



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: June 14, 2007 - 10:00– 11:30 AM – Whatcom County Health Department, 509 Girard Street, Bellingham

WCHAC Members Present: David Cahill, Gail DeHoog, Regina Delahunt, John Harmon, Nancy Larsen, Sue Parrott, Paul Schissler, Ronald Buchinski, Laura DeRose, Carole Wells, Gary Tomsic

WCHAC Members Absent: Michele Hall

Whatcom County Health Depart Staff/Guests: Gary Williams, Human Services Supervisor, Pat Fisher, Human Services Clerk, David Finet, Opportunity Council, Steve Powers, Archdiocesan Housing Authority

| Agenda Item | Discussion | Action/Who |
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| 1. Review the May 16, 2007 minutes. | <p>The May 16, 2007 Minutes were reviewed.</p> <p>There were additional important points discussed that should be noted in the May 16, 2007 minutes. (See Motion #1.6.07)</p> | <p>Action Requested: That the WCHAC consider amending the May 16, 2007 minutes as follows:</p> <p>Motion #1.6.07: To approve The May 16, 2007 Minutes with the following changes to Agenda Item #4 – Discussion:</p> <p>There was additional discussion regarding the future use for 2060 Capital funds. It was discussed that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It is expected that Capital funds will be available again in two years |

| Agenda Item | Discussion | Action/Who |
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| <p>1. Review the May 16, 2007 minutes. (cont.)</p> | | <p>2. The next funding session would be open to non-profit agencies and not exclusively to the Bellingham /Whatcom County Housing Authority. 3. The government-to-government funding will pave the way to developing a Capital RFP. 4. The local Capital sub-committee would assure that the County has a process in place to develop a Capital RFP for future funding sessions.</p> <p>Vote: (Yea 12) (Nay 0) (Absent 1) (Abstention 0)</p> |
| <p>2. YWCA Emergency Request for R&R funding</p> | <p>Paul stated that The YWCA request is somewhat complicated and asked Gary Williams, HS Supervisory if he would provide background, history and clarification.</p> <p>Gary provided an informational packet to the Committee members containing the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A synopsis sheet of previous Repair and Retention funding allocated to the YWCA 2. A letter from Julie Foster, YWCA Exec. Dir. dated June 13, 2007 to the Committee, requesting that the \$10,000 allocation in emergency funds for the YWCA Larrabee Residence Re-roofing and 4th floor seismic upgrade project be renewed. 3. The 2006 LOG Sheet 2060 Repair & Retention RFP 05-79 Screening Committee Recommendations 4. A copy of the December 14, 2006 Agenda and Minutes with reference to Motion #5/12/06. <p>Gary commented that the YWCA is short of funds by approximately \$27,000.</p> <p>The synopsis sheet of previous Repair and Retention funding for the YWCA stated the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8/06 WCHAC approved the YWCA request for \$10,000 of \$11,467 request for roof repair • A YWCA R&R LOA was approved by County | |

| Agenda Item | Discussion | Action/Who |
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| <p>2. YWCA Emergency Request for R&R funding (Cont.)</p> | <p>Council on 12/05/05 and signed by contractor for the period 1/1/06 – 12/31/06, which contained the terms and conditions that required any modifications (extension) must be requested in writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The YWCA submitted no written or verbal request for an extension to the County • Unexpended funds were returned to the County 2060 fund – 1/1/07 • WCHAC voted on 12/14/06 to recommend the county develop a new LOA for \$10,000 for roof repair using 2005-2006 R&R unused funds due to the rejected late submission of the application for funding the 2007 R&R RFP <p>Gary clarified that there is not an additional \$10,000 available from 2006 and suggested the committee could either consider this an emergency request or explore other funding sources.</p> <p>Sue Parrott asked if there was a requirement on the December Motion 5/12 06 to locate matching or additional funds or any designated time limits</p> <p>The December 14, 2006 Motion #5/12/06 states that the County enter into an LOA with the YWCA not to exceed \$10,000 of residual funds with the condition that they procure all the funds necessary to complete the roofing project prior to September 1, 2007.</p> <p>John Harmon stated that on certain projects the Bellingham/Whatcom County Housing Authority is required to make a donation to a non-profit agency. The BWCHA Board selected the YWCA to receive \$18,000.</p> <p>John suggested that in light of the funding that other sources have committed to the YWCA, the Committee might want to make an exception. Should the Committee decide to make the exception it should be made clear that this is the second</p> | |

