



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: April 14, 2022 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM – Virtual Meeting

WCHAC Members Present: Ann Beck, Ashley Thomasson (left early), Bruce Bosch, Dawna Morse, Dean Fearing, Deanna Wildermuth, Diana Phair, Hadrian Starr, Michael Jones, Samya Lutz, Tara Sundin, Teri Bryant

WCHAC Members Absent: Brien Thane, Marc Walker, Satpal Sidhu

Whatcom Co. Health Dept. Staff/Guests: Ashley Geleynse / Generations Forward, Helen Campbell, Joel Kennedy, Katy Sullivan, Kaylee Galloway, Paul Schissler, Rosie Crow

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
A. Call to order, introductions	Introductions commenced and quorum present.	Michael
B. Minutes Approval Feb 2022 Minutes Approval	Samya moved that the minutes from the December meeting be approved. Ann seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed.	Ayes: 12 Abstain: Motion Passed
C. Agenda Review	There were no proposed additions to the agenda.	Michael
D. Reports/Discussion 1. Membership Updates 2. Bylaws Update and Review	Dawna's Morse's appointment was confirmed on March 8 th . This is Dawna's first meeting as an official member of the committee. Additional changes were made to the bylaws. The amendments were distributed to the committee and there will be an item on the next agenda to vote to adopt the proposed amendments. Members were asked to review the bylaws and send changes or corrections to staff, prior to the next meeting.	Ashley G Ashley G



Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
3. Capital Projects Supported with ARPA Funds	Ann introduced two capital projects that could potentially be supported by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars; Dean and Samya provided more information about each of the projects. 1) About \$1M is being proposed to help Kulshan Community Land Trust obtain a parcel of land on Thornton Rd in Ferndale. The project would be 55-75 units of affordable housing for people at 50-120% AMI. 2) Evergreen Ridge at the corner Barkley and Sunset provides 145 units affordable housing for people who are at or below 60% AMI. The affordability compliance period for these units expires at the end of 2024. Mercy Housing is the only current potential buyer of and would be able to preserve at approximately half the cost of constructing new units. Committee members discussed and asked questions and were generally supportive of using ARPA dollars for these projects.	Ann Dean, Samya
4. Local Affordable Housing Funds Report 5. Upcoming RFPs	Ann reviewed a document outlining affordable housing funds eligible uses, fund balances, and what local housing dollars have been committed to contracts in 2022. The health department will be putting out RFPs for Interim Housing, Master Leasing, and Facility-Based Behavioral Health Services this summer. 2060 funds in particular will be used to fund Interim Housing projects, and the committee was asked for their feedback what should be considered when reviewing proposals. Committee members discussed and gave feedback on priorities for interim shelter in the community. The health department will look to committee members to volunteer to help score applications, keeping in mind that some members may have a conflict in interest. A Severe Weather Shelter RFP is also slated to be released next week and due at the end of May. The County will continue working with the City of Bellingham on the daytime warming center programming.	Ann
6. Health Department Staff Updates	Ann provided a health department staffing and division restructuring update. GRACE and LEAD are now a part of the new Response Systems Division (RSD), and other health department behavioral health programs including Mental Health Court will also be moving to the new division. Interviews for the Human Services Supervisor and Affordable Housing Specialist positions will be taking place over the next couple of weeks.	Ann
7. City of Bellingham Update	Tonight, the Community Development Advisory Board will be making a recommendation on the action plan for their budget that funds capital projects and continuing services. ARPA funds continue to be prioritized for housing and childcare and other economic recovery efforts and there may be an update on the families with children interim housing facility at the next meeting. Whatcom County will not be bringing a project forward to the Finance Commission for 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits this year because we have received more than our fair share over the years and need to sit out. Now is the time that the Affordable Housing Planning Group will start	Samya, Tara

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
8. Whatcom Homeless Service Center Update	<p>looking at projects for 2023. Michael shared about a potential 80-100 unit project in Blaine that he's working on with the help of Dean and Paul Schissler.</p> <p>The Whatcom Homeless Service Center is hiring for Landlord Liaison and Family Shelter Specialist positions and Coordinated Entry will be fully staffed up starting next week. The Point-In-Time Count was postponed due to a COVID surge, and there likely won't be a draft of the report until May. The WHSC continues to partner with PeaceHealth, Unity Care Northwest and the County to develop the Way Station, which will be a day use and recuperative respite care for people experiencing homelessness. The Whatcom County Coalition to End Homelessness has developed a small group to work on the annual issue of severe weather shelter operations. The group is creating a companion resource for interested organizations to share their skills and experience to support and encourage qualified operators to apply for the upcoming RFP.</p>	Teri
E. Public Comment	<p>Paul Schissler shared about his involvement assisting the Cities of Ferndale and Blaine in applying for the Washington Community Development Block Grant funding that's been allocated for planning only activities. Paul is in touch with the Housing Authority, Kulshan Community Land Trust, and the Opportunity Council so far and Paul is available if any other organization would like to talk about it.</p> <p>Kaylee Galloway shared that she and Councilmember Frazey are working on a resolution around some comprehensive plan priorities, and is eager to work together with members of the committee on housing issues.</p> <p>Samya shared there is a Special Programs Manager for Strategic Initiatives position open with the County Executive Office and encouraged people to share the opportunity within their networks.</p>	
F. ADJOURN	Meeting was adjourned at 9:31 am.	Michael
NEXT MEETING	Next regular meeting June 9, 2022 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. <u>VIRTUAL</u>	