

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Regular Meeting

November 23, 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 6:02 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. Councilmember Robertson led the flag salute.

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. Oral Communications

(a) Court Olson thanked the Council for the strong Environmental Stewardship Plan and for working with the People for Climate Action (PCA) group. He noted that the group identified potential actions from a number of cities across the country. He encouraged more aggressive actions, especially in the building section of the plan.

(b) Barbara Braun said she is active in local climate issues and with 300trees.org. She thanked the Council for the update to the Environmental Stewardship Plan and for taking a bold approach. She expressed concern, however, that more aggressive measures are needed to address buildings and transportation, which are two of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions. She encouraged forming a coalition of businesses and

residents to move forward. Ms. Braun encouraged setting more near-term milestones for reducing GHG emissions.

- (c) Doug Hoople expressed concern regarding potholes on southbound Bellevue Way SE and the adjacent highway ramps. He said that Enatai residents look forward to phase two development of the Enatai Beach Park. He thanked Councilmembers for their work.

Mayor Robinson asked staff to follow up on Mr. Hoople's concerns and to report them to the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

5. Reports of Community Councils, Boards, and Commissions: None.

6. Report of the City Manager

(a) Digital Cities Survey Award

City Manager Brad Miyake introduced staff's briefing regarding the City's recent award from the Center for Digital Government.

Sabra Schneider, Chief Information Officer, Information Technology Department, said the City received the First Place 2020 Digital Cities Survey award from the Center for Digital Government. She thanked Councilmember Lee and Councilmember Zahn for accepting the award on behalf of the City during the virtual award ceremony on November 10. She said the City has placed in the top four cities of populations with 125,000-250,000 for the past four years. The survey covers a broad scope of digital city components including data management, data analytics, networking, security, digital innovation, culture, leadership, and other elements of the Smart City program. The survey also included a section on the City's COVID-19 response.

PJ Rodriguez, Chief Operations Officer, ITD, highlighted a number of projects including the Robotic Process Automation (RPA) migration, Utilities Department smart water dashboard, 911 Dispatch Integrated Mapping application, and the development of the Universal Design Guide. The 911 dispatch integrated mapping application integrates real-time 911 dispatch data with traffic operations, video monitoring, and incident archiving.

Mr. Rodriguez said the City's technology response to the COVID-19 pandemic included launching chatbots for the public and for the IT internal help desk, providing tools and technology for remote meetings and public engagement, expanding free public Wi-Fi, and providing COVID-10 response maps highlighting regional services, meals, and internet access.

Chelo Picardal, Chief Technology Officer, ITD, said staff highlighted the City's partnerships in the Digital Cities award application, including the eCityGov Alliance, Community Connectivity Consortium (i.e., schools, hospitals, government facilities, community institutions), University of Washington's Livable Cities program, and private partners. She said that all of the achievements reported in the Digital Cities application relied on strong internal partnerships with departments including to implement the Smart City plan, which is designed to be a multi-department effort to impact mobility, water, connectivity, public safety, buildings and energy.

Mayor Robinson thanked staff and congratulated everyone for the award.

7. Council Business and New Initiatives

There was 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
Minutes of November 2, 2020 Regular Meeting
 - (b) Resolution No. 9846 determining that a public utility easement and a portion of a second public utility easement, all located at 10300 NE 8th Street, are surplus to the City's needs and are no longer required for providing continued public utility service; and setting a time and place for a public hearing to consider the release of these easements.
 - (c) Resolution No. 9847 authorizing execution of a three-year agreement with MacDonald Miller Facility Solutions, Inc. for heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC) system preventive maintenance and repair services at the Bellevue Service Center, with a two-year renewal option, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$218,136, plus applicable taxes.
 - (d) Resolution No. 9848 authorizing execution of a three-year agreement with Siemens Industry, Inc. for fire alarm and fire sprinkler system preventive maintenance, inspections, and repairs at City Hall, with a two-year renewal option, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$141,468, plus applicable taxes.
 - (e) Resolution No. 9849 authorizing the execution of an amendment to add EXHIBIT E(20) to Addendum D (the Software Maintenance Agreement) of the System Purchase Agreement with Advanced Utility Systems Corporation in an amount not to exceed \$410,000 plus all applicable taxes, to 1) add three additional years of software maintenance for the Utility Billing Customer Information System and bill-pay portal, and 2) extend the System Purchase Agreement through December 31, 2023.
 - (f) Resolution No. 9850 authorizing execution of an amendment to the Professional Services Agreement with Summit Law Group, PLLC, outside counsel for the City in the lawsuit Mayer v. City of Bellevue, KCSC Cause No: 20-2-14642-1,

increasing the total contract amount from \$30,000 to an amount not to exceed \$415,000, plus all applicable taxes.

- (g) Resolution No. 9851 authorizing execution of an amendment to the Professional Services Agreement with Keating, Bucklin & McCormack, outside counsel for a city employee in the lawsuit Mayer v. City of Bellevue, KCSC Cause No: 20-2-14642-1, increasing the total contract amount from \$30,000 to an amount not to exceed \$175,000, plus all applicable taxes.

9. Public Hearing

- (a) Final Public Hearing on the 2021-2022 Budget and 2021-2027 Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan

City Manager Brad Miyake noted that this is the third and final public hearing regarding the 2021-2022 Budget and the 2021-2027 Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan.

Keyi Lu, Assistant Director, Finance and Asset Management (FAM) Department, recalled that the initial budget workshop was held on June 22, and public hearings were held on July 27 and September 21. She highlighted the list of Council actions required to adopt the budget on December 7 or 14.

Ms. Lu said the budget totals \$1.7 billion as follows: 1) General Fund, \$474 million; 2) Internal Service and other Operating Funds, \$212 million; 3) Enterprise Funds, \$457 million; 4) Special Purpose Funds, \$74 million; and 5) Capital Investment Funds, \$523 million.

- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to open the public hearing, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

City Clerk Charmaine Arredondo noted that the Council received 13 total written comments on the budget topic and those comments were included as part of the desk packet provided to Council.

The following individuals provided oral comment:

1. Reverend Patty Ebner noted that she is one of the pastors at the First Congregational Church of Bellevue and a member of the Eastside Interfaith Council. She thanked the Council for the City's response to the pandemic, including increased human services funding. She encouraged the City to support the Muslim Community Resource Center and The Sophia Way transitional housing program.
2. Lei Wu encouraged the Council to support funding for the cross-cultural center. She said that she and her husband moved to the United States more than 20 years ago. She said a cross cultural center would bring the community together and provide the opportunity for

everyone to share their values, heritage, customs, arts, and history. Ms. Wu encouraged the Council to engage the public in planning the cross-cultural center.

3. Samuel Rodriguez said he is the founder and CEO of a company that works in the areas of equity, diversity, and inclusion. He said the cross-cultural center provides the opportunity for businesses, organizations, faith communities, cultural groups, parents, volunteers, and others to become engaged in learning and sharing their cultures.
4. Matt Jack, Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA), expressed support for the preliminary budget released in October. He noted the BDA-Chamber of Commerce joint letter of support in the meeting materials. He said the budget responds to the revenue shortfall related to the pandemic while funding vital services and capital projects that support recovery and growth.
5. Chris Johnson, Bellevue Chamber of Commerce, said the BDA and the Chamber encourage the City to continue investing in its COVID-19 response and economic recovery, maintain current funding levels for the Police and Fire Departments, continue supporting human services, and to consider a phased opening of Fire Station 10. Mr. Johnson urged the Council to adopt the one-percent property tax adjustment. He encouraged the City to be aggressive in implementing transportation projects and to seek grant funding. He thanked Councilmembers for their leadership through difficult times. He said the BDA and the Chamber look forward to continued collaboration with the City.
6. Weitong Wang, a high school student, expressed enthusiasm for the cross-cultural center. He said the center would provide accessible space and programs for residents of different cultural identities to learn and to support each other. He believes there are other young people like him who would be interested in connecting and finding common interests and activities.
7. Jennifer Keller, a Lake Hills resident, said she was speaking on behalf of People for Climate Action (PCA) Bellevue. She thanked the Council for its budget allocation for the implementation of the Environmental Stewardship Plan. She said it is important to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by half by 2030. She encouraged an allocation of at least \$500,000 for the implementation of the plan over the next two years. She thanked the City for its commitment to addressing the seriousness of climate change.
8. April Stevens concurred with Ms. Keller's request that the Council allocate \$500,000 toward the implementation of the Environmental Stewardship Plan over the next two years.
9. Ruth Lipscomb noted the Council's vision statement that "diversity is our strength." She said that with diversity comes friction between people and between groups. She said greater investments are needed to address racial equity and justice. She noted references in the budget to an equity lens but said the concept is not defined. She said there are five references to Amazon in the budget but no references to racial equity. Ms. Lipscomb

encouraged the City to develop a racial equity task force to bring the community together around fulfilling the Council's vision.

