

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

April 18, 2017
6:00 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Villar, Commissioners Bruels, Kline, McEachran, Mercer, Oxrieder, Perelman

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Staci Haber, Hopelink

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Villar who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioner Perelman who arrived at 6:15 p.m.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. March 21, 2017

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McEachran and the motion carried unanimously.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Kline reported that she attended the Phase 2 human services reframing workshop. She said it was well attended and everyone was provided good access to handouts.

Commissioner McEachran said he recently had a second conversation with Rachel Krinski, the new Executive Director of Lifewire. He noted that she had appeared on television responding to the school shooting in San Bernardino and gave a very compelling presentation on domestic violence and how to respond. He noted that he also recently had a conversation with Angela Murray of Sophia Way about the way boards work. Additionally, he said he attended the recent Imagine Housing action with Chair Villar at which about \$510,000 was raised.

Chair Villar said she participated on April 17 in briefing the City Council on the human services needs update. Commissioners McEachran and Oxrieder both attended as well. The Councilmembers were very complimentary of the work done by the Commission and said they should be considered as resources given their links to the community.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie noted that it was National Volunteer Week and took a moment to thank the Commissioners for their services to Bellevue. Bellevue is special given how many are willing to volunteer their time and expertise, and the Council is very appreciative of the work done by the Commissioners.

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said she too was appreciative of the work done by the Commissioners, particularly during the process of updating the Needs Update.

6. DISCUSSION

A. King County Mobility Coalition & Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative (EERC) Updates

Ms. O'Reilly informed the Commission that she attended a training session in 2005 by the National Transit Institute on what they were calling coordinated mobility. Senior Transportation Planner Franz Loewenherz and Cathy VonWald, Parks Enterprise Manager, also attended, as did Francois Larrivee from Hopelink and currently a member of the Transportation Commission. Models from around the country showing how people get to where they need to go were reviewed. Following the session, internal meetings were held to determine what could be done with the information. The Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative was one outcome. The program was focused on increasing mobility options for older adults on the Eastside and was created before the King County Mobility Coalition came into existence.

Staci Haber from Hopelink thanked Ms. O'Reilly for her support and for serving for a number of years as co-chair of the King County Mobility Coalition. She stated that Hopelink is an action agency that offers robust programs throughout the Eastside and North King County. The mission of the organization is to promote self-sufficiency for all members of the community.

Hopelink offers a strong transportation program that includes a Medicaid brokerage with a 24-hour call center to coordinate rides for Medicaid transportation and other medical appointments. The organization also has direct operations in which Hopelink vehicles are used in contract with King County Metro.

Ms. Haber explained that mobility management is defined as empowering all members of the community by facilitating access to opportunities. Transportation is the means to the end, and Hopelink seeks to ensure that people will have the transportation they need to get where they need to go, whether it be for social, recreation, medical, housing, employment or education purposes. The goal is addressed by supporting the coordination of transportation for special needs and other populations, collaborating, assessing the need, and seeking to improve services. An education piece has been designed in support of the coordination efforts; it includes training and orientation for immigrants and refugees to build awareness of existing transportation options. The top priority of the program is to get people to where they need to go, and to increase self-sufficiency by connecting people to opportunities in the community.

The vision of the King County Mobility Coalition is a coordinated transportation network that ensure that all people are able to move freely around King County and the Puget Sound region. It is important to think regionally because the populations served do not think about jurisdictional boundaries in seeking to get where they need to go. The Coalition is made up of more than 30 agencies, including rural and urban transportation providers, non-profit agencies serving special needs clients, and system users. The organization is co-chaired by Priscilla Vargas, Director of Paratransit and Rideshare Operations for King County Metro, and Ms. O'Reilly. There are members who are data- and project-driven who want to be assigned to tasks, and others who are more interested in learning about transportation. At the quarterly meetings there are presentations about transportation and discussions about various needs.

Ms. O'Reilly said it is in everyone's best interest to get people off of Access and into actual fixed-route bus services because of the big cost difference. Access van trips cost as much as \$40, for which the rider pays only about \$1.50. Those attending the meetings representing King County Metro have brought a lot of resources to the table and have been receptive to things like co-sponsoring grant applications. To have a major transit company as part of a grant request is significant to funders like the Federal Transportation Administration.

