

CITY OF BELLEVUE
CITY COUNCIL

Summary Minutes of Study Session

August 6, 2012
6:00 p.m.

Council Conference Room
Bellevue, Washington

PRESENT: Temporary Chair Stokes and Councilmembers Balducci, Chelminiak, Davidson, and Wallace

ABSENT: Mayor Lee and Deputy Mayor Robertson

1. Executive Session

Councilmember Chelminiak called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m., and declared recess to Executive Session for approximately 45 minutes to discuss two items of potential litigation.

The meeting resumed at 6:43 p.m., with Councilmember Stokes presiding.

2. Study Session

(a) Update on Visit Bellevue Washington

Deputy City Manager Brad Miyake welcomed Sharon Linton, Marketing and Communications Manager for Visit Bellevue Washington, to provide an update on the organization's activities. Ms. Linton noted that members of the Visit Bellevue Washington Advisory Committee were in the audience.

Ms. Linton described Visit Bellevue Washington's visitor impact model and explained how the economic impacts were calculated through the organization's work with Destination Analysts, the market research company that completed the initial 2010 Bellevue Leisure Travel Market Study.

Bellevue had 591,946 hotel visitors in 2011. They stayed an average of 2.6 days, and spent \$240 per day, resulting in a direct spending impact of \$369 million. An estimated 255,741 visitors came to see friends and family. They stayed an average of 4.4 days and spent \$63 per day, for a total direct spending impact of \$71 million. Bellevue had an estimated 405,000 day trip visitors averaging 2.2 visits and spending \$50 per day, for a direct spending impact of \$45 million.

Ms. Linton said an estimated \$44 million in Sales and Business & Occupation taxes is generated by visitors to Bellevue. The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) estimates that there are 7,634 jobs in Bellevue tied to tourism, and these jobs generate \$263.7 million in wages.

Councilmember Balducci asked whether the estimates are capturing home-sharing type visitors, which is an increasing percentage of the rental market for vacation travelers. Ms. Linton said she will check into whether and how that is taken into consideration.

Ms. Balducci questioned how the figures are validated. Ms. Linton said PSRC conducts a survey to quantify its figures. The estimated tax impact is calculated using the City's gross receipts. Ms. Linton said that spending estimates are based on the market study conducted by Dean Runyan Associates. Destination Analysts reviewed all of the information to determine the accuracy of the information based on its 2010 Bellevue study.

Responding to Councilmember Wallace, Ms. Linton confirmed that a portion of the sales tax generated by visitors goes to the State.

Ms. Linton showed the Visit Bellevue Washington video and described the use of the video to attract conventions. Responding to Councilmember Chelminiak, Ms. Linton described how Visit Bellevue Washington won the video production through a drawing.

Ms. Linton described travel writers and their role in generating interest in Bellevue. She commented on the development of the 2013 Visitors Guide. She reported a 143 percent increase in web site visits from 2011 to 2012, and noted that web visits from mobile devices are increasing rapidly. Ms. Linton said she will provide the next update in September.

Councilmember Stokes announced that the national narrow gauge model railroad convention is coming to Meydenbauer Center in late September.

Councilmember Chelminiak said he likes that this is a community-wide cooperative effort of hotels, retail, and other entities. He observed that the estimates of economic impact are likely on the conservative side. He suggested that the City should be highlighting this effort to the state legislature. Mr. Chelminiak said there is much to be proud of in Bellevue, and he would like the City to play a role in this effort.

Councilmember Balducci concurred, noting that the reason the Council asks questions about the organization is because the information is relied upon to determine whether the City should support the organization and its activities.

Councilmember Stokes thanked Ms. Linton for the presentation.

Councilmember Wallace noted that there are beneficial impacts to Metro, Sound Transit, and other entities as well.

(b) Partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bellevue at Hidden Valley Sports Park

Mr. Miyake opened discussion regarding a proposed partnership at Hidden Valley Park. He introduced Kathy Haggart, President and CEO of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Bellevue, and Leo Backer, Boys and Girls Club Board President.

Parks and Community Services Director Patrick Foran introduced Daniel Johnson, a Boys and Girls Club Board member.

Mr. Foran explained that staff is asking the Council to consider whether the City should enter into a long-term lease with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Bellevue that would allow them to construct and operate a gymnasium at Hidden Valley Park, in exchange for public benefits at the park commensurate with the estimated value of the property lease.

Mr. Foran noted that the City has been working with Blair Rasmussen from the Boys and Girls Clubs of Bellevue, who was not in attendance.

Glenn Kost, Park Planning and Development Manager, recalled that in 2004, the City approved a partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs at the South Bellevue Community Center. In 2007, the BGCB proposed a 45,000 square foot facility at Surrey Downs Park. However, the Surrey Downs site was ultimately determined to not be feasible due to issues related to the Sound Transit light rail project and to the municipal court facility.

Mr. Kost explained that other locations were explored, including the City-owned Chapin property. The BGCB revised its program to develop a smaller downtown location rather than a large flagship facility. In 2011, the organization approached the City about a partnership at Hidden Valley Park.