10. Christopher Randels encouraged the Council to continue to invest in implementing the Vision Zero safety program elements. He expressed support for pedestrian, bike, and transit infrastructure that promotes sustainable and safe transportation. He thanked the City for including non-motorized transportation facilities in the budget. He thanked the City for the implementation of new pedestrian interval crossings at several intersections. He expressed concern regarding traffic fatalities in Bellevue this year and urged the City to prioritize Vision Zero implementation.
11. Heather Kelley said it is important to center questions of race and equity in all aspects of budgeting. She said she would like to see a formal statement reflecting the City's commitment to addressing racial equity and to the Council's pledge to study police use of force. She urged the City to collect and analyze data to identify the areas in need of attention and improvement. She noted that data enables people to focus on facts instead of personal opinions. She asked the Council to use the budget as a vehicle for creating an equitable community for all.
12. John Bagge thanked Councilmembers for their work and for their support of the Police Department and the public safety budget. He asked staff to follow up with him regarding the per capita spending reflected by the Police Department's budget.
13. Cynthia Cole thanked the City for maintaining full funding for the Police Department and for keeping Bellevue safe. She noted that many protests in other cities resulted in the destruction of minority owned businesses. She thanked the City for its commitment to public safety and racial diversity. She said it is important for minority owned businesses to feel safe in Bellevue.
14. Jared Axelrod, Amazon, said they will be moving 25,000 employees to Bellevue over the next few years. He thanked the City for increasing its human services funding in response to the impacts of the pandemic. He encouraged support for transportation projects and programs to keep pace with growth and to provide multimodal travel options. He expressed support for the City's work on affordable housing and encouraged incentives to address affordability and livability. He expressed support for addressing racial equity. He thanked the Council and staff for the thoughtfulness and pragmatism reflected in the budget.
15. JD Yu, a Somerset resident, said he is president of the Seattle Chinese Cultural Theater. He expressed support for the cross-cultural center and noted the need for facilities and programming to bring the community together. He thanked the Council for funding the cross-cultural center feasibility study and encouraged them to provide funds for additional conceptual design work. He thanked the Council for continuing to support and fund the Police Department.

16. Dennis Curran, Vice President of Administrative Services, Bellevue College, expressed support for the Bellevue College Connection project. He said Bellevue College, King County Metro, and the City of Bellevue have worked together over the past two years to develop a strong partnership. He said the project will greatly enhance transit service for the college. He urged the Council to provide funding to help the college and Metro achieve 100-percent design of the project.
17. Valeriy Goloborodko said he is an immigrant from Ukraine. He described his extensive involvement in the local and regional Ukraine community, including serving as Honorary Consul of Ukraine. He was a co-founder of the Pacific Ukrainian Society, which started the annual Northwest Ukrainian International Festival. Until this year, that event was held in Crossroads Park and became the largest Ukrainian cultural event on the West Coast with last year's attendance of more than 15,000 people. He expressed support for the cross-cultural center. While he believes that performances and exhibits are important, he would like the center to also provide space for cultural organizations to work together on projects and events.
18. Ngaya Swai, a college student, advocated for the creation of a community court in Bellevue for alternative problem solving that is meant to identify and address the underlying issues that are causing criminal activity. The court could handle many misdemeanor crimes that are often committed out of survival or due to mental health issues, such as sleeping in a park or disorderly conduct. He said community courts address the causes of criminal activity and they have been shown to reduce recidivism, resulting in lower jail costs. He noted that there are community courts in Shoreline and Redmond.
19. Marrene Franich, a teacher in Bellevue School District, expressed support for funding a racial equity task force. She encouraged the City to collect data on race and policing in Bellevue. She suggested moving funds from the School Resource Officer (SRO) program, which she feels is problematic, to support the establishment of the task force. She expressed concern that the SRO program is generally unfavorable to students of color. She encouraged a task force of City employees, Councilmembers, local racial equity groups, youth organizations, and others.
20. David Allen asked the Council to increase funding for safe bike and pedestrian infrastructure. He expressed support for improving the Mountains to Sound Greenway and the bicycle network. He described his work with companies and universities and their bike commute programs. He said that Amazon, Facebook, and T-Mobile are interested in efforts to encourage bike commuting.
21. Mark Berejka, Director of Government and Community Affairs, REI Co-op, expressed support for the Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan, especially the Vision Zero Action Plan and other bike and pedestrian safety projects. He expressed support for an extensive bicycle network from Main Street to the Spring District.

22. Al Rosenthal expressed support for fully funding the Police Department. He expressed concern regarding housing and services for the homeless. He wondered whether having individuals living in homelessness will attract more homeless individuals. He opined that drug addiction is the problem, not the lack of housing. He urged the Council to not waste money on addressing climate change because he does not believe it is a threat to the human race.
 23. Margaret Li encouraged the Bellevue Police Department to hire a mental health correspondent to assist police officers in the field. She said the correspondents program has been successful in a number of cities in Washington. She suggested that having trained counselors will improve communication, defuse tension, and avoid detainment in certain situations. She encouraged additional training for police officers.
- Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis moved to close the public hearing, and Councilmember Stokes seconded the motion.
- The motion carried by a vote of 7-0.

10. Study Session

(a) 2021-2022 Budget Discussion

Mayor Robinson invited Councilmembers to raise questions and comments with staff, and to later discuss each Councilmember's recommendations.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis thanked everyone for their comments during the public hearing. He observed that key issues included environmental stewardship, diversity, cross-cultural center, public safety, racial equity, and transportation.

Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis regarding body cameras for police officers, Police Chief Steve Mylett said they began exploring camera programs shortly after he joined the City. Staff learned about the experiences of other cities and was advised to hire a consultant who could provide an independent, objective review. Staff also heard advice from other cities to engage the community and to give them a voice in the development of the program. Chief Mylett said the City is currently evaluating different options for the purchase of car cameras and/or body cameras. He said the Bellevue Police Foundation has committed to helping with the capital costs for the cameras.

Councilmember Barksdale noted Margaret Li's comments during the public hearing regarding the mental health correspondents program and asked whether the City has a similar program. Chief Mylett said the Police Department is exploring whether to establish a Community Assistance Response Team (CART) program to provide better services for individuals suffering from mental illness and/or in crisis. He noted that the Fire Department has the CARES (Citizen Advocates for Referral and Education Services) program comprised of social workers and students who assist with individuals experiencing homelessness and other individuals in crisis.

Chief Mylett said that staff has been studying best practices around the country and has narrowed their focus to the San Antonio model. This approach involves providing additional training in crisis intervention for a unit of officers who will partner with mental health professionals. Chief Mylett acknowledged that some individuals do not belong in jail and are in need of mental health or crisis response services.

Councilmember Barksdale said he would be interested in understanding how this might look as an independent service with its own set of goals and outcomes.

Councilmember Zahn thanked staff for all of their work on the budget and for tracking Councilmembers' suggestions and priorities. She thanked the public for their comments during the earlier hearing.

Ms. Zahn expressed an interest in the community court concept raised during the public hearing. She wondered if the City of Bellevue could partner with the City of Redmond or another jurisdiction that would allow Bellevue to pay for community court services through their programs.

Responding to Ms. Zahn, Transportation Director Andrew Singelakis said he would follow up with more information regarding REI's input and transportation priorities. He said a number of their suggestions are good candidates for multimodal impact fees at some point in the future.

Ms. Zahn requested information regarding the Welcoming Cities Collaborative with the cities of Kirkland and Redmond.

Councilmember Robertson thanked the public for their input. She thanked staff for their hard work and for tracking the Council's memory bank items. She noted that the Transportation Commission will be working on the mobility implementation plan and the concurrency update next year. She said the consideration of multimodal impact fees will follow that work. She said the mobility implementation plan and the concurrency work are both funded in the budget. She would like an update to the Council during the first quarter of 2021 to understand the scope of the work.

Referring to the suggestion to establish a racial equity task force, Ms. Robertson asked about the schedule for the next update of the Diversity Advantage Plan. She wondered whether the task force could be formed to participate in the plan update process. City Manager Brad Miyake said staff would follow up with information regarding the timing of the update to the Diversity Advantage Plan.

Councilmember Robertson said she appreciated the collaboration between the Police Department and the Bellevue Police Foundation to fund cameras. She expressed support for the Fire Department's CARES program and the CART program proposed for the Police Department. She said she did not realize how much the City is funding human services until Jared Axelrod's comments tonight. She is pleased that the City has been able to increase human services funding with so many in the community suffering from the economic and health impacts of the pandemic.

Councilmember Stokes said that the comments regarding racial equity from Amazon and the public are very powerful. He expressed support for additional funding for the Muslim Community Resource Center and The Sophia Way. He expressed support for the implementation of the Vision Zero program and bicycle infrastructure, and for further study of the cross-cultural center. He thanked everyone for their input.

Councilmember Lee commended City staff and the community for their response to the pandemic. He thanked Mr. Axelrod for his thoughtful comments and support to the community. Mr. Lee encouraged support for the multicultural/cross-cultural center. He noted that approximately 70 languages and many different cultures are represented in Bellevue. He said the budget represents the City's good intentions. He said he has heard from the public that there is a desire to connect with each other and to work together to achieve common goals and projects.

Mayor Robinson said there was a question from the public about the Police Department budget per capita and she would like to hear the answer when staff follows up.

Ms. Robinson asked about the Council Contingency Fund and how often it is replenished. She asked about the effects of using half or all of it in the near future. She expressed an interest in providing emergency funding for small businesses until more federal and state monies become available. Mayor Robinson thanked staff and the public for a successful budget process.

Toni Call, Director of the Finance and Asset Management (FAM) Department, said the Council Contingency Fund provides \$2 million over a seven-year period. Staff distributed the money evenly between the years. However, the Council may alter the timing of the use of the funds. She said that, historically, the Council has held closer to a \$7 million Council Contingency Fund. However, the City lowered that amount to a total of \$2 million in response to the budget constraints caused by the pandemic and the related decrease in economic activity. Ms. Call said the Council could choose to use Council Contingency funds in the General Fund instead of in the CIP Plan.

Councilmember Barksdale expressed an interest in understanding how the community court idea might fit with the City's probation services. City Manager Miyake said staff would follow up with more information.

