

Human Services Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Renton City Hall
Council Conference Room, 7th Floor
October 20, 2015 3:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: Ryan McIrvine, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

ATTENDANCE: Shannon Matson, Ryan McIrvine, Brook Dodd, Henry Malphus, Chad Buechler.

Excused: Amy Koehl, Linda Smith. **Absent:** Leslie Anderson. **Staff:** Karen Bergsvik, Katie McClincy, Jennifer Jorgenson. **Guest:** Evelyn Boykan, Human Services Manager for Tukwila.

1. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

It was moved and seconded to approve the September Minutes as presented. Motion carried.

2. SOUTH KING COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY OVERVIEW

Ms. Boykan gave a brief overview on one of the studies done by the Brookings Institute. The following excerpt from *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America*, May 20, 2013, explains their philosophy on the topic: "The changing map of American poverty matters because place matters... Place intersects with core policy issues central to the long-term health and stability of metropolitan areas and to the economic success of individuals and families..."

Data shows a 25% increase in the poverty rate for South King County. The data also indicates major cities' housing stock in the Pacific Northwest is no longer considered affordable for middle to low income populations. Trends are showing that these populations are moving to South County, where it is perceived the housing is less expensive.

One of the human services planners for Kent put together a handout related to poverty, and it shows that there are three drivers of economic security – meeting basic needs; education; and, having a vibrant local economy.

Ms. Boykan thinks that to reduce poverty that it needs to be looked at in a broader sense. Employers can reduce some of the hiring barriers by incorporating job training and apprenticeship programs in their hiring strategies. Government and human service entities can provide grants to individuals for work force training. Schools can broaden their efforts to include family members in some of their programs. Social organizations (Kiwanis, Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, Soroptimists) can partner together to brainstorm programs or combine forces to benefit or mentor the underprivileged. Economic development drives jobs and eliminating barriers stimulates social recovery. There's more that can be done on a regional basis to benefit everyone; it's a matter of putting the right forums together for expanded brainstorming, along with the authority to commence meaningful, lasting changes for better outcomes.

3. REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING EFFORTS

The cities that participate in the common funding application are working together on regional capacity building. There are four committees that include:

1. Review of the application and the questions that are asked.

2. Looking at a way of funding agencies that may be excluded from applying or getting funding in the current process. This group is looking at a demonstration project that may run parallel to the current process, or may happen in the off-year.
3. Looking at the systems in human services – like diversity of human service commissions, expanding the capacity of South County agencies to be able to compete regionally for funding,
4. Collecting the tools that cities currently use to evaluate funding applications, and looking at them through a social equity lens.

Karen helped to facilitate the regional discussions.

In discussion, it was suggested a social justice and equity tool kit should be developed and used as one guideline. Another suggestion was to look at changes and tools system-wide with human services committees and getting more people involved.

4. **ADVISORY COMMITTEE VACANCIES AND MARKETING**

There are three vacancies on the Committee, and possibly a fourth one. We are recruiting for applicants, and members were asked to reach out to people they thought would be an appropriate fit. Shannon said that it is time to start thinking about officer elections for next year, as her term is up at the end of 2015. The Vice-Chair usually moves into the Chair position, per the bylaws. In this case, Ryan is the Vice-Chair, and if he is elected to the City Council, he will need to resign from the HSAC. That would leave both the Chair and Vice-Chair positions open. Members were asked to think about volunteering for one of the two positions, and Brook indicated she was interested.

5. **HUMAN SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN**

Karen reviewed what work remains to be to complete the plan by December 2015. The goals are in the Comprehensive Plan and the way to reach the goals is the Strategic Plan. It is the roadmap for the next three to five years.

There was much discussion about the initiatives, and how they would be prioritized. There was also a question as to if the staff or the Advisory Committee or agencies were going to do the work. The general feeling is that both the members and the Manager do not have much capacity to take on additional tasks at this time, and there would need to be agreement as to what is realistic to get done. There was also discussion that there are many new members starting in 2016 and if this work should wait until they are on the committee.

Comments:

- Human services agencies have historically been placed at the front for being awarded grants. Are we looking to shift away from that?
- What perception(s) are keeping people from applying for services?
- Both early childhood development and child care are behemoth problems to tackle.
- Is the City a role model for other agencies to look to for guidance?
- The City is already partnering to address human service priorities (Initiative #3). Initiative #1 – Understand, measure and respond to community needs is also already being done.
- Discussing Initiative #5 – the Special Initiative on Employment – it was thought that additional data is needed: What employees in the City workforce specifically look like in depth – full

demographics – where they live (City residents?); homeowners or renters; annual income levels; males vs. females; in what classifications – occupations, ethnicity, age; single parent vs. two-parent households; education; longevity, etc. In terms of employment, what agencies does the City collaborate with? What does the City do to hire non-traditional staff? It also would be interesting to know where Renton residents actually work, if that information is available. What are the unserved needs?

For the next meeting, it was suggested that the committee look at the social equity work that the City is doing. It was noted that just being fair is not enough.

5. HOMELESS WORK

Karen gave an overview:

- Volunteers are trying to locate another location for the Cold Weather Shelter because Harambee is taking the overflow from the REACH shelter. The preferable location needs to be in a church, on a bus line, and within walking distance to the meal programs.
- Emergency Management is very interested in getting a detox and sobering center established in the South King County area.
- The Renton Meal Coalition has relocated to the Highlands First United Methodist Church, and the participation rate has dropped by 50% because of its new location. It is difficult to reach for anyone using a wheelchair, walker, or pushing a stroller. It is not on a bus line.
- ARISE has been struggling for the last few years. New churches have not volunteered to host the men. A group is working to put together a new interim board and direction.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shannon Matson, Chair

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING: NOVEMBER 17, 2015, 7th Floor, Renton City Hall
COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM**