



Seattle Immigrant and Refugee Commission

July 6, 2011, 6:00-8:00 PM

Room CH-370, City Hall

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Devon Alisa Abdallah, Ph.D., Jesus Y. Rodriguez, Yasemin San, Michael Neguse, Shree Dahal, Mohamed Sheik Hassan, Magdaleno M. Rose-Avila

Commissioners Absent: Lesley Irizarry-Hougan, Andrea Caupain, Ashraf Alazadi, Tsegaba Woldehaimanot, Bincy Jacob, Paulina Lopez Bermudez, Pradeepta Upadhyay, Cherry Cayabyab

Commissioners by Phone: N/A

SOCR Staff Present: Julie Nelson, Rosalinda Hoskins

Guests: N/A

Guest Speakers: Kellie Nakano, Sandy Nguyen, and Diane Pien – Human Services Dept.
Ref Lindmark – King County Metro Transit

Call to Order: Call to order at 6:00 PM

Approval of Minutes: June 1, 2011 minutes approved

1. Immigrant and Refugee Youth Proposal – Kellie Nakano/Sindy Nguyen

Kellie Nakano presented a new youth proposal to include 15-20 year olds' and their parents. It is a 9-month period designed to bridge the gaps they found between providing services separately to students and parents, to be delivered by community-based organization(s) which includes bilingual/bicultural job readiness training in the six most common languages according to immigrant and refugee populations in Seattle.

The proposal is aligned with the Youth and Families Levy and Human Services Department's Strategic Plan for funding in 2012. Funds available to community-based organizations are still based on Council approval.

Commission Feedback:

In consideration of the definition “newly arrived”, there are many who have been here months, even years, who still need assistance. The community may be offended and/or conflicted by the term “newly arrived” when determining who receives services.

Newly arrived are Bhutanese, but they are not listed in your six most common languages according to population, this seems to occur often – the proposal comes, but it was created using data that is dated. Recommend collecting data and feedback from others who actually work with these communities, listen to the families. In measuring success, it is based on data collection. Suggestion: supporting the community based organizations to collect the data.

Offering apprenticeships would make this proposal complete. Regarding the definition of six most common language groups, are these the only immigrant and refugees who will receive services? Also, when you refer to capacity-building, will others be left behind?

Capacity-building may also limit smaller community-based organizations from applying. Larger organizations may apply, but are they as knowledgeable as some of the smaller organizations? Although larger organizations are obtaining funds, we are still hearing that they are not as successful. Larger organizations should assist the smaller organizations to build their capacity in these areas, i.e., data collection. Possibly assign mentors to assist with grant-writing. High turnover at both large and smaller organizations has been detrimental to successful outcomes.

Cultural considerations and domestic violence – who are they doing outreach to and with, as well as regarding Single Father assistance programs – consider where they are located, who is offering the assistance, some will never use the services because of this - often it seems cultural differences are not considered in the process.

Kellie thanked the Commission for their input and assured that community meetings are being held, the next one is July 14th, to make sure they are gathering the input directly from the communities. She appreciated the idea for Youth Mentorship, adding Youth Internships, even unpaid, are great ways to assist with job readiness. At times, the program services are received, but it may take a while before employment is achieved, the knowledge wears off while they are waiting to get a paying job. In the meantime, large organizations can assist with internships, possibly partnering with the City of Seattle.

Seattle Youth Employment Program (SYEP) has a summer group project which can assist youth on how to work as a team.

2. Welcome / Housekeeping / Announcements

Introduction

- June Minutes Approved
- Announcements:
 - * White Center Cultural Center Storytelling Opportunities – contact Jesus
 - * WA State Redistricting Meeting in Olympia (June 13 @ 10AM) – Attend to Represent the I/R Commission to support an all-minority district for 2021

* The recent rise in Immigrant and Refugee Suicides – Set up meetings for people to connect those who have been here a while with new arrivals - to offer coping strategies and gather information, look for alternatives to bring communities together.

3. King County Metro – 2-Year Funding Reduction Proposal – Ref Lindmark, King County Project Manager

The Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) Program offers ridesharing and low-income assistance for transportation options, contact Ref Lindmark, King County Project Manager (206) 684-1104 or visit the website at <http://metro.kingcounty.gov/tops/jobaccess/jobseeker.html>.

See this link for *Immigrant and Refugee Elders Transportation Project*, Senior Services of King County, Seattle, Washington. Population focus: Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, Russian, Ukrainian, Burmese, Bhutanese, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Iraqi

http://seniortransportation.easterseals.com/site/PageServer?pagename=NCST2_about_projects_BreakingNewGround. At this page, you can also download the free pdf of *Everyone Rides – Transportation Access for Culturally and Ethnically Diverse Elders*.

Ref Lindmark gave an outline of what the proposal will include if passed by King County Council. King County proposes a \$20 car tab fee for a 2-year period that would prevent services cuts to Metro Transit. Adoption and non-adoption of this proposal would affect not only immigrant and refugees, but elderly and disabled communities in Seattle. The Commission votes to and writes a letter to the King County Council members to support adoption of this proposal.

SOCR Report

Julie sends out the full report via email, but touches on some highlights of the report.

Results of Race and Social Justice Employee Survey:

The survey results were to inform the Race and Social Justice Initiative assessment and plan for the following three years (2009- 2011). In October 2010 we conducted a second City-wide survey that will inform the assessment and strategic plan for Race and Social Justice Initiative for the next three years (2012-2014). The goal of the survey was threefold:

- Help measure understanding of the initiative, as well as gather ideas for improving our efforts;
- Help develop future RSJI work plans and communication strategies; and
- For City departments to develop a baseline for measurement and to measure changes over time.

For a copy of the full report, contact Rose or Julie.

The Meeting Adjourned at 8:10 PM