Responding to Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis regarding funding for the Environmental Stewardship Initiative, Ms. Call said there are approximately \$925,000 in the seven-year CIP Plan as well as expenditures within the operating budget (e.g., converting the City fleet to electric vehicles).

Mr. Nieuwenhuis asked whether there are shovel-ready transportation projects, including bike infrastructure projects, that could take advantage of federal stimulus money. Transportation Director Singelakis said that he would forward a list of the shovel-ready projects to the Council. He suggested that, if federal dollars become available, the City should consider pursuing TIFIA (Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act) loan interest reduction or loan forgiveness.

Councilmember Zahn asked for more information regarding the Bellevue College Connection project. She noted that she serves on the National League of Cities (NLC) transportation committee, which has been actively advocating for funding at the national level. Their priorities include Vision Zero principles, transit, multimodal travel options, and bike infrastructure. She wondered whether the Bellevue College Connection project would be a good candidate for federal funding. Mr. Singelakis said that \$400,000 was available in the CIP Plan, and \$100,000 has been spent in collaboration with King County and Bellevue College. He said that none of the partners currently have the \$3 million needed to continue to move the design work forward. He noted, however, that the partners will continue to work together to address the project again in the future.

Ms. Zahn asked whether revenues and potential bonding related to the new sales and use tax for affordable housing will be available next year during the mid-biennium budget process. Ms. Call said the Council could consider a bond measure at any time. Mac Cummins, Director of Community Development, said staff will be coming back to the Council with a number of policy considerations about how it would like to spend the tax collections and whether the City should issue debt. He noted that the tax revenues provide a funding source for mental health services as well.

Councilmember Robertson said she appreciated funding for the Vision Zero program and the bike network, as well as funding to move major transportation projects forward to be able to take advantage of grants. Responding to Ms. Robertson, Ms. Call said she was unsure of the next planned update from the Transportation Department regarding levy projects. Councilmember Robertson said she would like staff to explore using levy funds to conduct a transportation technology study.

Ms. Robertson expressed concern that the City will not be able to continue its current level of maintenance for parks. However, she said it is more important to fully fund the police department because it is a core governmental service. Regarding the Council Contingency Fund, Ms. Robertson advocated for spending not more than \$285,000 in the first year. She recalled that there was a \$25 million Council Contingency Fund before the 2008 recession.

Councilmember Robertson noted her support for the cross-cultural center and for restoring the Fire Department's training administration position with funding from Basic Life Support (BLS) transport fees.

Councilmember Stokes said he would like to receive more information from staff regarding suggestions from the public advocating for bike infrastructure and environmental stewardship priorities. He said it would be helpful during the Council's final deliberations to hear how those suggestions might affect the budget. He said he shares Councilmember Robertson's concern regarding park maintenance.

Councilmember Lee said the Council is approaching the end of the budget discussions. He commended the City's investments in human services and small businesses. He noted the importance of prioritizing needs and investing where it will produce the greatest benefits. He

expressed support for the cross-cultural center and noted that funding will likely come from the Council Contingency Fund. He encouraged moving forward with the project and identifying key deliverables and milestones.

Mayor Robinson recalled that the Neighborhood Enhancement Program (NEP) was put on hold during the last recession. She asked whether that could be done again and what the impact would be to the rotating schedule with neighborhoods. She asked whether funding from the program could be used for parks maintenance because parks benefit everyone in the community.

Ms. Robinson said she continues to be concerned about small businesses and how soon federal and state funding might become available to help them. Ms. Call said that \$725,000 are allocated annually to the NEP. Mr. Cummins said the Council could choose to place the program on hold and to reallocate the funds. He noted that would affect staffing because there is a program manager responsible for the program. He said staff will provide further analysis of the impact of shifting money between parks maintenance and the NEP.

Jesse Canedo, Chief Economic Development Officer, said the governor's office has indicated that the application process for financial assistance to small businesses is anticipated to begin in 3-4 weeks, and distributing the funds is expected to take an additional 4-6 weeks. Mayor Robinson expressed concern that two months is a long time for businesses that are barely surviving. Mr. Canedo confirmed that the City has identified approximately \$500,000 in need from local small businesses.

Councilmember Zahn wondered whether there are opportunities for partnerships to benefit small businesses. She asked whether the City could provide bridge funding until businesses can access federal and state funds. Mr. Cummins said staff will follow up with information regarding past and potential future partnerships.

Ms. Zahn asked whether Bellevue's Diversity Advantage Plan specifically addresses racial equity. Mr. Miyake said staff would follow up with Ms. Zahn.

Councilmember Lee asked about the City's current transportation technology funding and projects. He suggested using some of the funds for Vision Zero and climate change priorities. Responding to Mr. Lee, Mr. Singelakis said there is \$150,000 in the budget for transportation partnerships involving smart technology. Mr. Singelakis said it would be good for staff to provide an update next year regarding Bellevue's Smart City projects and initiatives. Mr. Lee reiterated his interest in partnerships, including with corporate entities. However, he noted that the City should provide the leadership.

