



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: December 9, 2021 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM – Virtual Meeting

WCHAC Members Present: Karen Burke, Hadrian Starr, Ashley Thomasson, Deanna Wildermuth, Dean Fearing, Teri Bryant, Brien Thane, Samya Lutz, Kyle Christensen, Tara Sundin, Michael Jones, Erika Lautenbach

WCHAC Members Absent: Marc Walker, Diana Phair, Satpal Sidhu

Whatcom Co. Health Dept. Staff/Guests: Chris D’Onofrio, Barbara Johnson-Vinna, Ann Beck, Ashley Geleynse, George Kosovich, Shelley Kjos, Paul Schissler, Joel Kennedy, J Pelant, Helen Campbell, Von E.O., Liz Marshall, Dena Jensen

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
A. Call to order, introductions	Introductions commenced and quorum present.	Brien
B. Minutes Approval October 2021 Minutes Approval	Samya moved that the minutes from the October meeting be approved. Teri 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.	Brien
D. Reports/Discussion 1. Island/Skagit/Whatcom HOME Consortium funding opportunity update	George and Shelley from the Skagit HOME Consortium presented on the guidelines and opportunities related to Whatcom County HOME ARP funding, which is in addition to the regular HOME funding allocated to counties each year. Whatcom County funding is not applicable within the City of Bellingham because Bellingham is receiving its own allocation. The intent is for the funding to be used for housing recovery due to COVID-19, and can be spent out until 2030. A copy of slides and a survey will be sent out to members and other stakeholders requesting feedback about possible use of funds and prioritization in Whatcom County. One thing to note is that	George, Shelley

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<p>2. Families with Children Emergency Shelter Update</p>	<p>operating funds have to be tied to agencies that will carry out new HOME ARP activities. The timeline for when NOFAs or RFPs will go out will be dependent on which uses are decided on during the consultation process and what is approved by HUD. The committee asked questions and discussed possible uses for the funding.</p> <p>Tara presented on a feasibility study being done right now around family homelessness, and gave an update on the planning efforts for emergency shelter for families with children, to be funded by Mount Baker Foundation. After defining goals and looking at the data, the core planning team is recommending: a trauma informed facility, individual micro units, therapeutic and rec spaces, site selection near bus line, park, groceries, and childcare, with a 25-30-unit facility in Bellingham, and 10-15 units in north and east county. This will be an approximate \$13M capital investment, not including operating costs. The committee discussed timelines and engagement with the small cities.</p>	<p>Tara</p>
<p>3. Health Department Update: Shelter, Budget, Affordable Housing Development Funds, Point-in-Time Count, Eviction Prevention</p>	<p>Ann and Tara provided an update on severe weather sheltering, sheltering folks who are displaced by the flood, and Northwest Youth Services' youth shelter opening for 18-24-year olds. The flooding brought in about 30 more people than Base Camp had been seeing. CTK will operate an overflow shelter for 5 ½ months with 40 beds. People are still moving into Gardenview.</p> <p>Chris shared funding changes by intervention from 2021-2022 in the following categories: case management, interim housing, rental assistance, permanent supportive housing, and systematic/miscellaneous. A new position to help manage motel stays has been approved by Executive's office. Chris also gave a brief update on 1406 and 1590 (affordable housing development) funds. The NOFA/RFP process is still being finalized for these funds.</p> <p>The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a requirement by HUD, and is completed annually in partnership between the Health Department and the Whatcom Homeless Service Center. This year, the count will take place on January 27, 2022. The Department of Commerce has indicated they will continue to monitor COVID-19 situation, but still expect communities to conduct the count. The Homeless Outreach Team and volunteers in the community are crucial in making the count happen each year.</p> <p>Chris reported that eviction prevention funds are assisting about 200 households per month through Opportunity Council's rental assistance program, and there are still funds available. The Whatcom Dispute Resolution</p>	<p>Ann, Tara</p> <p>Chris</p> <p>Barbara</p> <p>Chris</p>

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<p>4. City of Bellingham Update</p> <p>5. Whatcom Homeless Service Center Update</p>	<p>Center's Eviction Resolution Pilot Program continues to help landlords and tenants resolve nonpayment of rent, with about an 80% success rate.</p> <p>Samya shared that the City of Bellingham's Notices of Funding Availability have been published for housing development, housing preservation, and community facilities. Samya suggested that representatives from Healthy Whatcom present in the new year so the committee can think about embedding their endorsements into the work and policy recommendations made by this committee.</p> <p>Teri provided several updates: The Way Station partnership continues between Opportunity Council, Unity Care, and PeaceHealth; the City of Bellingham is funding two more outreach positions; a Coordinated Entry Governing Board is being stood up to oversee the system for homeless housing in Whatcom County; and lastly, a virtual Homeless Persons' Memorial will take place on the solstice.</p> <p>This is Karen Burke's last meeting as a member on the committee. Chris shared how interested individuals can apply for the open position on the board. The committee will elect chair and vice chair at the February meeting.</p>	<p>Samya</p> <p>Teri</p> <p>Brien</p>
<p>E. Public Comment</p>	<p>There was no public comment.</p>	
<p>F. ADJOURN</p>	<p>Meeting was adjourned at 9:53.</p>	<p>Brien</p>
<p><i>NEXT MEETING</i></p>	<p>Next regular meeting February 10, 2022 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. <u>VIRTUAL</u></p>	