

## **BELLEVUE NETWORK ON AGING**

### **MINUTES**

**June 6, 2024.**

Hybrid Meeting held at North Bellevue Community Center, 8:30a – 10:30a

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Anne Rittenhouse; Beverly Heyden; Andrea Kline; Kari Marino; Elaine White; Beth Hanley; Abigail Brown; Julie Hart; Bhavana Pahwa; Barbara Carey

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Eleanor Lee; Shana Aucsmith;

**STAFF PRESENT:** Dan Lassiter -Community Services Supervisor; Christy Stangland – HS Planner, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

**GUESTS:** Kaylin Dahms; Pamela Williams; Siobhan – King County Ombudsman Program

**PRESENTER(S):** King County Ombudsman Program

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Daniel Lassiter, Bellevue Parks & Community Services

**WELCOME AND ROLL CALL:** The meeting was called to order by Anne Rittenhouse

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** May 2024 minutes were approved.

**Presentation: King County Long Term Care Ombudsman Program by Kalin Dahms, Pamela William, Siobhan**

King County Long Term Care Ombudsman Program purpose is: **Ensuring the rights, dignity, and well-being of individuals living in long-term care**". It is a program of "Educating, Empowering and Advocating".

**The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program** is the first line of protection for nearly 78,000 vulnerable adults living in licensed long-term care. The word “ombudsman” is a Swedish word meaning “to advocate for another.” In Washington we use the term “ombuds.” The program is mandated and funded by the federal Older Americans Act.

The role of the Ombudsman Program is to:

- Protect and Promote the Rights (state and federal) of all long-term care Residents
- Complaint finding and resolution
- Advocating on behalf of long-term care residents
- Educating others: residents, families, providers, elected officials’ policymakers, media and public
- Systems change advocate- working to improve the overall system of long-term care (legislative, rules, policies)

This program is unique as it is: 1. governed by federal and state laws 2. But not part of government (Independent) 3. Not neutral – always on resident’s side 4. Not mandated Reporters.

What does an Ombudsman Do?

- Provide information to Residents about long-term care services and their rights.
- Identify, investigate, and resolve complaints made by or on behalf of Residents.
- Provide technical support for the development of resident and family councils.
  - Advocate for changes to improve residents’ quality of life and care.
- Ensure residents have regular and timely access to the ombudsman program

## **RCW 70.129 RESIDENTS RIGHTS**

The legislature finds that the public interest would be best served by providing the same basic resident rights in all long-term care settings. Residents in nursing facilities are guaranteed certain rights by federal law and regulation, 42 U.S.C. 1396r and 42 C.F.R. part 483. It is the intent of the legislature to extend those basic rights to residents in veterans' homes, assisted living facilities, enhanced services facilities, and adult family homes.

## **Resident Rights under the code.**

**Abuse/restraints** – You must be protected from mental and physical abuse, and chemical and physical restraints.

**Personal Property/Storage Space-** You must be allowed to use your own clothing and possessions as space permits.

**Mail & Telephone Privacy-** You must be provided with privacy for telephone calls. Your personal mail must arrive sealed.

**Advocacy, Access & Visitation Rights-** You must have privacy for visits from family, friends, ombudsmen, State representatives and your individual physician.

**Waiver of Liability & Resident Rights-** You do not have to sign waivers that release the facility of liability for losses of personal property or injury.

**Intent/Basic Rights-** You should have a safe, clean, comfortable, homelike environment to live in and be encouraged and assisted to exercise your rights as a resident and citizen. Your facility is responsible for providing a rights-friendly environment.

**Disclosure, Transfers & Discharge** – You can be transferred or discharged only after written notice is given and only for increased medical needs, safety, non-payment or facility closure. You may also appeal against the decision.

**Grievances** – You may complain, and the facility must make efforts to resolve your grievances.

**Find Financial Affairs** – You can manage your financial affairs, or you can request that the facility hold, safeguard, and account for your funds.

**Notice of Rights & Services** – You should be informed of your rights and the rules and policies of the facility, orally and in writing, and told of all costs and services available before you are admitted.

**Fees & Notice Disclosure Requirements** – You should be informed orally and in writing about any charges covered or not included in the basic rate, and any charges that occur during your stay at the facility.

**Quality of Life/Preferences** – You should be informed of your health condition and need to approve your Plan of Care. You can participate in social, religious and community activities as much as desired.

**Privacy & Confidentiality of Records.** – You can refuse any treatment, and your personal and medical records are confidential.

