

**Joint Eastside Cities Human Services Commissions Meeting Summary  
Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond, and Sammamish**

**Tuesday, April 16, 2019  
6:00pm – 8:00pm**

**Bellevue City Hall (450 110th Ave NE)  
Conference Room 1E-108**

<p><b>ISSAQUAH MEMBERS PRESENT</b> Derek Franklin Rebekah Smith Loretta Jancoski Matthew Meyer Ana M. Jiménez-Inman Susan Leonelli Senthil Chandran</p> <p><b>MEMBERS NOT PRESENT</b> Vanessa Mousavizadeh Brooke Fraser</p>	<p><b>ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PRESENT</b> Monica Negrila, Human Services &amp; Social Sustainability Coordinator</p> <p><b>VISITORS PRESENT</b> N/A</p>
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**City of Bellevue:** Judith Mercer, Anita Jain, Michelle Kline, James McEachran, Ann Oxrieder, Benjamin Piper, Alex O'Reilly, Dee Dee Catalano, Christy Stangland, Natalie Minas

**City of Kirkland:** Jonathan Stutz, Diane Bell, Michelle Alten-Kaehler, Max Resiman, Dave Godfrey, Adam White, Leslie Miller, Melissa Bartoletti

**City of Redmond:** Anny Smith, Jacob Brown, Kristin Muscott, Vibhas, Chandorkar, Sawn Roland, Alaric Bien

**City of Sammamish:** Stan Gunno, Jodie Nishioka, Joyce Bottenberg, Rita Badh

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The City of Bellevue Chair, Judith MERCER, called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m. Bellevue Deputy Mayor Lynne ROBINSON provided a brief update on the Mental Health and Drug Dependency Oversight Committee’s work. Christy STAGLAND, Bellevue Human Services Planner welcomed everyone and facilitated introductions.

**2018 HUMAN SERVICES COMMISIONS’ FUNDING PROCESS DEBRIEF**

Rita BADH, Community Services Coordinator from the City of Sammamish, provided an overview of the Human Services Commissions represented, highlighting unique features and common goals for each commission. BADH introduced the debrief process and invited each chair to describe their funding process, highlighting areas of strength as well as lessons learned for future funding cycles.

The process was followed by questions and answers from commissioners. Among questions and topics raised were: How does each city determine the funding level for Human Services? How do cities determine funding allocations for local versus regional needs? What do cities do with small grants that cost more to administer? What are some ways in which small organizations can be supported to obtain city funds? Discussion among Commissioners focused on providing examples on how the different cities address the issues noted.

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**BREAKOUT SESSION**

Table discussions were facilitated in groups of 6-8 Commissioners on the following topics: Equity training feedback, additional training needs, Regional versus local funding needs. Please see attached for a detailed summary of the feedback obtained during table discussions.

**CLOSING REMARKS**

NEGRILA summarized the breakout session and thanked the Commissioners for participating. She noted that the information and input obtained tonight will be utilized to create a best practices tool for the next funding cycle and noted that the next joint meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 17, 2019.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.

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### Table Discussions

#### 1. Equity Training

How was this used?

What were helpful components from the training?

Ways we could better implemented our learnings into this funding cycles?

#### 1. a) Equity Training- How Was It Used and What Worked Well

- The **checklist** and **handout** were very helpful, and they were very good, we referred to it/them.
- The training made me **aware** of how some of the agencies who can afford a grant writer may have a better application which puts smaller agencies without the resources to do this at a disadvantage.
- Helped to keep **equity in the forefront of the mind while reviewing** – some agencies didn't have the experience to write an application or came at it from a different cultural perspective.
- It was helpful because **it put words to concepts/ideas** that you already knew you should be looking for but didn't know how to phrase it.
- A commissioner who identified as being a 'numbers person' (analytical) said that the training **helped broaden the horizon** of what they look for.
- Issaquah will be **adding an equity component to their mission statement**.
- Kirkland -Disregarded poor English, **recognized that this training was only first step**
- Issaquah - **used "equity lens" in reviews**, for example, aware that reviewers should not penalize for not having admin resources to hire grant writer
- Bellevue - **zeroed in on diverse staff reflecting clients**, inadequate understanding of accounting but really wanted to support
- Better to have case studies but was useful in determining if they were really taking equity into consideration.

#### 1. b) Equity Training- Ideas and Suggestions

- The last training was good, but the **presenter needed more time. It felt rushed at the end**. If we do it again, let's do it on a Saturday so we have more time and people are fresh and not tired; Repeat basic 101 training for new commissioners
- The **Commissioners from Sammamish missed the training** and would like another one. It was suggested to do it **in 2020 right before the applications** come in so it's closer to the time they are reading them.

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- New commissioners need these trainings closer to when they're appointed. Several commissioners also mentioned difficulty scheduling trainings due to such a rigid timeline of work...it was framed as having "no off cycle".
- Discussed how some agencies don't have an equity lens in their work, with an important question about how commissions can support that work.
- Racial equity training for council members because they determine what the budget will be, could be together with commissioners
- Programs that have been funded for years wrote better applications than newer programs. Newer programs could use the help. Additional **training for smaller agencies**. Workshops, volunteer coaches to sit with agencies. Have the cities and counties figure out who would do this. Smaller organizations have volunteers that write the applications along with their other duties.
- The **technology** required to submit the application can sometimes be a barrier. Important to nurture the **grass roots organizations**.

