

**Whatcom County Homeless Coalition**  
**Thursday, March 6, 2008**  
**City of Bellingham – Municipal Court Bldg.**  
**Fireplace Room - 3:30-5:00 PM**

**1. Introductions, review February meeting notes announcements.**

Introductions of those present were conducted.

There were no comments or corrections regarding the February meeting notes.

**Announcements were as follows:**

Youth group from Amy's Place will be sharing their musical talents and poetry reading March 11, 8:00 PM; Three Trees Coffee House, 118 W. Holly.

SOAR training will be held on March 13 & 14, 9AM – 4 PM; St. Luke's Community Health Education Center, 3333 Squalicum Pkwy. For further information contact Page Chance, [page@lawadvocates.org](mailto:page@lawadvocates.org)

Homeless Disability Benefits Advocacy has a weekly outreach at Rainbow Center and Light House Mission. For further information contact Page Chance, [page@lawadvocates.org](mailto:page@lawadvocates.org)

**2. Public Comment Period**

Public Comment Period is a new monthly Agenda item that gives the public an opportunity to express any thoughts or concerns on how the Homeless Coalition is dealing with homelessness in Whatcom County.

**3. Steering Committee Report**

- **Project Manager hiring effort**
- **RFP#08-08 for Case Management February 13<sup>th</sup> Release**

The Steering Committee meeting notes are sent out in advanced to Homeless Coalition members, and the notes are reviewed during the Agenda at the WCCH meeting. (Refer to Agenda #5 for information on Project Manager and Case Management positions)

**4. Emergency Shelter Grants May 1, 2008 – April 30, 2009**

- **Select lead agency or Re designate**
- **Scheduled Stakeholder Meeting 3/12 2 -2:30 Health Dept**
- **Report on Availability of Funding**
- **Due to CTED by March 28, 2008**

A lead agency or re-designate agency needs to be selected to have responsibility of the Emergency Shelter funds. The Opportunity Council and Northwest Youth Services have been past recipients of the funding, and the Opportunity Council is willing to be re-designated as lead agency. Public awareness allows agencies to be informed of the funds and gives agencies an opportunity to participate.

A Stakeholder meeting will be held March 12, 2:00 – 3:30 PM; Whatcom County Health Dept., 509 Girard St. The meeting will provide information on the Emergency Shelter grant, and for any challenges should different agencies want to participate. The Emergency Shelter grant is due to CTED by March 28, 2008.

**5. Update of HGAP I Homeless Services Center**

- **Introduce of Bill Henkel WCHSC Project Manager**
- **RFP #08-08 for Case Management March 18<sup>th</sup> Deadline**

RFP #08-08 for the Case Management position has been issued and applications deadline is March 18. The Homeless Coalition selected Julie Foster (YWCA) to serve as Representative on the Application Committee.

Bill Hinkle was introduced to the Homeless Coalition as the new WCHSC Project Manager. Bill is currently the Skagit Community Action Agency's Community Service Director, and he will work part-time in March at WCHSC; starting full-time on April 1. Bill brings knowledge and skills necessary to implement systems to make WSHSC a reality. Bill has extensive experience in Homeless Housing Programs, including the HGAP Programs and Homeless Prevention Activities; and he will be working with the Opportunity Council and WHAC.

**6. HGAP II Project Update**

- **Technical Submission approved by CTED State Contract being Drafted for presentation to the county**
- **RFP for the Master Lease Project being developed**
- **Implementation by July 1, 2008**

Technical submission of the grant has been approved by CTED and the State is drafting the contract; the contract will be sent to the County for processing and will be implemented by July 1, 2008. The contract funding supports the Re-entry Project which includes the master lease, permanent housing for ex-offender under DOC supervision and transitional housing for county jail ex-offender.

Community safety issues were discussed and several folks have joined in meeting around risk mitigation and community safety. The work group has recommended establishing a Community Safety Committee, which would include representatives from the Victim Groups; Domestic Violence; Law Enforcement; Re-Entry Coalition; Mental Health; Substance Abuse; and Citizen Neighborhood Groups.

**MOTION: It was moved and seconded and passed unanimously by those present that the Homeless Coalition supports establishing a Community Safety Committee.**

**7. Report on 2008 PIT Point In Time**

- **Debriefing**
- **Recognition of volunteers**

Final numbers for the 2008 PIT Count should be completed by March 31. 2008 total numbers are expected to be comparable to 2007 numbers. A significant increase in homeless numbers was reported by the DOC and Bellingham Police Dept. A public press release will be made when the final numbers are available.