Commissioner Bruels asked if there is any interest in offering a critique of how society is organized around the automobile, which favors those who can afford to have and operate a car. He said such a critique could include a focus on making sure people are making zoning and planning decisions that take into account those who do not have as much, and making sure that new developments are pedestrian and wheelchair friendly and that there are signals for the hearing impaired. Ms. Haber said the organization has a five-year action plan that looks at things like improving the

pedestrian environment. When the new Snoqualmie Valley hospital was built, it was realized that there was very little pedestrian access and only limited transportation access, so the discussions turned to how to work with planners to ensure that transportation figures prominently in the planning process. Commissioner Bruels noted that the whole reason behind the need to provide transportation options is due to the unjust way in which society is organized around transportation and the automobile.

Ms. O'Reilly added that the King County Mobility Coalition was created as the result of an executive order by President Bush in 2006 that required all planning entities receiving federal dollars to have special needs transportation committees. The regional planning entity is the Puget Sound Regional Council.

Ms. Haber said the King County Mobility Coalition has three goals: 1) putting people first and making sure riders are aware of their transportation options, and are safe and satisfied with their trip; 2) moving people efficiently by coordinating transit, school, and human service transportation so that current transportation dollars are used to maximum effectiveness; and 3) moving more people by matching the needs of riders with the most appropriate transportation choice so that dollars go farther.

The King County Accessible Travel Map is a project that was undertaken by the Coalition. It is intended to serve as a resource tool aimed at an audience of older adults and people with disabilities, as well as their caregivers and support staff at human service agencies and senior centers. The map lists more than 30 transportation services and resources in King County. King County Metro printed 20,000 of the maps. The map will be regularly updated.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Kline, Ms. Haber said Sound Generations operates the Hyde Shuttle program, a neighborhood-based operation that facilitates trips to the local grocery store or nearby senior center. The on-demand shuttle is free and is very popular. Ms. O'Reilly added that the vehicles used by the program are owned by King County Metro and are accessible vans with a wheelchair lift. As they have money, King County Metro will add routes. So far, the service is not operating in Bellevue or the Eastside.

Ms. Haber said the service has relied heavily on federal grants and accordingly an emphasis on moving the model to more sustainable by eliciting support from local cities and King County Metro. Recently the Hyde Shuttle in Auburn was turned into a program fully operated by King County Metro. Called Community Ride Auburn, the service is open to the general public.

Ms. O'Reilly said at one time Hopelink operated a dial-a-ride van under a limited-time grant. The grant was not refunded through the federal process and the service was halted.

Commissioner Kline asked why the Hopelink direct operations are not reflected on the map. Ms. Haber the Demand Area Response Transit (DART) program is shown on the map in orange. Hopelink facilitates having riders picked up along the route or by calling ahead via a deviation to the route. The service picks up outside of assisted living facilities and drops off at grocery stores and other major destinations before dropping riders off again at their homes. While not fully a demand response, it is a model that would work well in Bellevue. Hopelink operates the Redmond Loop as a fixed service route. Hopelink's community shuttles are not reflected on the map because they are typically for commuters, so the task force chose not to include them.

Ms. O'Reilly commented that the North Bellevue Community Center has a bus on site that is used for various excursions. She said she did not know why the vehicle is not used as a shuttle. Ms. Haber said the Coalition seeks partnerships wherever possible to gain access to vehicles that sit idle much of the time. That can mean talking to churches and other organizations. Ms. O'Reilly said the dream and goal has for some time been to have a service operating in Bellevue.

Commissioner Kline said rather than infrastructure the answer could be in contracting with a service such as Uber. Ms. Haber allowed that Uber recently put out a community initiative proposal. There are a number of possible innovative partnerships. One service that was run through a grant was focused on connecting people to fixed routes. There is also a phone number and website called Go Go Grandparent that connects riders to Uber.

Ms. Haber said the Coalition has established committees that are focused on access to healthcare, access to work and school, and education and outreach. Each of those areas is highlighted in the five-year action plan that looks at the greatest needs in King County. There are also affiliated subregional coalitions, including the South King County Mobility Coalition, the North King County Mobility Coalition, and the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative.

Commissioner McEachran said access equals equity equals diversity and clarity. He noted that he serves a large faith community that has members with wealth and capacity, some of whom live in retirement centers that have transportation that does not take them anywhere individually. When asked why the faith community does not have a van, the answer always focuses on the issues of mobility, access, mitigation, safety and insurability. The Coalition should seek to create avenues to stress competitive collaboration in communities to ensure that seniors who retire in place have access to getting from Point A to Point B. Ms. O'Reilly said there are a lot of cities represented on the Coalition and each is working to address the issues. They are all working to bring their transportation planners along, though some are more open than others.

