

## **Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council**

P.O. BOX 662, Bellevue, WA 98009-0662

### **June 13, 2017 Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was held in Bristol Hall of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church; it began at 12:00 noon & ended at 1:45 PM.

**WELCOME:** People helped themselves to lunch and conversation. The meeting was called to order at 12:15 PM and conducted by EISCC President Tony Copes.

**OPENING PRAYER:** Tony Copes

**SELF-INTRODUCTIONS** were made by 24 representatives, new people and guests. Welcome back to Betty Spohn!

**CITY OF BELLEVUE ANNOUNCEMENT:** Helena Stephens is a Family Youth Team Services Manager at the City of Bellevue. She is co-chair of Eastside Racial Equities. Over the past 5 years the City of Bellevue, Eastside Pathways, Bellevue School District and Leadership Eastside have been meeting and participating in training by the Pacific Educational Group, located in Portland.

**June 27, 2017 community members are invited to participate in a discussion and FREE dinner from 2-6 PM.** Location: Odle Middle School, 502 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA 98007. The purpose is to bring together organizations across East King County in order to align existing equity initiatives, deepen individual understanding and commitment to the work, and to set forth a common regional goal towards a more equitable Eastside. Cost \$0

In addition, anyone is welcome to participate in the **Courageous Conversation 2017 Regional Summit** on June 28-29. Same location - Odle Middle School, 502 143<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE, Bellevue, WA 98007. Cost of \$495.

**MINUTES** of the May 9, 2017 meeting are not drafted because Secretary Karen Studders was in Minneapolis-Saint Paul taking continuing education classes from mid-May to mid-June and just returned.

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Treasurer Warren Marquardson reported our account balance is available on the website; about \$83,000. Approximately \$43,000 Backpack Meals, \$24,000 Congregations for Kids and \$16,000 EISCC.

Thank you to Karen Studders for sending out the 2017 dues letter to EISCC members this week. Annual EISCC dues are \$45 for congregations and \$30 for organizations.

**PROGRAM: Decolonizing – Idle No More** presented by Jeff Smith, member of the Makah Nation and American Friends Service Committee, invited by Anne St. Germain, Eastside Friends Meeting House.

American Friends Service Committee started in 1993 and is an advocacy and community organization. Jeff works on the annual Intertribal canoe journey. Decolonizing is meaningful and active resistance. Engage people's minds, bodies and lands with the purpose being to overturn structure. Do work with a prayerful attitude. Be able to speak up about racism, sexism and culturalism. Avoid shame.

Our country, the United States of America, was formed by colonialization and racism. Jeff participates in Decolonizing training with Eloni Casey, Alaska, and Sweetwater Nanook, Idle No More Washington.

His observations are that white environmental groups have experience with Direct Action and organizing and have

people BUT difficulties with different groups effectively working together.

In Jeff's opinion, Standing Rock was more effective than Occupy Wall Street because it established a clear goal for people to work around – stop the pipeline. Standing Rock sought to protect the water, the environment, treaty rights and tribal sovereignty.

At Standing Rock,

- A lot of non-Indians, ie white environmentalists, attend trainings and see how things are done today.
- Sioux/Standing Rock led and told whites not to lead drumming circles.
- Goals / philosophy methods of peaceful Direct Action.

Shell No and Kayactivists in Pacific Northwest experienced tensions in how they treated Indigenous People.

### **How do we build inclusivity?**

Jeff provided a handout **“How to be an Ally to Indigenous People.”** Discussed the concept of 7<sup>th</sup> generation.

Team mascots perpetuate ideas about Indians. Doctrine of Discovery and churches. Colonial mindset of the US.

Karen shared that at St. Mark's Cathedral a few years ago a letter of apology to Native Americans from numerous denominations in the Pacific Northwest was distributed. A copy of the 2014 letter, revised in 2015 is attached.

SeaFare PowWow is the Weekend of July 14<sup>th</sup> and is held over 3 days from Friday night until Sunday noon at Discover Park in Seattle.

**SPOTLIGHT: Support for State Homeless Legislation and Proposed Permanent Men's Shelter**, David Bowling, Congregations for the Homeless

Thank you for the support of EISCC and congregations on June 5<sup>th</sup>. Having people supporting the siting does make a difference. The next date is **June 26<sup>th</sup>, 6-8 PM**. The land use code needs to be amended to incorporate shelters. Bellevue City Code never had shelters in it; use hotel language and only operate 6 months a year. The code language may acknowledge that we have shelters. The risk is that it may limit what shelters do. Please go back to your congregations and speak out.

### Questions and Answers:

**What are the politics?** For numerous reasons, the preferred site is Eastgate. Ernie Simas is the swing vote; he is new on the council and wants unanimous. Councilmembers who favor the site: Mayor John Stokes, Deputy Mayor John Chelmiak and Councilmember Lynn Robinson. Councilmembers against the siting: Councilmembers Conrad Lee, Kevin Wallace and Jennifer Robertson.

### **Low-barrier v. Medium-barrier:**

- 9 years ago CFH was approached by the City of Bellevue to run a low-barrier shelter.
- Police SEE the need for a low-barrier shelter after the CFH Emergency Winter Shelter closes each spring.
- Tenor of criminalizing homelessness in Bellevue. Inferences that men experiencing homelessness are not safe. This treatment is de-humanizing and not dignified.
- CFH is committed to operating its rotating shelters in congregations; these are medium-barrier.
- Only 20 paid staff at CFH.
- Congregations provide low-barrier shelter for Sophia Way and CCC -- per Karina O'Malley.

