistance. Staff are thinking about how to best use that remaining balance. The bridge moratorium expires on September 30 so there is a need to get the contracts signed and funds out the door as soon as possible. More information will be shared with the Commission at the next meeting.

Dr. Farwell pointed out that a number of the agencies on the list recently received 1590 rental assistance dollars. She said that could be a contributing factor in regard to their requests for ARPA dollars. Ms. O'Reilly added that some agencies may also have received ARPA money through the county.

10. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

11. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner McClure. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Piper and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Kline adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.