



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: April 11, 2019 8:30AM to 10:00AM – Whatcom County Health Department, 509 Girard Street, Bellingham

WCHAC Members Present: Karen Burke, Regina Delahunt, Brien Thane, Ed Moran, Kyle Christensen, Samya Lutz, Jennifer Moon, Emily O'Connor, Debbie Paton, Paul Schissler

WCHAC Members Absent:

Whatcom Co. Health Dept. Staff/Guests: Anne Deacon, Human Services Manager, Barbara Johnson-Vinna, Human Services Housing Specialist; Chris D'Onofrio, Human Services Housing Specialist; Samantha Murdoch, Coordinator; Ann Beck, Human Services Supervisor; Mike Parker, Homeless Service Center Director; Rachel Lucy, PHAB

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
1. Call to order, introductions	Introductions commenced and quorum present.	Brien Thane
2. Agenda Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding a discussion about families with children and motel stays. • Bylaw update regarding roles under the public comment section. • Adding announcements. • Subcommittee being added under action items. 	Brien
3. Public Comment	<p>David Fitzgerald expressed that it has not been the normal response of this group to tackle emergency preparedness, but what is then the function of housing providers to align and work well with systems. Suggestion to inform and provide resources in such situations like what is happening now by this group. Communities that are successful with emergency shelters do not take from affordable housing and such, but find other ways to come up with emergency funds.</p> <p>What do we do about emergency preparedness in our community for the homeless with volcano eruptions and major power outages?</p>	Brien
4. New Business A. <i>February 2019 Minutes Approval</i>	Correction to the minutes to accurately reflect time of adjournment. Emily moved that the minutes from the February meeting be approved after corrected. Samya seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed.	Ayes: 10 Abstain: 0 Motion Passed



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<p><i>B. Severe Weather Responses – Subcommittee Charter</i></p>	<p>The intent of creating this subcommittee is to for this group to have a plan with contracts and partners in place for severe weather sheltering. It would create clarity on what sources are used to determine severe weather, what resources are available for use in such cases, and define qualifications sought in a provider.</p> <p>There was a discussion about representation of members on this subcommittee. The Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee would hold a seat, suggestion to have a domestic violence and sexual assault representative as well. These conversations will continue at the first meeting, determining who is represented and who needs to be attending that is not.</p> <p>Emily moved to approve this subcommittee. Regina seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed.</p>	<p>Anne D</p> <p>Ayes: 10 Abstain: 0 Motion Passed</p>
<p>5. Reports/Discussion <i>A. Local Plan Update</i></p>	<p>Chris and Barbara hosted six focus groups to assist in the local plan update process. The groups were of Permanent Supportive Housing, Interim Housing, Rapid Rehousing, Coordinated Entry, Affordable Housing, the City of Bellingham, and Prevention Diversion Stability Housing.</p> <p>There was some consistent takeaways from these focus groups including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Need for behavioral health support across, housing case managers relieved of some of the burden ▪ Light touch case management for diversion and prevention ▪ Referrals being appropriate to meet the individuals need and capacity from coordinated entry ▪ HOT Team does great work, but is limited to city limits. There is a need for expansion to county rural areas ▪ Specialized housing <p>There are new guidelines for creating a local plan, it is seven pages. We will incorporate a portion to youth in the local plan, and address efforts to ensure racial equity in planning processes. In the guidelines they address having a taskforce to assist with putting together the local plan, however it is</p>	<p>Chris</p> <p>Barbara</p>



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<p>B. <i>Families with Children and the Need for Emergency Shelter</i></p>	<p>not necessary. We have received input from the Steering Committee, focus groups, and will be facilitating a Special Meeting at the Coalition for additional input. Commerce is offering 10 hours of technical assistance per county.</p> <p>On April 25th we will host a Special Coalition Meeting for plan input, handouts provided. The plan is due Dec 1, 2019.</p> <p>In 2018 spending for hotel and motel vouchers was \$235,000 which is a band aid, and that is not including faith based and DVSAS. This year the waitlist for families with children has doubled. The amount we spent last year is not going to be enough. We have already run through what we spent last year and it is only early April. Some organizations have reported they have stopped funding hotels for this year. We need to find a long term solution.</p> <p>The children and family resolution passed and an action plan is due in January. PHAB is willing to participate in a sub group to work on this; there is also a joint PHAB / Health Board meeting June 11th.</p> <p>For \$250,000 a year we need to work on less expensive interim housing options.</p> <p>We need more data on increasing capacity for interim housing, average length of stay in shelters, increase of intakes and less program opening, plus more time for this conversation. Suggestion to have a half day retreat/conversation with more solid asks and ideas and follow it up with this committee.</p> <p>Debbie and Emily both at a place to stop funding hotels for the year.</p> <p>Send data requests to Chris for further discussion on this in mid-May.</p>	<p>Emily</p>
<p>C. <i>COB Update</i></p>	<p>Homes Now tent encampment has moved.</p> <p>City is coordinating a symposium on May 10 for tent encampments up at WWU. The topics are on code, planning, and zoning.</p> <p>The action plan is in process, recommendations made tonight. The annual action plan will be completed early May and begin July 1.</p>	<p>Samya</p>



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D. WHSC Update	<p>Wins and successes from 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ HMIS: 2281 person 1304 households got their homes or were able to keep their homes in 2018. Eviction prevention or housing (not emergency), includes carry over from previous year. ▪ 578 served through coordinated entry <p>Families with children out in the system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As of 4/8/2019 the number of households waiting for intervention is 612; 364 of those say they are unsheltered. Of those 36 are families with children. 25 of those say they are unsheltered. 59 are youth. 72 are over the age of sixty. 43 are veterans. 8 actively fleeing domestic violence. <p>Mike will put this together for people to use.</p>	<p>Mike Parker</p>
6. ANNOUNCEMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whatcom Housing Alliance is hosting a strategic planning session at the Squalicum Boathouse. May 10th from 8:30am to 12:00pm 	
7. ADJOURN	09:58 AM	Brien
<i>NEXT MEETING</i>	<p>Next regular meeting June 13, 2019, 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. Whatcom County Health Department - Admin. Conference Room</p>	