Mayor Robinson asked whether bridge funding is a possible scenario and whether the City could be reimbursed later from state funding. Mr. Canedo said he would follow up with more information. He noted that providing grants to small businesses is extremely complicated in this state.

Councilmember Barksdale said that he and Councilmember Zahn propose a budget amendment requesting \$150,000 for the biennium in support of racial equity through the Bellevue Centers

Communities of Color Initiative. Mr. Barksdale said the community must engage in conversations related to race and racial equity. He said that more than half of Bellevue residents are minorities. Given the Council vision statements that “diversity is our strength” and “Bellevue welcomes the world,” Mr. Barksdale said the City should address the needs of Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) who do not feel the sense of belonging that we aspire for our community.

Mr. Barksdale said that traditional models of community engagement often fail due to the failure to provide authentic and safe spaces for discussion about race and equity. The Bellevue Centers Communities of Color Initiative would allow the establishment of a coordinating team comprised of community members that would lead the planning and implementation, while instilling empathy, trust and awareness through these necessary conversations. The goal is to build racial literacy skills across public, private and nonprofit stakeholder groups throughout our community and to foster community partnerships toward identifying recommendations for actions with racial equity outcomes. Councilmember Barksdale requested the Council’s support of the proposed amendment.

Councilmember Zahn said the Council needs to make a commitment and a pledge to racial equity and to engage the voices of those in the community who are often not heard. She suggested co-creating with the public what racial equity means for the community. She commended the City for reviewing its police use of force policy but noted that there are many more components to racial equity. She expressed support for the cross-cultural center as one avenue for addressing racial equity.

Councilmember Barksdale proposed a budget amendment requesting \$150,000 annually for funding a senior policy professional or policy analyst in the Council Office. He appreciates the work of staff and the Leadership Team to respond to questions and policy issues for the Council. He noted, however, that Council’s questions and requests of staff often pull them away from their regular departmental activities to conduct preliminary research and analysis. He proposed a dedicated staff person to assist the Council with policy research and analysis to enable them to more deeply understand policy issues.

Mr. Barksdale proposed a budget amendment requesting \$50,000 annually in support of enhancing the City’s business intelligence capability about understanding the needs in our community and ensuring that services are responsive to those evolving needs.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis noted previous Council discussion regarding the creation of a technical advisory group (TAG) to engage with the implementation of the Environmental Stewardship Plan. He would like to add this as a potential budget amendment. Responding to Mr. Nieuwenhuis, Ms. Call said the cost of managing a TAG would depend on the scope, size and frequency of their meetings and involvement.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis referred to the joint work of the Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA) and Bellevue Chamber of Commerce in responding to the pandemic. He requested providing one-time \$20,000 payments to each organization to help them continue their good work with the business community.

Mr. Nieuwenhuis expressed his support for the cross-cultural center and for Councilmember Robertson's request to fund the Fire Department training administration staff position.

Councilmember Zahn highlighted the key priorities of affordable housing needs, human services, small business grants, public safety, the cross-cultural center, racial equity, transportation projects, and the environment.

Ms. Zahn proposed initiating the use of the \$2.5 million for Vision Zero implementation in 2021, and spreading the balance over the remainder of the seven-year CIP Plan. She said there have been a number of traffic fatalities this year in Bellevue. Ms. Zahn said the growth corridor issue also has urgency. She would like to receive annual reporting on the Vision Zero program accomplishments.

Councilmember Zahn expressed support for the Bellevue College Connection project. She said it is important to make sure this is a highly competitive project that may be eligible for grant funding. She encouraged continuing to work with King County Metro and Bellevue College and perhaps other partners.

Ms. Zahn expressed support for increasing funding for the implementation of the Environmental Stewardship Plan. She suggested creating a line item of \$100,000 annually for rapid, early win actions. She said it is important to have sufficient funding to quickly move the environmental efforts forward. She said she would rather direct funds toward actions than toward staff time to manage a TAG. She reiterated her support for the cross-cultural center.

Councilmember Robertson asked staff to provide a budget proposal for consideration on December 7 for restoring the Fire Department training administration staff position. She said the position survived the last recession and the staff person is needed to support training activities, especially for new employees as longtime employees continue to retire. Ms. Robertson said the cost of the position is \$80,000. Ms. Robertson suggested setting the BLS transport fee at \$950 to fund the position, noting that the amount falls slightly above the median fee in the region.

Ms. Robertson noted her support for the cross-cultural center proposal. She observed that there are a number of sizable budget amendment requests without information about how they will be funded. She suggested that Councilmembers include their recommendations for funding their budget proposals.