Gary reported on ideas/methodology used by other counties for PIT Counts that could be considered for Whatcom County future counts. Some ideas included:

- Assign volunteer counters to buses
- Post PIT Count Posters on buses
- Soup kitchens sponsored by churches in rural Whatcom County areas
- Fly-over rural wooded areas by heat-detecting aircraft to identify homeless campsites
- Additional teams for counts
- Freeway ramp counts
- Add the following question to future questionnaires:  
"Given everything that is going on in your life, what is the one thing you need most that you do not have?" (besides food, shelter, money) The overwhelming response to this question in other counties was: "companionship and social (friends or mentors)"

Additional suggestions for future PIT counts can be given to Greg Winter, [gregw@stonestrategies.com](mailto:gregw@stonestrategies.com) or Gary Williams, [gwilliams@whatcomcounty.us](mailto:gwilliams@whatcomcounty.us).

At the WCCH meeting on April 3 the Homeless Coalition plans to recognize PIT volunteers and agencies for their hard work on the PIT2008 count.

## **8. Homeless Coalition Steering Committee And Officer Election**

Nominations Committee: Sandi Hall – Opportunity Council; Julie Foster – YWCA; Gary Williams – Whatcom County.

### **Recommendations for the Homeless Coalition Officers:**

Bill Henkel – Chair; Gail DeHoog – Vice Chair; Gary Williams – Secretary.

### **Recommendations for the (12) members for the Steering Committee:**

- (1) **City - Council** – Bill Henkel;
- (2) **County** – Housing Specialist;
- (3) **Housing Authority** – John Harmon;
- (4) **Mental Health** – Gary Williams;
- (5) **Substance Abuse** – Jackie Mitchell;
- (6) **Open Homeless Rep** – Open ?;
- (7) **Domestic Violence** – Julie Foster;
- (8) **Criminal Justice** – Thad Allen;
- (9) **Adult Housing Agency** – Debbie Paton;
- (10) **United Way** – Peter Theisen;
- (11) **Open** – Riannon Bardsley;
- (12) **Youth Housing Agency** – Gail DeHoog

**MOTION: It was moved and seconded and passed unanimously by those present to accept the Nomination Committee recommendations for the Homeless Coalition Officers and for all of the Steering Committee, with the exception of voting for #7 (Domestic Violence).**

WCCH member elected Shannon Webb for the Domestic Violence position and Gary Ables was selected as the Open Homeless Rep.

## **9. Employment Project Grant Effort**

Building Changes, a non-profit technical consulting organization, is seeking funding from various foundations to bring the Community Employment Pathways project model to several Washington State counties. The project seeks to (1) identify counties that are interested and ready to accelerate the pace of integrating employment, treatment, and housing systems in their own communities; and (2) provide the counties with training, tools, and technical support needed to succeed. Participating counties will receive technical assistance to implement strategies that build capacity to improve measurable outcomes for homeless job seekers.

Greg Winter and Mark Gardner have been looking at the opportunities with Building Changes. Building Changes is excited to know that Whatcom County might be interested in participating in the program. For further information contact Greg Winter, [gregw@stonestrategies.com](mailto:gregw@stonestrategies.com)

**MOTION: It was moved and seconded and passed unanimously by those present that the Homeless Coalition should adopt the resolution for the Building Changes Community Employment Pathways project.**

## **10. UPDATE/BELLINGHAM WHATCOM PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT**

PHC Planning Group is reconsidering site location and event date for the PHC event in Bellingham. Potential sites should have 10,000 – 15,000 sq. ft., kitchen facility, parking area, and ensure the best opportunity for service partners and community volunteers to fully participate in the event. The United Way of Whatcom County plans to provide PHC with administration support. For further information contact Bruce Johnson, [bruce98225@msn.com](mailto:bruce98225@msn.com)

## **11. Presentation: PBS NOW Program “Home at Last” if Available/Time**

The PBS **NOW** program “**Home at Last**” concerning permanent supportive housing is back ordered and should be available for the April meeting. The program is available on-line at <http://www.pbs.org/now>.

❖ **Next Meeting: Thursday, April 3, 2008**

**If you have any questions call or e-mail:**

Gary Williams at 676-6724 Ext. 30693 or e-mail [gwilliam@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:gwilliam@co.whatcom.wa.us)

Gail de Hoog – Northwest Youth Services 734-9862 or email – [gaild@nwys.org](mailto:gaild@nwys.org)

Ann Holmes at 676-6724 Ext. 50811 or email [aholmes@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:aholmes@co.whatcom.wa.us)