



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: June 9, 2022 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM – In-person and Virtual Meeting

WCHAC Members Present: Ann Beck, Ashley Thomasson, Brien Thane, Bruce Bosch, Dawna Morse, Dean Fearing, Deanna Wildermuth, Diana Phair, Hadrian Starr, Michael Jones, Samya Lutz, Teri Bryant, Tyler Schroeder

WCHAC Members Absent: Tara Sundin

Whatcom Co. Health Dept. Staff/Guests: Ashley Geleynse, Barbara Johnson-Vinna, Chris D’Onofrio, Erika Lautenbach / Steve Bennett, Leah Wainman, Ginger Segel, Sarah Lindsley, Debbie Ahl, Paul Schissler, Rosie Crow, Shannon Bacon, Helen Campbell, Von E. Ochoa

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
A. Call to order, introductions	Introductions commenced and quorum present.	Michael
B. Agenda Review	There were no proposed additions to the agenda.	Michael
C. Minutes Approval	Samya Lutz moved that the minutes from the April meeting be approved. Ashley Thomasson seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed.	Ayes: 13 Abstain: Motion Passed
D. Election of New Chairperson	Michael Jones, chairperson of the committee, accepted a new position with Island County; this will be Michael’s last meeting. Dawna Morse nominated Ann Beck to be the new chairperson. There were no other nominations. The committee voted and the motion passed.	Ayes: 13 Abstain: Ann elected as new chairperson
E. Bylaws Approval	Ann Beck moved to approve the bylaws as amended on April 26, 2022. Brien Thane seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed.	Ayes: 13 Abstain: Motion Passed

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
<p>F. Reports/Discussion</p> <p>1. Public Health Advisory Board Membership</p> <p>2. Families with Children Shelter Project</p> <p>3. Health Department Housing Program Updates</p> <p>4. City of Bellingham Update</p>	<p>Steve Bennett and Leah Wainman, Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB) members, presented PHAB's plan to expand membership by adding members from other health department boards and committees. This was decided following the passing of new legislation that outlines new requirements and scope of work for public health advisory boards. Samya asked Teri Bryant if she was interested in joining PHAB and Teri accepted. Ashley Thomasson volunteered to be an alternate.</p> <p>Ginger Segel and Sarah Lindsley presented on their need and feasibility analysis of an interim housing facility for families with children both in Bellingham and outside the City of Bellingham. The primary recommendations were a 25-30-unit facility in Bellingham, and 10-15 units in north and east county. The City of Bellingham is currently put on pause. The County is interested in talking to potential partners about units outside of the City of Bellingham. The presentation slides will be available in the meeting packet uploaded to the county calendar.</p> <p>Ann Beck provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amanda Burnett was hired last month as the new Human Services Supervisor, replacing Ann Beck, who is now the division manager. • The Human Services and Community Health divisions within the Health Department are merging to become the Community Services division. • The Health Department will look to contract with and/or hire someone to work on affordable housing after two failed searches for an Affordable Housing Specialist. <p>Chris talked about two capital affordable housing projects that the County is working on right now. One is alongside Kulshan Community Land Trust for a potential homeowner project in Ferndale, and the other is alongside the City of Bellingham and Mercy Housing Northwest in acquiring an 145-unit apartment building in Bellingham in order to preserve the affordability of the units.</p> <p>At the Tuesday County Council Committee of the Whole meeting, County housing staff presented on how the staff's work fits into the bigger picture of our community's response to homelessness, and housing service delivery, and affordable housing. A recording of the presentation is available online.</p> <p>Samya Lutz shared that the City Council passed its Housing and Urban Development Action Plan focused on several housing development projects and childcare.</p>	

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<p>5. Whatcom Homeless Service Center (WHSC) Update</p> <p>6. Hybrid Meeting Review</p>	<p>Teri Bryant provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The expansion of the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) is complete. HOT's hours have also expanded into the evening on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. • Interviews are complete for a Landlord Liaison, and will be onboarding someone soon. • An offer has been made to a Family Shelter Specialist. This position is intended to help coordinate motel stays across agencies. • In July, WHSC will be recruiting for a Housing Navigator, which is intended to replace Housing Lab. • The WHSC and Health Department are finalizing the Point-In-Time Count Report. <p>Committee meetings will continue to be hybrid going forward. At future meetings, members and staff gathered in person should state who they are before they speak because it can be difficult for those attending virtually to identify who is speaking.</p>	
<p>G. Public Comment</p>	<p>Von E. Ochoa asked about whether residents have ever had the opportunity to take over a building of affordable housing units after certification expires by transferring land to a community land trust, so that the land trust could go on to create new units for others who are in need. Dean Fearing of Kulshan Community Land Trust has not heard of that happening, other than transforming some manufactured home parks into resident owned. Kulshan has been advocating for there to be an option to purchase market rate rentals, but hasn't heard of other models that have worked yet.</p> <p>Samya added that the City of Bellingham Planning Commission will be working on changing code to allow the purchase of manufactured home lots. There will be public hearing coming up.</p>	
<p>H. ADJOURN</p>	<p>Meeting was adjourned at 9:42 am.</p>	<p>Michael</p>
<p><i>NEXT MEETING</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Next regular meeting August 11, 2022 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. <u>In-Person and Virtual</u></p>	