

EASTSIDE INTERFAITH SOCIAL CONCERNS COUNCIL (EISCC) GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, April 13, 2021 - Noon-1:30 PM - Virtual

▪ **Opening Prayer – Elizabeth Maupin, M.Div.**

Oh holy one who has created all of yours and made human in your own damage. Please look with compassion on our entire human family. Remove the arrogance from our hearts, our tendency to judge others harshly for the very things we do not care to see in ourselves, our tendency to confuse punishment with Justice our love of hierarchies, our inclination to stigmatize or fear all that we do not understand. We seek your help in breaking down the walls that divide us. And in strengthening the bonds of love and compassion, which unite us. Help us in this gathering to embody your love and care for all who are in any way, afflicted in body, mind, spirit or circumstance that we might be instruments of your healing power. Grant us the grace, wisdom and courage to accomplish your purpose is on earth. Respecting your entire creation, and establishing the balance, harmony and peace that you intend for this amazing planet. Great and Merciful One with many names, please hear this prayer.

▪ **Introductions (via chat box)**

- **Reports** – To maximize our time for two presentations today, there will be a time for announcements at 12:40. Otherwise, written reports should be emailed for inclusion in the minutes of the meeting.

▪ **EISCC Board Membership Election**

EISCC By-Laws require the membership to appoint individuals to the board. A vote was taken and all agreed to the appointment of Rev. Mark Griffith, Pastor at St. Luke's to the EISCC Board.

Presentation #1 - Jennifer Fischer, Executive Director, Bellevue LifeSpring (accompanied by Human Services Administrator, Carlos Vargas) – Presentation attached

- ✓ Jennifer has been the Executive Director for the last seven years. She has worked with other Bellevue organizations and is a resident of Bellevue for the last 27 years,
- ✓ Honored to have worked with many EISCC organizations as children and families in our community have been greatly impacted by COVID-19
- ✓ LifeSpring was the first non-profit in Bellevue
- ✓ They serve students that are out of the free and reduced price lunch program during the school season by providing them with food vouchers and back to school clothing
- ✓ Their goal during COVID is to support basic needs—food, emergency rental assistance
- ✓ Poverty is at the core of challenges faced by Eastside residents—poverty leads to eviction notices, unmet childcare needs, insufficient nutrition and healthcare
- ✓ Many LS clients are those providing services to other Bellevue residents, yet living in Bellevue is cost prohibitive. They are working with Amazon who has invested \$10B in a housing equity fund. Transportation is another challenge faced by impoverished communities.
- ✓ PowerPoint presentation is attached

Community Announcements

- ✓ Farida--Thanks to the prayers and donations, the Islamic Center is being re-built in Bellevue.
- ✓ Kimberly (Hopelink) –
 - Mobility Management Team has a Vaccine Transportation helpline which is in place to help transport individuals to the sites where vaccines are being administered and other appointments as well.
- ✓ Trisha Berry (Eastside Baby Corner)

- Annual Diaper Derby – May 1 through June 5 – diapers can be dropped off in person or order online and ship to Eastside Baby Corner. Their goal is to collect 125,000 diapers in this year’s drive (85,000 collected in 2020)
- ✓ Kathy (President and CEO of Easter Seals Washington) – their adult day program has lost their lease and is seeking a new space of 4500 square feet or more. They are willing to partner with another organization as they provide services to adults who have dementia and live with developmental disabilities and respite for families providing support to their loved ones.
- ✓ Alysa (The Sophia Way) – Suggests that EISCC invite Stephanie Martinez (outreach person for the City of Bellevue) and The Sophia Way to present at EISCC on what they can and cannot do for people experiencing homelessness
- ✓ Ellen Weiss (Temple B’Nai Torah) – welcomed Tent City #4 to their campus on Friday, April 9th. Any individual or organization wishing to contribute meals should contact Social Action/Social Justice Committee Chair, Marty.
- ✓ Susie Gonzales (Library) – Continues to extend services to people experiencing homelessness through book totes, hotspots for agency use, laptops and various kits (activity, self care, vision board, etc.)

Presentation #2 – City of Bellevue, Alex O’Reilly – Use of 1590 funds

- In October 2020, the Bellevue City Council passed a resolution that allows the city to collect 1/10th of 1% of sales tax to be used on affordable housing, mental and behavioral health services and housing related services. This was made possible as the Washington State Legislature passed HB1590 which allows cities, municipalities and counties to enact this sales tax. The annual income is unknown at this point but is believed that as much as \$9M could be collected each year. The purpose of the presentation was to obtain feedback in response to the questions below:
 - How can the funds best serve the people of Bellevue?
 - Mold issues in existing affordable housing units, group living conditions for people coming out of homelessness, rental assistance for those who need it, Bellevue school district children needs, health support for students coming out of the COVID crisis
 - What are the gaps and barriers in our current funding systems which are preventing people from getting the funding currently available?
 - Housing for those providing direct services to Bellevue organizations, etc.—police officers, nurses, teachers, hotel workers. Especially those who qualify for low income housing instead of affordable housing
 - Fear of accepting government funding, language barriers, access to technology, transportation
 - Is there something coming up in the near term (by the end of 2021) which could be addressed with these funds related to affordable housing focus or behavioral health focus, anything that would allow people to remain in their homes. It could be legal assistance, physical health services.
 - Childcare for working families; Partnering with a teen housing organization to purchase property
- **Closing Prayer** – Steve Roberts

In Service,
 Rev. Patty L. Ebner
 EISCC Board Secretary