



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: January 8, 2009 – 8:35-10:10 a.m. – Whatcom County Health Department, 509 Girard Street, Bellingham

WCHAC Members Present: David Cahill, Regina Delahunt, Laura DeRose, John Harmon, Rebecca Johnson, Nancy Larsen, Sue Parrott, Paul Schissler, Gary Tomsic

WCHAC Members Absent: Michelle Hall, David Finet, Steve Powers, Gary Williams

Whatcom County Health Depart Staff/Guests: Greg Winter, WHSC; Debbie Paton, Opportunity Council; Anne Deacon, Health Department Human Services Manager, Gail DeHoog, Health Department Housing Specialist; Vicki McClure, Health Department Human Services Clerk

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
Call to order and Introductions	The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. and introductions were conducted	
1. Review December 11, 2008 minutes.	The December 11, 2008 minutes were reviewed and approved unanimously as presented.	
2. Old Business	<p>The revised meeting time of 8:30-10:00 a.m. will be adopted.</p> <p>Economic Development Initiative – Paul reported on follow-up research done. A variety of projects are being funded in different counties, but no counties appear to be using EDI to fund housing. CTED wants to defer to local jurisdictions. A one-page proposal summary will be presented to the Economic Development Council requesting consideration of use of EDI funding for housing purposes.</p>	<p>Paul to continue work with Gail and Gary Tomsic to refine and strengthen the proposal for EDI funded projects prior to it's submission to legal in preparation for the proposal's presentation to the County Executive and County Council.</p>

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<p data-bbox="178 175 506 240">2. Old Business (continued)</p> <p data-bbox="178 1076 506 1109">3. Capital funds</p>	<p data-bbox="506 175 1398 305">A question was posed regarding availability of economic stimulus funding being available for use in housing. Whatcom County will not be receiving NSP funds due to the lower foreclosure rate in our county.</p> <p data-bbox="506 342 1398 472">Paul reported that the WA Low Income Housing Alliance, a statewide non-profit group, provides networking opportunities and information regarding legislation, and funding. Attendees are encouraged to check out their website.</p> <p data-bbox="506 509 1398 1040">Homeless Service Center -- Greg reported that he will bring a one-page quarterly report to future meetings the month after the end of each quarter. HSC challenges: finding units in the private rental market; caseloads are high with challenging cases necessitating need for additional case management capabilities. Some rental assistance funds may be moved to a master leasing program in cooperation with Opportunity Council, perhaps as early as March. The almost doubling of energy assistance money from the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Plan will allow for additional case management by using a portion of the LIHEAP funds for rental assistance, thereby freeing up HSC funds for increased case management. Average rental assistance amounts will probably be above average over the last quarter. Eviction prevention goals were met, and Greg reports that HSC exceeded their goals for serving secondary and tertiary populations. Kudos were extended to Greg and his staff for their innovative approach.</p> <p data-bbox="506 1078 1398 1472">The Capital Sub-Committee met on December 17, 2008. Gail provided notes from that meeting to the membership. The group seeks recommendations from WCHAC regarding \$225-250,000 which should be released for the 2010 Capital fund. A RFQ can be released in Phase I, and RFP in Phase II. Due to the nature of the grant application process, it may be necessary to hire a consultant and legal support, which may cost \$25-50,000. The Sub-Committee posed three possibilities for consideration: (1) don't do a capital round and use the funds for R&R and O&M. This would require re-doing the Interlocal agreement. (2) Hold off on committing funds and let them build up. Concern that if this option is adopted, would interest on existing funds be retained?</p>	<p data-bbox="1398 1013 2003 1344">Motion: To expend the necessary capital funds to obtain consultant services for the RFQ/RFP process. The consultant will ensure that the RFP include the requirement that the legal costs associated with drafting contracting documents be assumed by the sponsor to minimize cost to the fund. Yea 10; Nay 0; Abstain 0; Absent Michelle Hall, David Finet, Steve Powers, Gary Williams</p>

