

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Special Meeting

August 24, 2020
6:00 p.m.

Virtual Meeting
Bellevue, Washington

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

ABSENT: None.

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

All Councilmembers were present and participating remotely.

3. Approval of Agenda

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

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

4. Other Ordinances

(a) Resolution No. 9812 authorizing execution of an agreement with the Bellevue School District for \$160,000 to purchase food and supplies for other basic needs.

(b) Resolution No. 9813 authorizing execution of an agreement with Hopelink for \$127,000 to purchase food for the Bellevue Food Bank.

Mayor Robinson thanked Councilmembers for attending the special meeting during their summer recess. She thanked staff for their work, and the Human Services Commission for holding a special meeting to develop a recommendation for the City Council.

Michael Shiosaki, Director of the Parks and Community Services Department, recalled that the Council previously voted to allocate Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding to human services needs and to direct staff to move quickly to distribute the funds within the community. He said staff is seeking Council approval to: 1) authorize the execution of an agreement with Hopelink to provide \$127,000 to purchase food for the Bellevue Food Bank, and 2) authorize the execution of an agreement with the Bellevue School District (BSD) to provide \$160,000 to purchase food and supplies for other basic needs.

Alex O'Reilly, Human Services Manager, recalled that on August 3, the Council approved the allocation of \$500,000 in CARES Act funding for human services needs, with \$300,000 to be used to address food scarcity and \$200,000 to provide emergency financial assistance (primarily for housing costs). In determining which agencies to recommend for funding, Ms. O'Reilly said staff considered principles of fairness, the speed with which the agency would spend the funds, funding more agencies, and determining how agencies conduct outreach to underserved and underrepresented communities in Bellevue. She said Hopelink has a food bank in Bellevue as well as a mobile food truck that will resume operating in September.

Ms. O'Reilly said that all of the agencies recommended for funding (Bellevue School District, Hopelink Food Bank, The Salvation Army, and the Renewal Food Bank) are known to extend their public outreach as far as possible and to partner with other groups to meet the range of needs in the community. To determine the amount of funding to provide to each organization, Human Services staff had extensive conversations with representatives from each agency to discuss their need for food assistance related to the impacts of the pandemic.

Staff is seeking Council approval to provide \$160,000 to the Bellevue School District and \$127,000 to the Hopelink Food Bank. Two smaller grant awards under the \$90,000 threshold requiring Council approval are \$10,000 to The Salvation Army and \$3,000 to the Renewal Food Bank. She said the latter serves many refugees and immigrants who might not want to go to larger agencies or who feel more comfortable going to the food bank because it is located within a church.

Ms. O'Reilly said the funds will be distributed within the next two weeks. The contracts and scopes of work for the agencies receiving funds include a requirement to provide a monthly report describing the number of people served, the number of units provided (e.g., meals or boxes of food), and the amounts of the grant funds spent to date. This is to ensure that the funds are used in a timely manner and that the number of units served and number of people assisted meet the targets identified in the individual contracts.

Ms. O'Reilly said staff has been mindful of balancing requests for data that is important for statistical analysis and the need for the agencies to maintain their relationships as trusted messengers within the community. She said many of the individuals served are wary of government and intimidated if subjected to extensive questioning.

There is a growing number of first-time applicants for human services assistance. Ms. O'Reilly said that none of the funds to be awarded to address food scarcity include any personnel costs, and therefore all of the money will be used to provide food and to meet other basic needs.

Ms. O'Reilly said that applications for emergency financial assistance were received on August 19. The Human Services Commission will review staff's recommendations and take action on the awards for emergency financial assistance on August 27. If any contracts exceed \$90,000, they will be brought back for the Council's authorization.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff for the presentation.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked staff and said he was ready to approve both resolutions. He thanked the Human Services Commission for their work.

Councilmember Stokes expressed support for the proposed grant funding. He said he is glad for the opportunity for the City to assist the community.

Councilmember Robertson expressed support for the resolutions. She said Hopelink and the Bellevue School District have been great partners in providing resources to the community.

Councilmember Zahn thanked staff and her colleagues for addressing urgent human services needs related to the impacts of the pandemic. Responding to Ms. Zahn, Ms. O'Reilly said the agencies have until December 31 to expend the funds. The agencies are required to provide monthly reports regarding their spending to date. Councilmember Zahn expressed support for the resolutions.

Councilmember Lee noted the severe economic impacts resulting from the pandemic. He said he appreciates all the City has been able to do already in providing funding to small businesses and the community. He urged providing assistance to the community as soon as possible, and he thanked staff for continuing to reach out to underrepresented groups within Bellevue. Responding to Mr. Lee, Ms. O'Reilly said the Highland Covenant Church is on Bel-Red Road, and the City has provided financial assistance to the Renewal Food Bank for approximately 12 years. The food bank was previously located in a different church in the Factoria area. Councilmember Lee expressed support for the resolutions. He looks forward to the Human Services Commission's continued focus on agencies serving underrepresented populations.

Councilmember Barksdale thanked the Human Services Commission and staff for their work with the Council to provide the funds. He is happy the City is able to work with strong community partners to provide food assistance.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Ms. O'Reilly confirmed that the deadline to apply for human services funding has passed. Ms. Robinson noted that smaller groups have stepped forward to provide food assistance within the community. Ms. O'Reilly said that smaller organizations, such as those that provide backpack meals for youth and food truck vouchers, benefit through the larger organizations that receive City funding (e.g., BSD and Hopelink). She said the smaller and larger organizations are working together to share resources and redistribute food where needed within the community. Ms. O'Reilly said it would be helpful to find other funding sources for the smaller organizations. Mayor Robinson said she would send staff the names of two organizations that have been providing food to Bellevue residents.

Responding to Mayor Robinson, Ms. O'Reilly said the public may contact her at Aoreilly@bellevuewa.gov if they have additional questions.

→ Deputy Mayor moved to approve Resolution No. 9812 and Resolution No. 9813.
Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.

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

5. Adjournment

At 6:27 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared the meeting adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC
City Clerk

/kaw