- Almost every congregation who hosts a shelter has a school and there have been no problems. One congregation hosts a low-barrier shelter across the street from a school, another shelter shares a wall with the Day Care and another allows men experiencing homelessness to sleep in the Day Care! – per Sandy Lewis.

**REFRESHMENT COORDINATOR:** Sandy Lewis

Please thank Sandy Lewis, Betty Spohn, Diane Richards, Brittany Holmes, Sue Caruso and Trish Rogers who provided the food for today's meeting.

**REPORTS:** The meeting was running late and reports began at 1:25 PM.

**President's Board Report:** Tony Copes

Tony asked for volunteers for the board nominating committee. There are 3 openings on the board - 2 at large positions and the president-elect position. Farida Hakim has agreed to temporarily fill one of the at large board positions until the October election.

**Backpack Meals:** Jan Starr

Jan left the meeting and Farida Hakim provided a brief report. At St. Margaret's. Provided Safeway vouchers to 120 summer students. 30 people attended a garden party fundraiser. Provided 9,000 packets of food at a cost of \$68,000.

**Congregations for Kids:** Nancy Jacobs

Nancy's team is ready to roll!

**EISCC Legislative Coordinator:** Jean Harris

Legislature is now in Special Session. PLEASE contact your representatives if the budget is not done by 7/1; we run the risk of having a government shutdown.

To contact your state legislators, call **1-800-562-6000**. Tell them where you live and they'll provide you contact information for your legislators. **Email or postcards are the best way to reach state legislators.**

Celebrate the passage of:

- HB 1508 Breakfast After the Bell
- HB 1570 document recording fee extended to benefit the eradication of homelessness
- HB 1048 Solar energy credits

Deferred/Pending bills include:

- HB 1646 environmental tax on carbon
- SB 5073 and HB 1529 deadly force statute reform
- SB 5294 ombuds office to monitor Department of Corrections and prison related issues; non-violent communication

Careful and **do NOT sign I-1552** which seeks to repeal transgender equity

**DO sign I-940** which provides more training for law enforcement on use of deadly force

**NOTE the monthly EISCC Board meeting has been moved to the FIRST Tuesday of the month; in July the board will meet 7/5, the Wednesday after Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup>.**

**Hopelink:** Brittany Holmes

Hopelink is partnering with Workforce and serving as a satellite. Computers are in the lobby and it is one of 5 Eastside Centers. With all of the negative news today, want to share a positive highlight: two kids and a woman living in a shelter moved into a house fully furnished and received energy assistance.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**Tomorrow, June 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM at Aldersgate United Methodist.** Free concert using 140 bells by Handbell Ringers & Singers from First UMC in Lakeland, FL. This outstanding bell choir has existed since 1976 and has toured and performed throughout the United States and around the world.

**On June 14<sup>th</sup>, 6:30-8:30 PM at East Shore Unitarian Church.** East Shore Unitarian, 350, Sightline Institute, Earth Ministry and Sierra Club are holding the first environmental fundraiser on the Eastside to raise legal funds for activists and tribes protesting Kinder Morgan. It is a panel discussion to learn more about Kinder Morgan's project and how the people are fighting back; The People v. Kinder Morgan.

Karen Studders provided a Medicaid in Washington handout dated January 2017 and encouraged everyone to **write and call the entire 12 members of the Washington State Congressional delegation** and tell them to vote no to the repeal of the ACA and vote against the ACHA. <https://www.govtrack.us/congress/members/WA> and 202-225-xxxx

## ACTION NEEDED:

- Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council served as the fiscal agent for Congregations for the Homeless in its early years. EISCC supports this siting of the permanent men's shelter and supportive housing within the City of Bellevue. The City of Bellevue is accepting comments regarding the **proposed permanent men's shelter and supporting permanent housing at Eastgate**. Several public meetings have been held.
- The City of Bellevue and King County are working in partnership with Congregations for the Homeless & Imagine Housing. The site being studied is at 14350 SE Eastgate Way. Information can be found at <http://www.bellevuewa.gov/eastside-mens-shelter.htm>.
- Please write and send emails/ letters to [EastsideMensShelter@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:EastsideMensShelter@bellevuewa.gov) or call Mike McCormick Huentelman at 425-452-4089, or contact Bellevue City Councilmembers directly at [council@bellevuewa.gov](mailto:council@bellevuewa.gov)

Anne St. Germain welcomed a past student of Bellevue Community College and a resident in her home who is now a pastor living in DC named Oduno Tarik. She picked him up from the airport today and he is visiting us for a few weeks.

CLOSING PRAYER: Sue Caruso

**THE NEXT EISCC MEETING will take place on Tuesday, July 11, 2017, 12:00 – 1:30 pm**

PROGRAM: The topic of **Hunger** is to be presented by Jan Starr, Backpack Meals, an EISCC Agency and perhaps others.

LOCATION: St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Bristol Hall, 4228 Factoria Boulevard SE, Bellevue, WA

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Karen Studders*

*Secretary, Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council Board*