

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on October 18, 2022.

CITY OF BELLEVUE  
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION  
MINUTES

September 20, 2022  
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall  
Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Piper, Commissioners Ma, Mansfield, White  
COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Vice Chair Amirfaiz, Commissioner Singh  
STAFF PRESENT: Christy Stangland, Toni Esparza, Leslie Miller, Donna Adair, Department of Parks and Community Services; Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis, Major Mark Tarantino  
GUEST SPEAKERS: None  
RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Vice Chair Amirfaiz and Commissioner Singh.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – None

4. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Chair Piper noted the receipt of a written communication from Kindering Center since the last Commission meeting.

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

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis reported that the Council on September 19 saw fit to approve the appointment of Angela White to the Commission. Commissioner White will be a great addition to the Commission.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis noted the Council also approved an ordinance authorizing the city manager to enter into an agreement with Imagine Housing for the Samma Senior Apartments. The recommendation from ARCH was approved to amend the 2021-2022 Housing Fund by allowing for an additional \$2 million, essentially passthrough dollars, donated by Amazon for the project. Amazon has been and continues to be a great community partner.

The Council also received an update regarding the economic impacts of the recent successful

Rock ‘n Roll half marathon event. A few businesses were inconvenienced, something that will be addressed next time, but the city benefited to the tune of \$5 million. There were 10,500 runners who participated, and all hotels were sold out. It is positive that the city is viewed as being able to host such events.

Commissioner White noted being a Bellevue resident since 2012 and having a business on SE 9<sup>th</sup> Street at the base of the Woodridge neighborhood close to the East Link walking path.

The Commissioners and staff introduced themselves to Commissioner White.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis announced that Commissioner Ma was resigning from the Commission to attend to family matters. The dedicated work of Commissioner Ma on behalf of the Commission was acknowledged. Notice of the vacancy on the Commission has been posted and the Commissioners were encouraged to share it.

Human Services Manager Leslie Miller remarked that the application submittal deadline had been extended by one week to allow more time to get the word out in the community.

6. STAFF AND COMMISSIONER REPORTS – None

7. INFORMATION FOR THE COMMISSION

8. OLD BUSINESS

A. Finalize 2023-2024 Human Services General Fund Allocation Recommendations

By way of background, Leslie Miller explained that the Commission had been working over the last few months reviewing the funding applications submitted that totaled more than \$10 million. Given only \$5 million to allocate, some difficult decisions had to be made. The recommendation of the funding allocations to the City Council is the final step in the process for the Commission.

No changes were proposed by the Commissioners to the preliminary recommendations.

A short break was taken to review the bylaws in regard to the number of Commissioners needed to vote to finalize the recommendations.

**\*\*BREAK\*\***

A motion to move the funding recommendations to the City Council was made by Commissioner Mansfield. The motion was seconded by Commissioner White and the motion carried unanimously.

Leslie Miller led the group in a round of applause for all of the Commission’s hard work.

B. Updated Proposed 2023 Community Development Block Grant Allocations

Leslie Miller explained that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars flow to the city from the federal government annually and the allocations must be approved in a separate action. It was noted that one of the recommendations was made contingent on work that needed to be done by an agency. It is the amount earmarked for that agency that has triggered the need to revise the recommendations.

Community Development Block Grant Administrator/Housing Repair Specialist Donna Adair

said the initial recommendations were before the Commission on July 19, but since then there have been some changes. The Seattle Business Education Hub was funded by the Commission for 2021 and 2022. Staff had originally recommended funding the agency at \$100,000 for 2023, contingent on the agency's ability to come into compliance with federal regulations and record keeping practices. Staff provided technical assistance to the agency and in so doing it became clear to both staff and the agency that both had misunderstood the intent of the program. After a lengthy discussion, the agency decided not to continue with funding in 2022 and withdrew its application for 2023 funding. That resulted in there being \$100,000 from the 2022 funding as well as the same amount recommended for 2023 to deal with.

At the July 19 meeting, there was \$175,805 available from the prior year. That amount has now been increased by \$100,000. The projected 2023 program income in the amount of \$249,995, and the projected 2023 Bellevue entitlement of \$808,000, has not changed, bringing the total projected available funds for the 2023 program year to \$1,333,800. Staff recommended funding public services to the 15 percent cap for a total of \$166,200; planning and administration to the 20 percent cap for a total of \$211,600; and capital projects totaling \$956,000. Specific to capital projects, the recommendation to fund the Major Home Repair program at \$586,000 remains unchanged. While the Minor Home Repair program is typically funded through Sound Generations, over the past two years that program has spent less money. Their funding for 2022 was halved but they are still working to spend down their 2021 and 2022 funding, thus no funding for 2023 has been recommended. The revised recommendation looks to allocate \$370,000 to microenterprise assistance.