Ms. Haber said traditionally people have understood that those not able to use regular transit services have access to programs like Access and Hyde Shuttle. The

two approaches have been seen as two separate systems. Things are getting to the point, however, where due to different technologies, options and services, mobility is becoming more integrated. The Coalition has been working with King County Metro on their alternative services, which is now called Community Connections, to make sure there are no populations who are forgotten in doing outreach.

Commissioner Mercer said she has a teenager who tries to use the bus system on the Eastside. She said anyone who says the Eastside actually has good bus transportation is living in a dream world. Buses are often late, come by only once per hour, or never show up at all. Certainly the neighborhoods do not have an adequate bus system. Ms. Haber said the Coalition and King County Metro is looking at the first mile/last mile concept for how to get from an origin to a bus stop to get to other destinations, and back again. They are working on a number of different options, including an app and the guaranteed ride home program, all while considering the needs of different populations. In a listening session at the Kenmore Senior Center, seniors said they would love to be able to drive their car to a park and ride and go into Seattle on the bus, but by the time they get there the lot is full. What would work for them is a way to get to the park and ride so they can grab a bus to Seattle. There is a clear need to integrate services and be more efficient with partnerships.

Commissioner McEachran pointed out that two major park and ride lots are about to close in Bellevue to accommodate light rail construction. By the end of May, the Overlake and South Bellevue park and ride lots will be closed, and that surely will impact a lot of seniors. He added that faith communities are very important to seniors, yet they are increasingly not able to rely on the faith communities to provide transportation. He suggested the Coalition should seek to work with the Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council.

Commissioner Mercer commented that transportation is a crucial piece of human services. She suggested the Commission would benefit from hearing directly from King County Metro about their plans. Ms. O'Reilly said there are staff in the city's transportation department who work with Metro. They have advocated for route changes and additional services, but they have not always gotten what they want. She suggested it would be good for transportation staff to visit with the Commission to hear the concerns.

Ms. Haber explained that the goal of the Access to Healthcare Committee is to foster dialog between transportation, providers, human service agencies and healthcare professionals. At their last meeting, it was made fairly clear that the transportation world and the healthcare world do not speak the same language. Plans are being made to provide various stakeholder groups representing the healthcare community presentations regarding the importance of transportation. There was recently a meeting with Overlake Hospital to develop transportation tip sheets that outline the available transportation options for getting to medical facilities. The information will be available as a handout for social workers as well as online. A how-to guide is also being developed to assist medical professionals in developing similar resources.

Ms. O'Reilly said the tip sheets were developed in conjunction with frontline staff who made the medical appointments. They were asked to track the main reason cancelled appointments, and a very high percentage of the people said their ride fell through or they did not know how to get to their appointment. Additionally, King County Metro's outreach person is working with every King County public health clinic to develop a similar map.

Ms. Haber said there is also an Access to Work and School Committee that is looking at barriers from that perspective. The group has been working with resettlement agencies, employment specialists, Goodwill, and with community colleges. While still just ramping up, the committee has had a few successes, including having public transit orientation trips with ESL classes to Worksource. The committee spends much of its time sharing information with different organizations about available transportation for their clients.

The Commissioners were informed that the Education Outreach Committee works to build awareness of different transportation options and resources. The group has toured the Solid Ground circulator in downtown Seattle to learn all the intricacies of the service by talking to the driver and the manager, and also toured the Hyde Shuttle service. The group will next tour the emergency operations center to learn about transportation for vulnerable populations.

The Coalition a few years ago created a three-part video series on how to run the bus, and the different options available to users throughout King County. The videos were translated into 13 languages and utilized a native-speaker community leader for each. There are plans to update the series. The Coalition also submitted a proposal to King County Metro last year seeking to allow veterans to ride for free for the two days of a countywide resource fair for veterans experiencing homelessness. Approval was given and the group will seek to partner with Metro again for the 2017 version of the program; an attempt will be made to also get Sound Transit to partner for the event.

Ms. Haber said the Coalition also partners with the Northwest Universal Design Council and is currently working on a first-mile/last-mile event to address innovative solutions. The Coalition also participates with the King County/Seattle Age-Friendly Task Force to promote transportation services for older adults, and partners with the Regional Alliance for Resilient and Equitable Transportation, which looks at transportation for vulnerable populations in emergencies. The Coalition also recently applied for a grant with Snoqualmie Valley stakeholders to form a Snoqualmie Valley Transportation Coalition. The grant in the amount of \$100,000 over two years has been approved.