### 2. Grant Making Process

Are there other training needs?

Is there information that would have been helpful in making funding decisions?

What could we do this year to prepare for the next funding cycle?

#### 2. a) Grant Making Process - What Works Well

- Bellevue- **Panels- ESL**; Eastside Pathways- **survey**; **Financial Assistance panel**- phenomenal;
- Sammamish- **youth panel**- organizations having clients would be helpful; Site visits are occurring in a few commissions. Issaquah is doing one service area at a time and visiting the agencies in that area rather than spreading around the visits to increase fairness.
- Learning/ **information on the issues**/needs was more helpful in their decision-making process than learning more about the agency.

#### 2. b) Grant Making Process- Ideas and Suggestions (trainings, funding decisions, preparing for next year, etc.)

- Interested in **experiential training** rather than class room style: e.g. hear from homeless individuals on the street; from opioid users, etc. bring in customers to talk about their experience;
- Workshops with **large versus small organizations**;
- **Cultural sensitivity** trainings are also helpful to understand better the culture and needs of different groups.

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- **Advertising** the grant opportunities better. Invitation to apply and provide help.
- **Training for new commissioners; Training for commissioners** to understand **outcomes and services** units; Give me 3-4 questions that the budget should tell us – how does a reviewer look at the **budget?**
- **Training about issues that are regional**, such as homelessness – temporary shelters, large shelters, tent cities, etc. Educate about the top issues facing the region. Train all Commissioners, not just by city. Best practices for cities, the U.S. even the world.
- **More meaningful outcomes** that aren't a burden on the agencies. Some agencies have no idea what a goal and an outcome is – **capacity building**
- Benefit from having **an accountant on commission**
- Bellevue has talked about what they would want in an application
- Difficult to apply to all cities at the same time – want more specific **information regarding their own city**
- If submitting **multiple proposals, give supplement** to explain how they all tie together (financially)
- Talk about what we did/didn't fund, would we want to make different decision if we had more info? can we know **what other cities are funding before we make our decisions?**
- **Questions on the applications- possibility to change?** Not giving us good information. For example, many use too much national data and its more helpful to have local data. Another is outcomes which is a gray area.
- Are there **questions not needed?** Have a question on the application to tell us more about **board composition**
- **Outcomes** area- gray area on the applications;
- Can there be a **link to agency 990** in their applications? Can we have more site-specific audit information?
- Maybe the **chairs** of the commissions should meet a few times/year to discuss common issues.
- A back and forth mechanism between applicants and city staff for areas that weren't clear in the applications

### 3. Regionality (East King County) vs locality (City specific)

Did you think regionally in prioritizing funding?

Did themes in prioritizing funding?

- Having **regional themes** to help with prioritizing funding is helpful;
- Focus on addressing **homelessness** (regional effort) through prevention (e.g. workforce, financial assistance, etc.)
- During the grant decision making, it would be helpful if a system could be created where other cities (HSC) could see what other funding was provided by the other cities – to better leverage funds;

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- **Cities' comprehensive plans** can be used to help organize what the needs are and then know how to address the needs regionally. Review the Snoqualmie Strategic Plan;
- Would be helpful to have more information on what cities are doing regionally – that would help local funding decision;
- Should there be a question on the application or scorecard about regional impact?
- Homelessness and housing issues- need regional approach
- Useful for bigger organizations to provide one application for all their programs to give a better picture of their overall regional effect. The amount of program income that will have been received but not reprogrammed is difficult to project. All the program income comes from the Home Repair Program and is dependent on the real estate market (e.g., homeowners selling their homes) and attrition (when homeowners pass away, and their properties are sold). We will not know the exact amount of 2019 program income until the end of the year.
- A collaborative process for funding regional issues makes more sense than the current system of individual cities.
- Human service needs that are specifically regional (homelessness was used as an example) should be directed to a 'regional commission' that would be a collaborative board of appointed commissioners from all East side commissions. Issues that are city-specific or don't impact other cities (like the Boys and Girls club) would be handled by individual commissions still.
- If they ask for only a small amount, may be based on regional program that only serves a few residents in a particular city, so if we give \$1000 to serve 3 residents but bigger cities don't give anything, how can the program operate?

### 4. Other Suggestions and Comments

- Government grant dollars come under fiscal scrutiny.
- Pre-determine a number of grants the commission would fund under the minimum amount and have groups who want smaller amounts apply through a different process. This was suggested as a way that might encourage very small groups (like high school clubs) to get involved.
- Having **minimum grant amounts** can impact agencies. Does it discourage or encourage smaller agencies? A commissioner explained that when they received an application that was below the minimum amount, they would contact the agency and encourage them to apply for the minimum.
- There was agreement that funding services for a small demographic is still highly valuable, especially if there isn't a comparable service in the area.
- A commissioner said that their commission focused on where opinions diverged on funding decisions. They also mentioned they had little to no discussion on funding decisions that were unanimous.

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- There wasn't enough time to discuss fully, but a commissioner brought up the question of "how to evaluate fee-for-service versus all charitable services?" with the concern that agencies who can provide fee-for-service options could adjust their business model to cover their own services whereas charitable services cannot.
- Need capacity building and incubation to bring agencies up to level where they are competitive
- Agencies reviewed seemed to be doing much better with a diverse staff this time around.