

2018 Activity Report

I. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY OF THE ADVOCACY COMMITTEE IN 2018

1. **GENERAL:** The Bellevue Network on Aging (BNOA) and the Kirkland Senior Council (KSC) have a Joint Advocacy Committee.
2. **LEGISLATIVE AGENDA** Each year the advocacy committee develops a local, state and federal legislative agenda. We recently drafted a proposed state and federal legislative agenda for 2019 and will also develop a 2019 local legislative agenda. The Eastside Human Services Forum (ESHF) generally includes in their legislative agenda some issues from the BNOA-KSC legislative agenda. Diana Thompson, BNOA-KSC advocacy co-chair, regularly partakes in the meetings of the ESHF advocacy committee and has given the ESHF facts and figures related to senior issues.

Our members learn about senior issues through internet research, their work, participation in committee meetings and attending educational events. For example, Diana attends both the meetings of Washington State Senior Citizens Lobby and the meetings of the Seattle-King county Advisory Council on Aging and Disability Services. Both Jullie and Janet, social workers, work with older adults.

3. **SENIOR LOBBY DAY:** Prior to the 2018 Senior Lobby Day we developed a handout for state legislators. Then, on February 22nd, despite the snow in Bellevue and Olympia, some members of the BNOA and KSC attended Senior Lobby day and thus a) attended interesting lectures on senior issues AND b) met with legislators and/or legislative assistants. (Item three of our state legislative agenda requested restoration of the former Medicaid adult hearing aid benefit and the legislature did pass a law requiring Medicaid to cover adult hearing aids.).
4. **AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR SENIORS** Throughout the year the committee focused on Affordable Housing for Seniors, an item emphasized in our state legislative agenda. In March a BNOA advocacy member attended the Kirkland public forum on "Seniors & Property Taxes." At the March Active Senior Fair some advocacy members received feedback from attendees on the negative impact of rising property taxes. In April we spent a full meeting discussing affordable housing and in early July, our invited guest speaker, Shelly Park, spoke to us about co-housing. Later in July we met with Senator Dhingra and discussed the need of affordable and accessible housing for seniors, the effects of increasing property taxes, and the negative impact of current state law on condominium construction. Senator Dhingra is concerned about these issues.

5. **MEETING WITH SENATOR MURRAY'S OFFICE:** In August 2018 we met with Stasha Espinosa, a legislative assistant to Senator Patty Murray and discussed our federal agenda. Stasha was particularly interested in our desire to eliminate the cap on the amount of income, which is subject to social security tax. She wondered whether we had income figures for King County and Washington. Following the meeting we secured income information from Gwen Rosseau of the City of Bellevue and emailed it to Stasha. She expressed appreciation for the information and connected us with a person in Senator Cantwell's office, who has agreed to meet with us.

Because Diana was discussing senior issues at scheduled ESHF appointments with Representatives Smith and Reichert, the advocacy committee decided not to schedule BNOA-KSC meetings with these Congressional Representatives.

6. **CANDIDATES FORUM** on September 28th, at the North Bellevue Community Center, our advocacy committee, together with many other senior organizations including AARP and Aging and Disability Services, hosted a candidate's forum. At the forum the candidates were given information and answered questions on issues that are important to seniors.
7. **SENIOR LOBBY FALL CONFERENCE** on October 11th two members of the BNOA together with a few members of the KSC attended the Senior Lobby Fall Conference to learn more about issues affecting seniors and proposed legislation.
8. **FEDERAL AND STATE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA:** At our November 2018 meeting we discussed what should be included in our 2019 federal and state legislative agendas. We anticipate our recommendations will be approved by the KSC and BNOA.
9. **SMART 911 and Other Emergency Tools:** In early 2018 an advocacy committee member contacted Scott Sotebeer of Norcom to determine when Smart 911 would be extended to Bellevue and Kirkland. She was informed that there were no plans to extend it to Bellevue and Kirkland, that Smart 911 is not secure and is considered obsolete, and that our county is working on the next generation of 911.