| Agenda Item | Discussion | Action/Who |
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| <p>2. YWCA Emergency Request for R&R funding (Cont.)</p> | <p>exception and a strong warning issued that the YWCA must watch deadlines and conditions of agreements more closely in the future.</p> <p>David Cahill requested clarification on whether or not there were two sets of requests for \$10,000. Gary stated that this was an additional request on top of the 12/14/06-approved allocation.</p> <p>Regina Delahunt asked what funding source would be attached to support the new request.</p> <p>Gary stated that the Committee could recommend using the 2008 R&R allocation but that would reduce funds available for that funding session by \$10,000.</p> <p>There was a great deal of confusion and questions so in order to further clarify history for the Committee members Gary stated the following:</p> <p>In the 2005 RFP process for 2006 R & R funding, the YWCA requested and received \$10,000 that they did not expend in 2006 and therefore, stayed in the fund.</p> <p>In the 2007 RFP process the YWCA had a late submission and was not considered for funding.</p> <p>In December 2006 the Committee moved to reallocate to the YWCA the \$10,000 that the YWCA did not expend from the 2006 RFP allocated funds.</p> <p>The request before the Committee today is for an additional \$10,000.</p> <p>There was clarification that the current letter from Julie is requesting a renewal, which is inaccurate. This request is not renewing any previous funding request it is a new request. Julie Foster is under the impression that the 2006 funds have not been spent but that is inaccurate, they were</p> | |

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| <p>2. YWCA Emergency Request for R&R funding (Cont.)</p> | <p>allocated as stated above in December 2006.</p> <p>Laura Derosé recommended that the Committee approve the current request.</p> <p>Gary stated that the 2008 R&R funds are currently accumulating and will be approximately \$130,000 - \$150,000.</p> <p>There was discussion on whether or not the YWCA could be excluded from application for the 2008 RFP funding round and it was the general consensus of the Committee that that was not an option.</p> <p>John Harmon stated that taking into account the funding difficulties presented to the YWCA during this project, that delays or failures to complete the required repairs could result in the loss of affordable housing in Whatcom County and/or if there were an earthquake there is a possibility of injury to the residence, and further deterioration of the building, that the request be approved.</p> <p>There was question as to whether or not to include language in the motion in the form of a warning stating that this is the second such request and that there needs to be accountability for the actions that led to this and previous request. Ron Buchinski suggested that this would best be conveyed in a letter to Julie Foster, cc'd to the YWCA Board of Directors, which the committee agreed was the best course of action</p> | <p>Action Requested: That the WCHAC is asked to consider:</p> <p>MOTION # 2/6/07: It is the recommendation of the Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee to allocate \$10,000 to the YWCA from the 2008 2060 R&R funds for the Larrabee Residence re-roofing and 4th floor seismic upgrade project, with the understanding that the funds available for the 2008 RFP allocation will be reduced by this amount.</p> <p>Vote: (Yea 11) (Nay 0) (Absent 1) (Abstention 1) Dave Cahill abstained.</p> <p>Action: Upon approval by the County of the YWCA request a letter will be composed to Julie foster, cc'd to the YWCA Board of Directors stating the suggested warning.</p> |
| <p>3. Presentation - Countywide Housing Affordability Taskforce (CHAT) - Paul Schissler</p> | <p>Paul circulated a handout that addresses the CHAT Mission, Task Force Members and the Charge to the Task Force as it was laid out by the Mayor and the County Executive and invited comment and discussion at the end of the presentation.</p> <p>Paul spoke to the fact that the CHAT Mission is ambitious. He explained that the Mission figure of the anticipated need for 11,000 additional housing units by 2022 that are affordable to households earning 80% or less of the county</p> | |

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| <p>3. Presentation - Community Housing Affordability Taskforce (CHAT) - Paul Schissler (Cont.)</p> | <p>median income was arrived at by projecting how many households will be low- to moderate-income among the estimated 60,000 or so additional people that are planned for in Whatcom County under the Comprehensive Plan. This is the projected figure and does not factor in the current population of well over 10,000 households in need of affordable housing.</p> <p>The County and City jointly decided to hire a team of consultants that are gathering background information on County demographics and summaries of the tools that other jurisdictions are using around the country to address problems that they face with housing issues. The Taskforce and consultants are meeting almost every Friday to review these tools and discuss which tools would apply to Whatcom County.</p> <p>The CHAT schedule expects a summary of recommendations to be presented to the community at large by September 2007. At that time public input will be requested and incorporated into a report for presentation to the County and City by October/November 2007.</p> <p>Paul stated that as the plan develops the WCHAC could provide recommendations along the way and/or individually during the public forum.</p> <p>Paul opened the floor for comments/questions.</p> <p>Gail commented that there is a lot of information to sort out and would welcome input and ideas from people. Discussion at Taskforce meetings has touched on the need to come to a philosophical place regarding the populations being considered in the planning process.</p> <p>John cautioned that planning actions should not create windfalls for developers but actually increase the affordability of housing. If the price of housing is not regulated, housing costs will rise or fall to meet the market. Density bonuses and tax credit projects must be monitored</p> | |