Councilmember Stokes reiterated his suggestion to provide funding to the Muslim Community Resource Center, especially as they respond to needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic. He expressed support for the proposed \$150,000 in racial equity resources. He expressed support for continuing to study the cross-cultural center concept. He suggested that more discussion is needed in the future about the objectives of the initiative and whether a dedicated building is necessary to accomplish the goals and desired outcomes.

Mr. Stokes said it is important now to address urgent needs. He expressed an interest in further discussion about assisting small businesses and individuals in Bellevue.

Councilmember Lee said he supports his colleagues' great ideas, including in the area of racial equity. He said the cross-cultural center addresses a number of the City's priorities, including to bring people together to share their experiences. He hopes the private sector will partner with the City to support the center. Councilmember Lee expressed support for transportation technologies, multimodal transportation system elements, and environmental initiatives.

Mayor Robinson said she would like to use the Council Contingency Fund to invest \$100,000 in creating a cross-cultural center TAG that would meet for one year and have staff support. The group would develop the scale, goals, purpose, budget, and the preferred concept for a cultural center.

Ms. Robinson suggested using \$100,000 from the Council Contingency Fund to establish a racial equity TAG to help guide policy and to make recommendations. The group would be supported by City staff and would meet over a one-year period.

Ms. Robinson said she would like to prioritize the rapid implementation of the Vision Zero projects, especially those included in the pedestrian-bike program.

Mayor Robinson suggested that Councilmembers indicate whether they support the budget amendments that have been proposed this evening.

Councilmember Barksdale asked Councilmembers to highlight their proposed amendments again during the next round of comments. Mr. Barksdale reminded the Council of his proposed amendments regarding the Bellevue Centers Communities of Color Initiative, adding a professional policy analyst to the Council office, and adding language to the Utilities objective about identifying opportunities for future innovations that help improve system reliability and storm water management. Mr. Barksdale recalled his comments during a previous Council meeting regarding his interest in leveraging innovative technology. He suggested identifying opportunities for new technologies in order to be prepared to move forward when funding becomes available.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis noted his support for the establishment of an Environmental Stewardship TAG and for his proposal to contribute funding to the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce and the BDA for their work with the small business community.

Councilmember Zahn recalled her proposed budget amendments regarding Vision Zero, Bellevue College Connection project, the growth corridor, and environmental stewardship rapid, early win actions.

Councilmember Robertson noted her proposed amendment to retain the Fire Department training administration staff position and to fund it through BLS transport fees.

Councilmember Stokes recalled his proposed allocations of \$50,000 for the Muslim Community Resource Center and \$50,000 for The Sophia Way. He expressed support for allocating \$100,000 to the cross-cultural center work. Mr. Stokes expressed support for the proposed budget

amendment presented by Councilmember Barksdale and Councilmember Zahn to address racial equity.

Councilmember Lee noted that the cross-cultural center has a purpose beyond arts and culture. Responding to Mr. Lee, Councilmember Stokes said that he is not convinced that a new structure is needed to implement a more robust cross-cultural program. Mr. Stokes expressed concern about constructing a new building without defining the objectives and desired outcomes.

Mr. Lee said he supports Councilmember Robertson's proposal for retaining the Fire Department training administration staff position. He expressed support for implementing the Environmental Stewardship Plan.

Mayor Robinson described her proposal to spend \$100,000 for staff support to create a cultural center TAG to engage in a broad community process about what the center could be and how it would benefit the community. She said there are many people in Bellevue who are qualified and eager to be involved in developing recommendations for a cultural center. Ms. Robinson said her second proposal is to use \$100,000 to create a staff-supported racial equity TAG to assist in reviewing policies, goals, and programs.

Mayor Robinson suggested that everyone state which proposals they do and do not support.

Councilmember Barksdale said he supported contributing \$50,000 to the Muslim Community Resource Center and \$50,000 to The Sophia Way. He expressed support for creating the environmental stewardship TAG and for Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis' proposal to provide \$20,000 each to the BDA and the Bellevue Chamber of Commerce for their work with small businesses. Mr. Barksdale noted his support for the racial equity TAG, growth corridor work, Vision Zero, and the Bellevue College Connection project. Mr. Barksdale said he supports retaining the Fire Department's training administration position as well.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis observed that there are many good, important, and beneficial ideas and he wishes the City could fund all of them. He expressed support for the cross-cultural center, the three TAGs (i.e., cultural center, racial equity, environmental stewardship), Fire Department training administration position, and Councilmember Zahn's Vision Zero proposal.

Councilmember Zahn expressed support for the Fire Department staff position and for Councilmember Stokes' proposed funding to the Muslim Community Resource Center and The Sophia Way. Ms. Zahn asked whether the cultural center TAG and the work to advance the cross-cultural center to preliminary conceptual design are one or two proposals. She believes it is important to have designers and architects that can help bring the vision of the need and the programming into some concepts and cost estimates, and to identify potential locations, similar to what was done to study the aquatic center. Ms. Zahn expressed support for the item regarding utilities data. She expressed an interest in Councilmember Barksdale's proposal for a policy analyst in the Council office. She concurred with his suggestion that perhaps an existing employee could fill the position.

