



## CHILD AND FAMILY WELL-BEING TASK FORCE

OCTOBER 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2021

**Present:** Alicia Hanning, Anne Granberg, Astrid Newell, Samya Lutz, Brian Nelson, Carol Frazey, Debbie Ahl, Escarleth DeLeon, Jamie Desmul, Jen Wright, Keith Montoya, Komal Shah, Mara Kelley, Mike Ford, Monica Koller, Ray Deck, Jed Holmes, Sterling Chick, Urvasi Graham, Vesla Tonnesson, Yarrow Greer

**Not Present:** Beverly Porter, Chris Cochran, Gregory Hansen, Mary Sewright, Melissa Isenhardt, Rosalva Santos-Guzman, Sarah Cook, Sativa Robertson, Silvia Johnson

Topic	Discussion/Outcome
<p><b>Welcome</b></p>	<p>Introductions, land acknowledgement, housekeeping and review of agreements led by Lewin Consulting.</p> <p><u>Land Acknowledgement:</u> The Red Nation shall rise again and it shall be a blessing for a sick world; a world filled with broken promises, selfishness, and separations; a world longing for light again.</p> <p>I see a time of Seven Generations when all the colors of mankind will gather under the Sacred Tree of Life and the whole Earth will become one circle again.</p> <p>In that day, there will be those among the Lakota who will carry knowledge and understanding of unity among all living things and the young white ones will come to those of my people and ask for this wisdom.</p> <p>I salute the light within your eyes where the whole Universe dwells. For when you are at that center within you and I am that place within me, we shall be one. – Crazy Horse (1840-1877) Oglala Lakota Sioux</p> <p><u>Agreements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family and self-care come first.</li> <li>• Be kind and gentle with yourself and others and assume everyone is coming from a positive place.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Everyone has the best intentions.</li> <li>○ Listen with an open mind and heart.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Be mindful of this space. Step-in and step-out/Step-up and step-back. Offer your truth and insights and listen to others' truths and insights.</li> <li>• Treat each other with honor and grace. We are all working under difficult circumstances.</li> <li>• Embrace diversity. Remember that we all come from different backgrounds giving us different perspectives and only when we embrace that diversity can we develop creative solutions to address the child and family well-being needs in Whatcom County.</li> <li>• What is said here stays here.</li> <li>• Have fun.</li> </ul> <p><u><a href="#">Fist to Five Consensus</a></u></p>
<p><b>Approve Meeting Minutes</b></p>	<p>No amendments to discuss, minutes from September 27, 2021 were approved as presented.</p>
<p><b>Upcoming events, community</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shout out to Lummi youth Sadie Olsen and Jayden Phair Williams on episode 6 of the Young and Indigenous Podcast. <a href="https://settingsunproductions.org/young-and-indigenous-podcast">https://settingsunproductions.org/young-and-indigenous-podcast</a></li> </ul>



<p><b>shares, shout outs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Washington State Wire has an annual conference in December. <a href="https://washingtonstatewire.com/events/2021-re-wire-policy-conference/">https://washingtonstatewire.com/events/2021-re-wire-policy-conference/</a></li> <li>• Shout out to the indigenous people for the stewardship and care for the land we are on.</li> <li>• Shout out to the Hispanic month.</li> <li>• Shout out to this task force for connection back to your why and for showing up to do this work.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Child Care Proposal Presentation Information</b></p>	<p>A presentation for the Child Care Proposal will be given to the Whatcom County Council on October 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021 around 4pm. The work that has been done in this task force over the past few months will be presented, and an invitation to listen in has been extended.</p> <p>Later in the evening a public comment period will be provided. For those unfamiliar, you can do oral or written comment and instructions can be found here: <a href="https://www.whatcomcounty.us/3415/Participate-in-Virtual-Council-Meetings">https://www.whatcomcounty.us/3415/Participate-in-Virtual-Council-Meetings</a>. During public comment each person has three minutes, and you will not be on camera. Hearing the different voices is encouraged.</p>
<p><b>Survey Results and Analysis</b></p>	<p>The task force has spent 6 months together, identifying what the work is and how to do the work. A <a href="#">survey</a> was created to identify the needs and wants of this task force, some responses are still needed. A quick review of responses was shared. This survey will be brought back to the meeting on October 25<sup>th</sup> to have a fuller discussion, and identify how to make this a member-led task force by the end of the year. Many ideas have been shared and we do not want to make these decisions as a staff-based planning team. At this meeting, an ask was made to indicate interest in being a part of the team to build out a proposal on how to incorporate the feedback into the task force. Jennifer Wright, Keith Montoya, Urvasi Graham all indicated interest in chat.</p>
<p><b>Building Infrastructure for Child &amp; Family Work</b></p>	<p>Tyler Schroeder, Deputy Executive of Whatcom County, attended to discuss the infrastructure for child &amp; family work. Erika Lautenbach introduced herself as director of the Whatcom County Health Department.</p> <p>Executive Sidhu has been working to bring forward larger initiatives for the county into an Office of Strategic Initiatives, the director of which would report to the Executive. The Office would include initiatives on children and families, climate action, and racial equity. Currently discussing steps to provide a broader foundation in county government and the community for the work supporting children and families and how to move that action forward. Identified a need for a position in the Executive's Office to be a direct link between Bellingham and small cities leadership, community leadership, and the Health Department for cohesiveness in moving the strategic initiative forward.</p> <p>Executive Sidhu's hope is to provide infrastructure support to children and families through this office by creating two positions within the Health Department:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One for a Child and Family Manager/Strategic Lead, who would work with community partners to continue to move this initiative forward.</li> <li>• Another request is to add a Child Care Program Specialist, which would navigate priorities such as increasing capacity and affordable child care.</li> </ul> <p>From a foundational standpoint this is just the start of the investment, with a one-, three-, and five-year plan. After staff and infrastructure is established, this task force and others would continue to define where additional investments can go, find the right funding and the right community organizations to help.</p> <p>Some of the investment plans next year and moving forward are related to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars. Conversations are happening on how best to allocate these funds in 2022, 2023, and forward. Right now, there is \$2 million to be allocated in 2022 to focus on work force development, stabilization and retention related to child care. A request was made to hear recommendations from this task force about this. Another priority is increasing capacity for child care. The City of Bellingham is working with Bellingham Housing Authority on opportunities for facilities, and Opportunity Council is working with Whatcom County on a capital project on Forest Street.</p> <p>Erika acknowledged that the sequencing of these conversations did not align, asking the task force for recommendations while another proposal was being prepared at the same time. This infrastructure proposal is the start. It is 10% of the need, and the recommendations from this task force will be relied on for the remaining 90%. There was a drive to get positions funded due to deadlines. She apologized for not giving time and space to weigh in on these recommendations. She commits to do better and to co-create what these positions look like and how they meet our priorities.</p>