Ms. Haber said the Coalition recently started a monthly newsletter to promote things happening in regard to transportation.

The Commissioners were informed that the Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative was formed in 2005 to look at transportation coordination and solutions for the Eastside. As recently modified, the mission of the Collaborative is to improve regional mobility awareness and access for special needs populations in East King County. The work is done through education, advocacy and by creating various tools. The Collaborative's list of partners includes city representatives, non-profit agencies and transportation providers. Sometimes all it takes is bringing the various partners together to make things happen. The target populations include disadvantaged transportation groups. The Collaborative successfully recruited someone from the Eastside to serve on the King County Metro task force for fair outreach and changes.

The Collaborative recently held a Beyond the Bus fair at Redmond Senior Center. About ten vendors who provide transportation options in the area participated. Hopefully something similar will be utilized in Bellevue and other Eastside locations.

One of the projects completed recently by the Collaborative is a how-to guide on how to start a bench program. There never was an intention for the Collaborative itself to start a bench program, rather the focus is on mobilizing communities, faith-based organizations and others. A grant was applied for and approved to add some benches in the Tukwila area using information in the guide.

Ms. O'Reilly said there is more to a bench program than one might think. There are land use and liability issues as well as other issues. Ms. Haber said she had a job focused on mobility management in New York City where there was a citywide bench program in place. Benches are of great value, especially when it comes to accommodating those who walk to use public transit.

Ms. Haber said the Collaborative recently completed working on travel tips for The Landing in Redmond. Similar to the Transportation Tips for medical organizations, the travel tips look at the origin of area shelters. The group has also been working with Sophia Way to develop a travel tips guide for them. No assumptions are made about where folks need to go, instead the case managers at the shelters are consulted in determining where clients need to go.

Commissioner McEachran pointed out that the Human Services Element of the Comprehensive Plan includes a map showing the location of all the funded agencies. The Comprehensive Plans of other jurisdictions have similar maps. He suggested the maps could serve as good resources in developing travel guides.

Ms. Haber said for 2017 the Collaborative intends to go back to agencies to listen as they describe their transportation challenges. Work will also continue on the specialized travel tools, and the organization will continue to share information about the needs and projects to keep everyone informed about what is happening on the Eastside.

Ms. O'Reilly said Ms. Haber serves as part of the Puget Sound Regional Council special needs transportation committee which is in the middle of updating its needs assessment.

Commissioner McEachran said at some point it would be interesting to hear how drivers are trained given the diversity of the population. Ms. Haber said she will be working with King County to put together a volunteer drivers summit that will look at things like cultural competence.

7. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie noted that the application period for positions on the city's boards and commission would remain open through April 21. She said the Commission would have one position to fill.

Ms. O'Reilly said the report for the phone and online surveys has been received. She said she would provide the Commission with an update at the first meeting in June. She pointed out that the lack of affordable housing continues to be the top problem, highlighted in the surveys by 77 percent of the population as a major or moderate problem.

Ms. O'Reilly thanked the Commissioners for indicating their interest in attending the May 11 King County Veterans Coalition muster. She said former Commissioner Doug Hoople will participate. A short presentation on the Needs Update will be made.

Ms. O'Reilly said she was close to being ready to send out the providers survey. It will go to all providers funded by the city as well as providers not funded by the city.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie reported that a follow-up panel with providers who deal with substance abuse and chemical dependency has been scheduled for May 16. They will be talking about the heroin and opioid epidemic.

Commissioner Bruels said it would be helpful to ask for an overview of the chemical dependency system from the time someone is identified as having a chemical dependency problem. He also said he would like to hear the status of the public detox crisis. Chair Villar said she would like some numbers relative to rates of treatment success. Commissioner Oxrieder said she would like to have information about the gap between the need and the capacity of programs. Commissioner Mercer said she would like to hear about any barriers to access, specifically at what point someone must be in their recovery in order to access services. She also said she would like to know more about how the programs interact with homeless programs. Commissioner Kline said she would like to hear about the kinds of information that is being collected and what is being done with the data.

Ms. Leslie informed the Commission that the Council voted to move forward on the Eastgate site for the homeless shelter, while still exploring two additional sites over the next 45 days.

9. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS – None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Villar adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date