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<p>3. Capital funds (con't)</p>	<p>(3) Hire consultant and proceed with RFQ/RFP process. Discussion took place regarding amount of consultant/legal fees. Consulting costs could be 10-15%, and the consultant could create documents which could be used now and in the future. An RFQ, which would be a one-page letter of interest would go out by February 2, 2009 with responses due February 16, 2009. As the RFP would be more complex, consulting services would not be needed until this stage. If no response to the RFQ, a "plan B" could be implemented which would consider O&M or R&R projects. Further discussion took place regarding attorney fees. The question was posed whether attorney fees would come out of dollars we are already charged in administrative fees. Since county legal lacks expertise in this type of RFP, an external firm (for example, Kantor Taylor) would be required. It was determined that the RFP should include legal costs associated with drafting contract documents. A motion was put forth to engage the services of a consultant to prepare an RFP which can be used now, or which would meet future needs as well.</p>	
<p>4. Phase IV Planning</p>	<p>Paul provided a one-page suggested approach to the 10-Year Plan update, which is to be completed this year. The document was reviewed and discussed. The document was the product of input from several individuals. As the plan needs to go to the County Council, a target date of 6/30/09 is suggested. The goal is for Phase IV Planning to be part of the housing chapters for the county and city's Comprehensive Plans instead of a stand-alone document. It was decided that a sub-committee to be made up of John Harmon, Dave Cahill (or representative), Gail DeHoog, Paul Schissler, Greg Winter, Gary Williams, Gary Tomsic and Samya Lutz along with members recruited from the Homeless Coalition steering committee will meet prior to the March meeting to provide input and overview of housing needs. The sub-committee will be tasked to gather initial information regarding CHAT recommendations and additional information. As the goal of Phase IV would be to broaden the view to include the entire continuum of housing need, a recommendation was made that the entire WCHAC meet to brainstorm and develop and define the scope of this challenge early in the process. The WCHAC Charter was reviewed to ensure that the committee will be</p>	

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Phase IV Planning (cont.)	operating within the scope of the charter. It was noted that most of the background data has come out of the previous market/economic environment. The planning should adjust for current conditions.	
	Also to be considered: What are the requirements under the Growth Management Act? Cities and counties need to take this into consideration when composing their documents. Small Cities updates are due in the next year or two.	The March meeting will be an extended session, from 8:30-10:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 12, with the primary focus of the meeting to address Phase IV.
5. On the horizon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the Horizon will become a regular agenda item. • Anne Deacon reported on the Governor’s proposed budget projection. Due to an expected six billion dollar shortfall, the following immediate cuts are anticipated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 21% reduction in chemical dependency treatment funding proposed by Governor ▪ Eliminating the ADATSA living stipend <p>Being considered before July:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elimination of funding for transition out of jails into housing and treatment services ▪ Wage earner proviso may be withdrawn. <p>Individual treatment providers aren’t entering the field, which results in decreased number of providers. The Governor recommended putting more money in food banks and shelters. GAU funding is in jeopardy. Re-entry funding throughout the state may be reduced or eliminated. HSC will probably see an increase in the need for clean and sober housing. The state will not be increasing the poverty ceiling for children’s benefits. Members are encouraged to contact legislators with concerns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dave reports that there is \$4000 in the city budget available for SHP application assistance from John Epler. Shelter Plus Care is part of that application and John reports he may need to access the assistance. • It was reported that FEMA funds have increased from last year. • Intermediate measures to reach sheltering goals to be considered for next meeting. What would the response be in severe weather if severe weather shelters weren’t available? Is funding available for shower/laundry facilities for temporary shelters? Needs to be looked at from the perspective of temporary housing and not housing. Homeless Medical 	

	<p>Respite project is being explored by HSC, which could dovetail with temporary housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelter Plus Care RFP was issued; decision to be made soon. 	
Adjourn	The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 AM	
Next Meeting	<p>February 12, 2009 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. Whatcom County Health Department Administrative Conference Room 509 Girard Street,</p>	