	<p>Member comments included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need to intentionally identify where we go from here, and how to include the work that has been done the last few months.</li> <li>• There are a lot of competing interests at the executive level, and to be heard is important. There is a concern about child and family well-being not being first with this recommended structure.</li> <li>• The two specific sites under way provide around 98 slots, around \$20,000 allocated per slot created. The child care proposal work group identified programs being done around the country, and one in Washington, DC created a new slot for every \$1,700 allocated. Recommendation to review the strategy that the Low Income and Investment Fund did creating 1200 slots in DC using \$9 million of public funds leveraged over 3 years. This strategy could translate really well to Whatcom County and take away from the heavy lifting in the county government. Strategy: <a href="https://www.liifund.org/news/post/liif-exceeds-goal-in-bringing-1k-child-care-slots-to-d-c/">https://www.liifund.org/news/post/liif-exceeds-goal-in-bringing-1k-child-care-slots-to-d-c/</a>. King County used ARPA dollars to attract a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI). Enterprise was the respondent to the RFP and created the Washington Early Learning Lending Fund (WELL Fund). This was just created, no results to share at this time.</li> <li>• The timeline for this budget and possible start of positions: child care recommendations from this task force to Council on 10/12, plan to have budget approved in November, and hiring of positions approved would begin in January.</li> <li>• What is needed from this task force and the scope of work includes providing background and example for leveraging funds, and defining workforce development proposals.</li> </ul> <p>“If you want to build a temple, you have to start with the foundation” is something Executive Sidhu often says, and having the employees to focus on these initiatives in the county is a foundation.</p> <p>The departments have submitted budget requests.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They will be sent to Whatcom County Council on October 22<sup>nd</sup>.</li> <li>• Public hearing will be available at November 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.</li> <li>• Vote on adjustments takes place on November 23<sup>rd</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>Tyler will update Astrid and Judy on the process to bring updates to this task force. The task force would like to discuss this again soon to allow opportunity to make informed public comment if needed during November meetings. Tyler has offered to come to the next meeting on October 25<sup>th</sup> to discuss in the Children and Families First workgroup for discussion to bring the conversation back to the full task force to identify how to proceed with public hearing on November 9<sup>th</sup>. A small workgroup meeting will be scheduled ahead of the task force meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p>Infrastructure Concept:  <a href="https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ROaxnV70JhMw6ME6dqNMoezKMRtqS89H/edit#slide=id.p1">https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ROaxnV70JhMw6ME6dqNMoezKMRtqS89H/edit#slide=id.p1</a></p>
<b>Public Comment</b>	Heather Flaherty – After reviewing the infrastructure slide and three priorities, there are other groups in the county working on this. Recommendation to bring representatives from each of those groups (racial equity commission, climate action committee, child and family well-being task force) together to discuss the concept at large.
<b>Closing</b>	5:42pm
<b>Next Meeting</b>	<b>Next regular meeting: October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021</b> <span style="float: right;"><b><u>Location: Virtual</u></b></span>