



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee
Special Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: January 9th, 2020 10:00am to 11:00am – Whatcom County Health Department, 509 Girard Street, Bellingham

WCHAC Members Present: Regina Delahunt, Brien Thane, Samya Lutz, Jennifer Moon, Emily O’Connor, Debbie Paton, Paul Schissler, Kyle Christensen

WCHAC Members Absent: Karen Burke, Mike Parker

Whatcom Co. Health Dept. Staff/Guests: Ann Beck, Human Services Supervisor; Barbara Johnson-Vinna, Human Services Housing Specialist; Chris D’Onofrio, Human Services Housing Specialist; Samantha Murdoch, Coordinator
Guests: Tara Sundin, Judy Ziels

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
1. Call to order, introductions	Introductions commenced and quorum present.	Brien Thane
2. Agenda Review	No additions to the agenda	Brien
3. Public Comment	No public comment.	Brien
4. Reports/Discussion A. <i>WCHAC Membership and Logistics Update</i>	The Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee (WCHAC) is expanding to include new positions associated to Substitute House Bill 1406, and has two new members that will be appointed and attending the February, 2020 meeting. The current meeting space is no longer adequate to support the needs of the committee. The meetings will now be held at the WECU Education Center located at 511 E Holly Street, Bellingham, Washington. The times and dates will be the same. Tara Sundin will attend as an unofficial member of the WCHAC until the new mayor has designated representatives from the City of Bellingham. It was discussed that we should bring to the next meeting the bylaws pertaining to attendance of members, and authority of the committee to remove membership under certain criteria. Chris will review attendance over the past year and provide a summary	Chris



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<p>B. <i>Children & Family Action Plan</i></p>	<p>In 2018 the Health Board (HB) passed a resolution for priorities around Children and Family Well-Being. As part of this resolution the Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB) was tasked with completing a formal plan and set of policy recommendations to take to the HAB at the February 4th, 2020 meeting. PHAB approached this committee asking for input related to policy and priorities around family stability. A Child and Family Action Plan was created through collaboration with community partners. This morning the Public Health Advisory Board approved this plan. The intent today is to walk through the plan and request this committee to make a formal support of this plan that can be attached to the final action plan when presented at the HAB meeting on February 4th, 2020. The recommendations in the action plan are policy and actions the County Government can make with a goal of being more preventative focused versus crisis response. The three key areas are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Safe and stable housing 2. Safe, accessible childcare and early learning opportunities 3. Accessible behavioral health services for children and their families <p>The action plan recommendations focus on the infrastructure of the County Government. There is a recommendation to establish an office that will pull together interdepartmental thoughts and practices and their impact on children and families. Other recommendations are to include input from parent and family stakeholders, to promote family-friendly employment practices as a model for community employers, and to focus on results and accountability. Specific to housing, the plan calls for non-allocated funds to eliminate family homelessness and improve housing stability by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocating resources to scale up effective prevention and intervention systems including emergency assistance, rental assistance, case management, and linkage to legal and other family supports for families with young children experiencing homelessness or unstable housing • Working with partners to expand affordable housing options throughout the county, through actions such as establishing a Whatcom County Affordable Housing Investment Fund, improved zoning for modestly-priced housing, and offering surplus and underutilized public land for affordable housing <p>The plan was updated to include a recommendation for a fiscal analysis to find other revenue sources. It was strongly requested that the plan include wording that expresses the need to not take funding from current partnerships and established programs. With regards to a newly established office, it would need to be outside any department in order to provide inter-departmental reach. The goal of this plan is to be bold, without being too specific on how it is carried out.</p> <p>Paul motioned to authorize the chair to sign a letter that will be drafted by a small sub group of this committee and will be circulated to the members for comment. Debbie seconded the motion, which is clarified below:</p>	<p>Emily O'Connor</p>



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<p><i>Action:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A letter will be drafted by Emily, Samya and Paul. • The letter will include a support of the Family Action Plan and Sharing a Vision for Whatcom County Children and Families. In this letter there will be strong support for new revenue sources and specific interest in the housing and homelessness recommendation as it is this committee's purview. Adding that this committee would appreciate being an advisor for policy and action that falls under the housing portion of the action plan. <p>The committee voted and the motion passed.</p> <p>Brien Thane, the chairperson, will not attend the February meeting. It is unknown if the vice-chairperson will be present. To prepare for the possible event that neither chairperson nor vice-chairperson is available, Samya nominated Emily O'Connor, the Committee's prior chairperson, facilitate the meeting for February. Regina seconded this.</p> <p>The committee voted and the motion passed.</p>	<p>Ayes: 8 Abstain: 0 Motion Passed</p> <p>Brien Ayes: 8 Abstain: 0 Motion Passed</p>
<p>5. ADJOURN</p>	<p>11:03am</p>	<p>Brien</p>
<p><i>NEXT MEETING</i></p>	<p>Next regular meeting February 13th, 2020, 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.</p> <p><u>NEW LOCATION</u></p> <p>WECU Education Center</p> <p>511 E Holly St</p> <p>Bellingham, Washington</p>	