A committee member discovered and reported that one can set Samsung and I phones so that first responders can obtain emergency contact information from locked phones.

10. **FUTURE PLANS:** We plan to draft a proposed 2019 local legislative agenda. In addition, we want to develop a new handout for seniors focusing on Medicare Observation Status and hospital discharges. Finally, some BNOA and KSC members will attend Senior Lobby Day in Olympia and meet with legislators or their assistants in February 2019.

II. BNOA Transportation & Housing Committee 2018 Activity Report

- Lobbied at Human Services Commission, Eastside Easy Rider Coalition (EERC), Bellevue Transportation Department, and various transportation workshops to expand transportation options and accessibility for older adults in the City of Bellevue.
- Partnered with Bellevue Human Services Commission and METRO to survey and collect Bellevue senior transportation needs information, participated in a series of four meetings, identified possible options, and will meet in early 2019 to further explore the four transportation options and possible funding mechanisms.
- Supported EERC in their grant request process by writing a Bellevue Network on Aging letter supporting the grant request which would be used for transit training and improved access for Bellevue aging adults.
- Attended regular EERC 2018 meetings to continue advancing/developing transportation options for aging adults.
- Throughout year, also participated in other transportation-focused activities, including. American with Disabilities Act (ADA) focus group, Ride2 Shuttle open house, Coffee-Talk transportation workshops, Puget Sound Regional Commission (PSRC) Vision 2050, and a community transportation summit.

HOUSING:

- Updated the A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) website for 2018 affordable senior housing options on the Eastside.
- Throughout the year also participated in other affordable housing activities, including ARCH Housing 101, SHARE/WHEEL presentation on homelessness, Lunch-n-Learn at IMAGINE Housing, Eastside Neighbors Network on the village living concept, an opioid crisis workshop, and the Legislative Age Wave Forum.

III. BNOA Outreach Committee 2018 Report

Outreach Information/Resources:

- Finalized the BNOA PowerPoint presentation and presented at Newport Church in January, then revised presentation based on feedback from participants.
- Completed training session on using PowerPoint to Outreach Committee Members.

- Updated the BNOA Aging Adult Resources List - validated resource information and updated with additional categories for aging adult services.
- Translated the Vial of Life instructions into Mandarin and Russian and gathered program flyers representing a variety of languages as available (fall prevention, emergency preparedness, and resident's rights in long term care).

Outreach Events of which BNOA participated:

- Overlake Hospital Active Senior Fair.
- Elder Abuse Awareness Day - Diana Thompson received the proclamation at City Council meeting and delivered her presentation on the subject with local examples of reported abuse.
- City of Bellevue-King County Library System (KCLS) Quarterly Resource Fair.
- Crossroads Farmers Market.
- Strawberry Festival – This event is geared to families with many activities for children. Outreach Committee recommended that BNOA discontinue participation in 2019. Approved by BNOA members.
- Bellevue Farmers Market Aging Adult Day – recruited 7 organizations with a focus on aging adult services and concerns to participate at Aging Adult Day at the Market.
- Annual Senior Health Fair developed by Chinese Information Service Center (CISC) at City of Bellevue Parks & Community Department's North Bellevue Community Center (NBCC).
- India Association of Western Washington (IAWW) Health Fair at Bellevue Parks & Community Department's North Bellevue Community Center (NBCC)
- Monthly participation at Alzheimer's Café located at Tutta Bella of Bellevue.
- Kirkland's Volunteer Fair
- PSA on Bellevue TV on Hospital Observation.

Partnership Projects:

- King County Metro Transportation Survey – assisted in reaching out to community for input from seniors.
- Attended the Bellevue Human Services Commission meetings with BNOA Transportation and Housing Committee members to review aging adult transportation options.
- Bellevue Network on Aging, North Bellevue Community Center, Momentia; Patriots Glen and Old Friends Club formed an informal partnership – working to provide activities on the eastside for aging adults and adults living with disabilities.
- Bellevue Farmers Market – organized Annual Aging Adult Day at the Market.