Donna Adair said the experience with Seattle Business Hub triggered the need to step back and reexamine all of the microenterprise assistance applications for 2023. It was determined that two of the agencies were not asking for enough resources to be successful. It was also discovered that the programs can be more successful by offering more in-depth assistance to potential small business developers and current business owners. Microbusinesses by definition have five or fewer employees, one or more of which may be the owners of the business. There were meetings with each of the agencies and each application was carefully reviewed. The recommendation of staff was that they participate in a cohort, which would initially be offered monthly for staff to provide technical assistance to the agencies. The meetings would be reduced to quarterly once everyone is on the same page. The agencies were also asked to analyze their funding requests and to propose new budgets with additional funding to ensure program success. Two of the agencies had wanted to provide stipends for Bellevue residents to attend business training classes, but staff recommended that instead they should provide small business grants after they go through the training classes.

As recommended, the \$370,000 for microenterprise assistance would be allocated as follows: 4Tomorrow – Latino Microenterprise Project, \$150,000; Bihug Korean Resource Center – Microenterprise Growth, Support and Training, \$100,000; and Indian American Community Services – Small Business Assistance Project, \$120,000. The agencies serve different minority populations.

4Tomorrow works with Latinx microenterprise organizations. They will be creating quarterly cohorts for Spanish-speaking Bellevue residents, and will be providing training and one-on-one personalized support for business proceedings. They will also use funding to help create greater economic stability and security for small business owners. They plan to hire a CPA and to provide paid legal consultation and support in part of the case manager's salary and a percentage of the executive director salary. Small grants will be provided to participants who successfully complete the training and demonstrate a need for the grants.

Bihug Korean Resource Center will be using the funds to support the employment of a half-time staff as well as for marketing and outreach, and to pay for professional services to help

with technical assistance. They will also provide resources and support to small businesses within the Korean community, and will be focused on building resiliency for small business owners in Bellevue by minimizing financial health and educational disparities of the disadvantaged population they work with. Help with improving language and cultural barriers will also be provided. The agency will also be providing small business incubation grants.

Indian American Community Services also will be supporting struggling small businesses with technical assistance, and will provide help in applying for relief funds. They will be providing workshops on businesses licensing, labor practices, marketing and web development. Some funds will be used to hire a small business coordinator and a lead to provide the training. Funds will also be used to pay for consultations and to provide small grants to their participants. The agency has served as an important lifeline to small businesses throughout the pandemic.

Deputy Mayor Nieuwenhuis asked how small business is defined, and what the reporting requirements. Donna Adair said a small business is defined as having five or fewer employees, including the owner of the business. The reporting metrics will depend on their scope of work once the contracts are executed. Leslie Miller added that the family income of the business owner cannot be more than 80 percent of area median income. Donna Adair noted that in addition to the income requirements, the other two objectives for CDBG funding are urgent need and slum or blight areas.

Chair Piper observed that each of the agencies are poised to serve specific communities but asked if members of all communities can participate. Donna Adair allowed that the programs are open to all.

A motion to send the recommendations to the City Council was made by Commissioner Mansfield. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mansfield and the motion carried unanimously.

Staff led the room in another round of applause for the Commission's hard work.

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

### A. Commissioner Requests to Participate in Future Meetings Remotely

A motion to approve remote participation by Chair Piper and Commissioner Mansfield on October 4, and for Commissioners Mansfield and White on October 18, was made by Commissioner Mansfield. The motion was seconded by Commissioner White and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Piper took a moment to voice appreciation for the work of Commissioner Ma over the years, noting that the insights brought to the table were always insightful.

Christy Stangland agreed with Chair Piper, adding that Commissioner Ma always brought a different approach to the conversations, leading the Commission to think outside the box.

Department of Parks and Community Services assistant director Toni Esparza said Commissioner Ma was unique in teaching the ability to navigate conversations of different perspectives with inclusivity. That was modeled very well when serving as the Commission chair.

Leslie Miller shared that on October 4 the Commission will be reviewing applications in response to the RFP for the Housing Stability Program. Recommendations from the

Commission must be delivered to the Council on October 24. The applications will be forwarded to the Commissioners as soon as they come in to facilitate the review process.

Toni Esparza said the expectation is that between 10 and 15 applications will be submitted.

10. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS – None

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

Chair Piper adjourned the meeting at 6:53 p.m.