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| <p>3 Presentation - Community Housing Affordability Taskforce (CHAT) – Paul Schissler (cont.)</p> | <p>to assure that these tools are doing their job to provide affordable housing.</p> <p>Gary stated that he characterizes the philosophical dialog as whether the full continuum of housing is being embraced to include populations ranging from the homeless to the very wealthy or is the plan to begin with incomes of professional individuals such as law enforcement, teachers, etc. who are being forced out of the city for want of affordable housing. There have been comments in the meetings that the lower income individuals are the responsibility of agencies such as the Housing Authority and others who address the needs of that population. Gary stated that this is a concern to him in that it poses a substantial risk for losing existing units that are affordable when it comes to allocation of need.</p> <p>Ron Buchinski pointed out that Whatcom County has a large population of individuals who work in the agricultural industry and have very low incomes who are not currently counted. He also pointed out that if the immigration legislation before the government now goes through it is anticipated that there will be between 12 and 18 million individuals nationally who would fall into this lower income bracket. Ron suggests that this should be taken into consideration by CHAT.</p> <p>Dave Cahill stated that the current numbers are preliminary and being used as a base line. They are based on the 2000 Whatcom County census of documented residents. If an individual was not registered they were not counted.</p> <p>He pointed out that the taskforce is working toward a process that ultimately will result in legislation through the City and the County to provide affordable housing. The next step will be to evaluate the tools to use to get a more accurate planning process.</p> <p>He stated that the charge of the taskforce is to look at the full range of the housing continuum to include homelessness. In the initial meetings there was confusion</p> | |

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| <p>3 Presentation - Community Housing Affordability Taskforce (CHAT) – Paul Schissler (cont.)</p> | <p>by some members that the issues to be addressed only involved home ownership.</p> <p>Gail talked to the fact that she would like input so that during the discussions we will best be able to represent the lower end of the income spectrum in a way that will be taken seriously, and figured into the whole planning process. She feels it is important to give the Taskforce actual numbers to support credibility.</p> <p>Dave commented that there will be many tools to help address all the concerns from homelessness to moderate-income housing needs and the philosophical discussion will identify gaps and needs to better plan how resources are allocated to the different groups.</p> <p>Gary stated that he has access to some excellent source documentation and clear information about the current demographics, housing resources, etc. of Whatcom County. Gary will forward this information electronically to WCHAC members. The recent Prosperity Summit also produced some excellent information that will be forwarded.</p> <p>Gary commented that as the WCHAC is an advisor to County government it is very appropriate at this time to provide recommendations to CHAT regarding how their decision will effect the population that this committee is most focused on and how well the process addresses the needs. The WCHAC and the Whatcom County Coalition for the Homeless can be a very powerful and informative asset to CHAT's planning process.</p> <p>Nancy Larsen commented that there is a population of individuals that are working everyday, have two incomes in the \$30,000/yr range that cannot qualify for mortgages over \$175,000 using USDA Section 502 loans. This is a very large population that is unable to afford home ownership and makes up a large part of the rental population in need of affordable rentals. It is important that the whole spectrum of income abilities and needs is explored.</p> | <p>Action: Gary to email local demographic and housing resource information and information produced at the recent Prosperity Summit</p> |

| Agenda Item | Discussion | Action/Who |
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| <p>3 Presentation - Community Housing Affordability Taskforce (CHAT) – Paul Schissler (cont.)</p> | <p>John Harmon stated that the taskforce realized that there is a broad spectrum of individuals that need assistance and how important it is not to shift resources to one end or the other of the spectrum. It is important to proportionally allocate resources to the extent that can be controlled. When you get over-60% of median income it is very difficult to get any money for subsidy. The only option then is bond financing, which is not adequate with current construction costs. The taskforce will need to focus on the tools that may be out there to address this.</p> <p>The other issue John would like to see addressed is a recommendation from the CHAT Taskforce for a countywide trust fund, because even though there are matching funds for development from the City of Bellingham, there is no funding source for County development except for State funding, which is not adequate.</p> <p>Paul thanked Committee members for the very helpful insight and recommendations. He stated that there would be continued progress reports from CHAT for future discussion.</p> | |
| <p>4. Staff Report</p> | <p>A. HGAP Contract: The County has not received the contract from the State at this time but it is expected very soon. There was a small budgetary variance in the application document that was clarified and the addition of a signature sheet. It was indicated to CTED that the start date of the contract to be 8/7/07 to allow for sufficient time for the contract to clear the County review process. There does not appear to be any major problems to delay the process.</p> <p>B. WCHSC RFQ: The document is in a final draft. The County has hired a new Contract Coordinator who is assisting in the process of developing the contract language that is agreeable with the County Finance department. It is anticipated that it will be ready for the Finance review within the next week or two with a week or two turn around time from Finance. Once that process is complete, an RFQ with a target date for issue of the first to middle of July and complete by the end</p> | |