Referring to Mr. Nieuwenhuis' proposal to provide a total of \$40,000 to the BDA and the Chamber, Ms. Zahn suggested that the money could instead be distributed as small business grants. Responding to Councilmember Zahn, Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis said the organizations did not request funding. However, he knows that the BDA and the Chamber have done a great deal of work with small businesses, and their revenues and memberships have been significantly impacted by the pandemic.

Ms. Zahn said she would like to understand more about the costs associated with managing the TAGs. She would rather see money spent on actions, for example, from the Environmental Stewardship Plan.

Mayor Robinson said that the cultural center TAG would be a conceptual committee to outline the purpose and goals of a cultural center, potential sites, estimated budget, and other details. She suggested that creating a TAG and providing staff support would allow the community to engage in the process and help to develop the overall concept. Mayor Robinson observed that there are different ideas among Councilmembers about what a cross-cultural center is or could be.

Councilmember Robertson said she needs more information regarding costs, funding sources, and the tradeoffs associated with the proposed budget amendments. Regarding the proposed policy analyst position for the Council office, Ms. Robertson said she does not support bringing in a new person when some departments are currently laying off staff. She said more information is needed to understand the proposals described tonight. She expressed support for the cross-cultural center and suggested that perhaps the Parks and Community Services Board could be involved in engaging the public around that planning effort.

Ms. Robertson said the Bellevue College Connection project is very important. However, the funding was eliminated from the budget because the City's partners are not able to provide funding at this time. She said the project would be a good candidate for future grant funding.

Councilmember Robertson observed that the only proposed amendment with a revenue source is the Fire Department training administration position funded through BLS transport fees. She would like to learn more about the racial equity TAG and task force suggestions. She noted that the Council may use the Council Contingency Fund at any time.

Mr. Miyake suggested that staff develop more details about the budget proposals for discussion with the Council on December 7.

Councilmember Robertson said the Council will need to have amendment language for every proposed budget amendment in the December 7 meeting packet. The proposals should identify the funding source and/or specific tradeoffs in the budget.

Councilmember Stokes concurred with Councilmember Robertson's suggestion about how to proceed. He said he looks forward to reviewing additional details regarding the budget proposals on December 7.

Councilmember Lee reiterated his support for the cross-cultural center and said he looks forward to additional conversation about all of the proposals.

Mayor Robinson said she came into the meeting with some ideas of things she wanted, and some of those have changed after listening to her colleagues, staff, and the public. She suggested that it is important to establish a cultural center TAG at this time to combine all of the ideas from people in the community about the purpose for the facility.

Ms. Robinson said there are many issues, concerns, and recommendations that could be addressed by the racial equity TAG. She expressed an interest in the suggestion for creating a community court. She strongly supports funding for creating the TAG and for establishing the scope and goals of their work.

Mayor Robinson expressed support for Councilmember Robertson's proposal to retain the Fire Department's training administration position. Ms. Robinson recalled that the Council recently agreed to allow an extra funding cycle for human services next year if additional funds are available. She suggested that Councilmember Stokes' proposed grants to the Muslim Community Resource Center and The Sophia Way could be addressed at that time.

Regarding suggestions to increase funding to implement environmental stewardship actions, Mayor Robinson said the Council will receive quarterly updates on the recently updated Environmental Stewardship Plan. She suggested waiting to see how things progress and engaging with the community before creating an environmental stewardship TAG. Ms. Robinson expressed support for Vision Zero implementation, ped-bike infrastructure, and multimodal transportation.

Councilmember Zahn said she would like to work with Mayor Robinson and Councilmember Barksdale to discuss their racial equity concepts. As the incoming Co-Vice Chair of the National League of Cities (NLC) racial equity and leadership committee, Ms. Zahn said there are a number of resources for addressing those issues. Ms. Zahn noted her support for Vision Zero implementation and the rapid growth corridor.

Mayor Robinson asked whether the BDA and Bellevue Chamber of Commerce are eligible to apply for small business grants for their own operations. Mr. Canedo said they received grants under the last program authorized by the Council.

(b) Briefing on the Expansion of Outdoor and On-Street Dining Areas in Old Bellevue *[Item postponed.]*

(c) Regional Issues *[Written update in meeting packet.]*

11. Land Use: None.

12. Other Ordinances, Resolutions, and Motions: None.

13. Unfinished Business: None.

14. New Business: None.

15. Executive Session

At 9:45 p.m., Mayor Robinson declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 30 minutes to discuss pending litigation.

16. Adjournment

The Executive Session concluded at 10:22 p.m. and the meeting was adjourned.

Charmaine Arredondo, CMC
City Clerk

/kaw