**RCW 43.190, WAC 365.18.060 authorizes and mandates Ombudsman:**

- *Access to facilities (• Nursing Homes/Skilled Nursing "SNF" • Assisted Living/Memory Care • Adult Family Homes • Continued Care Retirement Communities "CCRC" (minus Independent Living)*
- *Private access to residents*
- *Access to records AUTHORITY*
- *"Unusually strict" disclosure laws*

## **King County COMPLAINT OUTCOMES**

TOTAL of 800 complaints: • 81% partially or fully satisfied • 4% Not satisfied • 15% Withdrawn or canceled • 6 Full-time staff • 23 Volunteers donated 1675 hours

## **Interested in becoming an Ombudsman?**

### **INFORMATION**

36-hour training 1 year commitment 16-hours per month required 1 monthly volunteer meeting  
INFORMATION 10-hour on the job training Annual Volunteer Appreciation.

Washington State Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program: 1800-562-6028

Email: [Ltcop@mschelps.org](mailto:Ltcop@mschelps.org)

Web: [www.waombudsman.org](http://www.waombudsman.org)

## **Human Services Report – Christy Stangland**

Christy reports that the Human Services funding applications are being reviewed. 7million is available and 20million in requests have been received. At least six of the requests are related to older adult needs. Christy indicated that groups that are small typically do not apply as they do not have the infrastructure for the required reporting. Community members are involved with the decision-making process and these community members were chosen from the city-council derived committees of BDAN, Youth Services and one who receives funding. Decisions will be presented to the council sometime between July and September.

Christy reports that the “Safe Parking” site has been open for a month and this last week the last space was filled. All spaces are for those with families and are being reported as very successful.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** *Members were asked to read the committee reports before the meeting for discussion.*

### **Advocacy Committee Report – Abigail**

The Advocacy Committee is currently working on a Legislative agenda in cooperation with the Kirkland Senior Council.

The team continues to seek businesses on the eastside that would provide a discount to older adults and be included as part of The Gold Card program.

Nothing to report beyond what is written in the minutes for the June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

### **Outreach Committee Report – Shana**

Farmers Markets July 2 at the Crossroads Market. No new information for the day Senior Day at the Bellevue Farmers Market which will be on Thursday September 5<sup>th</sup>. There will be space for six non-profit older adult supportive agencies.

The Bellevue City Hall on June 1 headed by Mark Heilman went well but did not have a large attendance.

All of BNOA was reminded to continue seeking good locations to distribute the Neighborhood News. Let Shana know of any changes in distribution.

### **Housing and Transportation – Anne**

On May 4<sup>th</sup> there was an Affordable Housing Tour attended by Anne. May 4<sup>th</sup> Affordable Housing Bus Tour (Andrea - Plymouth Crossing Permanent Supportive Housing tour, Shauna & Anne - Polaris Workforce Housing. Also, all toured the Together Center in Redmond, Non-profit Resource Space + Affordable Housing.) Plymouth Crossing in Eastgate is permanent housing with 92 apartments for homeless and disabled. Polaris at Eastgate has 360 units with 60% AMI and is “work force housing”. The first building is at full capacity. There are 72 family sized units with 3 plus bedrooms. Redmond “Together Center” houses both non-profit space and affordable housing. Connects residents to resources. ARCH has office space there now. Older folks are served in this space. Bellevue affordable housing is tied to tax breaks for the developers and expire in 7-10 years. Currently 6000 planned units, 350 in downtown with that 12-year tax incentive. At the Redmond Center the non-profit owns the land so these tax breaks don’t apply to that location. The Together Center has a rooftop playground and community space. Great planning!

### **Community Meetings and Events Attended**

Several members indicated they attended the Alzheimer’s Webinar. Excellent information was provided, and the disease continues to be a huge issue to understand how to manage it in a person’s life. Good healthy living continues to be the current best defense in fighting the disease.

### **Old Business –**

World Older Adult Abuse Awareness Day is June 15<sup>th</sup>, and a Proclamation will be read at the City Council on June 11<sup>th</sup> with Anne Rittenhouse receiving and providing a statement. Planning on attending is Anne, Diana, Bhavana, and Dan.

### **New Business**

TEAMS vs ZOOM discussion. A team of BNOA members met this past month to practice a meeting utilizing the TEAMS application. Recommendations for post-meeting are: 1) Invitations need to have a way to be posted directly to people’s

calendars, 2) Run a practice BNOA meeting with TEAMS with City of Bellevue IT Dept to resolve issues that each member may have. Advantages with TEAMS include the use of the CHAT function again, translation and transcription ability.

NBCC received the King County Veteran, Senior, Human Services, Levy grant for the next 2.5 years. Activity suggested for the grant included supporting: Medicare; Medicaid; healthy living activities; support hospital issues; provide lunch series; set up a consumer complaint system; better develop the website; emphasize dementia friendly activity; continue to provide a variety of cultural support in activities.

*The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 a.m.*