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| <p>4. Staff Report (cont.)</p> | <p>of July, first of August.</p> <p>C. WCHSC Staff Position: John Harmon provided position descriptions from other similar facilities and it is hoped that a draft will be available for the implementation workgroup that has been established to evaluate and develop Whatcom County's position.</p> <p>D. Planning implementation process Gary recommends that in terms of the summer's interim support that a personal services contract is crafted to provide staff support to meet a variety of deliverables in establishing the HMIS system that is necessary, coordinating policies and procedures, training, etc. Items that must be addressed prior to opening the Homeless Service Center.</p> <p>E. Annual CTED Report Submitted CTED requested a report on the use of the existing funding which has been completed and returned. The report included information on allocation for Operations, Repair and Retention and Capital, along with other requested information such as the PIT. Gary is scheduled to meet with the Small Cities Mayor's Group on June 19th to discuss with them how the County is using the CTED funds in an effort to keep them involved in the process.</p> <p>F. RFP Update The 2008 R&R RFP is slated for release in July. The agreement with County Administration is that the R&R RFP will be reissued annually</p> <p>The 2060 Operations RFP is a three-year contract. Gary stated that he would be requesting input from the Committee to achieve the previously identified goal to eliminate locking funds up in programs that do not match the Strategic Vision. The release target date is July/August.</p> <p>At the May meeting there was a request to review membership attendance in order to assure that WCHAC</p> | |

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| <p>5. Review of WCHAC Attendance (cont.)</p> | <p>remains an effective committee or establish whether or not there is a need for membership recruitment.</p> <p>There is also the position of the Homeless representative vacancy. Paul asked for an update from the Nominating Committee.</p> <p>Carole Wells reported that she had two applicants, John Paskel and Robert Hess, who have completed treatment and subsequently been employed. Neither of these applicants felt it was in their best interest to attend a meeting during working hours. Both applicants asked if there was the possibility of changing the time of the meeting.</p> <p>Gary shared with the Committee that the Whatcom County Homeless Coalition Steering Committee has recruited a formerly homeless individual who is able to attend meetings and is quite committed to participating in contributing to ending homelessness.</p> <p>Ron Buchinski reported he recruited a formerly homeless interested applicant, Chris Weitzel who submitted his application to the County and has not been contacted.</p> <p>Gary commented that there was a question presented to Mr. Weitzel as to whether or not he had been homeless and he responded that he had not.</p> <p>Ron stated that Mr. Weitzel share with him that at one point in his life he had lost everything and lived in temporary housing. He is currently employed as a real estate agent and is very passionate about the homeless issue as well as being able to bring information regarding Whatcom County Housing issues to the Committee table.</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding the definition of homelessness and that the committee is looking for an individual who can add experientially to the committee. Mr.. Weitzel will be contacted to further clarify if his experience with homelessness. John Harmon stated that if for some</p> | |

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| 5. Review of WCHAC Attendance (cont.) | <p>reason Mr. Weitzel did not qualify as a homeless representative, his application should be kept current and be considered for the next vacant position</p> <p>Ron Buchinski commented that he has recently had professional and personal commitments that have resulted in several absences but that his involvement on the Committee has been invaluable and he would like to continue on the Committee.</p> <p>Carole Wells commented that she has recently been met with some health challenges that have resulted in absences. She stated that participation on the WCHAC has been a real learning process and would like to continue as a representative of the chemically dependent population who range from individuals living under bridges to successfully recovering addicts who struggle with housing and employment issues.</p> <p>Gary stated that when members have come to the end of their commitment to the Committee the Executive's office would contact them to resubmit an application for reappointment if interested.</p> <p>It was reiterated that it is important to contact the Committee Chair or County Staff that you will be missing a meeting</p> | |
| Adjourn | The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 AM | |
| Next Meeting | <p style="text-align: center;"> 9:00 - 10:30 AM 2nd Thursday—July 12, 2007 Courthouse, Room #512 </p> |  |