Ms. Haggart said the BGCB has been serving the community for 60 years. The main clubhouse is aging and has not been improved since the 1970s. The organization recently purchased the former Lake Hills Library and opened it on July 12 as a teen center. Ms. Haggart said they have three clubhouses in public housing in partnership with the King County Housing Authority (KCHA). BGCB youth programs at Crossroads Community Center continue to experience increasing demand. Ms. Haggart said the proposed partnership in Hidden Valley Park recognizes the need for more clubhouses and recreational activities.

Mr. Kost said the City has similar partnerships with the Kinderling Center, Youth Eastside Services, Boys and Girls Clubs at South Bellevue Community Center, the Pacific Science Center at Mercer Slough Environmental Education Center, and the Bellevue School District. He described City policies that support partnerships between public and private service providers.

Mr. Kost described legal and regulatory requirements related to partnerships including those applicable to gifting public funds to private entities, title and funding restrictions, zoning and the Land Use Code, and Comprehensive Plan considerations.

Responding to Councilmember Balducci, Mr. Kost said he will provide specific policy language in the Subarea Plan related to this type of project.

Continuing, Mr. Kost explained that Hidden Valley Park is a large community park, 17 acres, in the R-3.5 (3.5 residential units per acre) zoning district. Advantages of the site include active sports use, good access and visibility, existing parking capacity, and residential buffers.

Mr. Kost outlined the key business points of the proposed partnership and described a graphic representation of the proposed site configuration. The plan includes installing full synthetic turf for the existing lighted field, adds a third Little League field, and completes other site improvements (e.g., parking, circulation, stormwater). Under the proposal, the City uses the gym during non-Club hours at no cost.

Mr. Backer described the plan for the gymnasium building, which would accommodate a number of sports including basketball, volleyball, and gymnastics. He reported that Board members and donors strongly support a gym facility and the use of sports fields.

Mr. Kost explained that the total estimated cost is \$9.6 million (\$4 million for gym; \$2 million for site improvements; and \$3.6 million for sports fields improvements). The City would be responsible for \$2.8 million, while the BGCB would be responsible for the gym at \$4 million. A number of elements of the agreement need to be developed. However, similar agreements have been negotiated with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Bellevue for other partnerships.

Mr. Kost said the proposed project would involve a number of public outreach activities. Next steps include budgeting, fundraising, negotiating the agreement, design/engineering work, permits, bidding, and construction. Construction is targeted for late 2013 and 2014.

Councilmember Balducci expressed support for the project, noting that she believes it fits well into both organizations' missions. She acknowledged the need for more gym capacity in the community and observed that this is a creative use of an existing park site.

Responding to Ms. Balducci, Mr. Kost said the proposal has been submitted to the Parks and Community Services Board. In further response, Mr. Miyake said the Leadership Team is reviewing all of the City's capital budget proposals, and he believes this project will rank high based on the established review criteria. Ms. Balducci suggested identifying available funding before doing too much more work on the proposal.

Councilmember Chelminiak questioned the hours that will be available for the City's use. He would like the opportunity to provide adult/senior activities and recreation during the day and possibly at night. He encouraged a variety of recreation uses including badminton.

Mr. Chelminiak said he likes the concept of using an existing park. He would like all of the fields to have synthetic turf. Mr. Kost clarified that the current proposal is for synthetic turf on the infields. Mr. Foran said the proposal is identical to the Newport Hills fields, which have

synthetic infields and natural grass outfields. He clarified that Field 1 on the Hidden Valley graphic is all synthetic, which is very expensive.

Councilmember Davidson asked whether adding the third field would affect existing bleacher capacity. Mr. Kost said there will still be room for bleachers on two sides. However, the bleachers on the first base side probably will not be preserved. Dr. Davidson wondered whether some sort of temporary bleachers could be incorporated for specific events.

Councilmember Davidson expressed support for the project, noting the long history of partnership between the City and the Boys and Girls Clubs of Bellevue. He thanked the organization for all of their work with youth in the community.

Councilmember Wallace believes this is a fantastic opportunity. He suggested developing estimates of anticipated usage, perhaps using the South Bellevue Community Center as a model. He suspects that the cost per person served by the City's investment will be relatively low, which helps the project achieve a high ranking within the budget process. He noted the gym's configuration with three basketball courts, and questioned where parents would sit.

Mr. Backer said the gym's dimensions are similar to the one at Bellevue College. He acknowledged that there is limited space for an audience. Ms. Haggart said they use some small portable bleachers at the South Bellevue Community Center, which might also work at Hidden Valley Park. Councilmember Wallace reiterated his enthusiasm for the project.

Councilmember Stokes expressed strong support for the proposal. He was on the Parks Board when the Surrey Downs Park facility was discussed, and he believes this will work out better. Responding to Mr. Stokes, Mr. Foran said the Park Board is aware of the proposal. The Board is generally supportive of the project and is expected to facilitate the public outreach component.

At 7:58 p.m., Councilmember Stokes declared recess to the Regular Session.

Myrna L. Basich, MMC
City Clerk

kaw