



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: 8/8/2024 / 8:30-10:00am / Hybrid: Civic 1st Floor Conference Room & Zoom

Committee Members Present: Adrienne Renz, Andrew Calkins, Ann Beck, Ashley Thomasson, Bruce Bosch, Dan Dunne, Mary Lou Steward, Paul Schissler, Samya Lutz, Tara Sundin, Teri Bryant, Von Ochoa

Committee Members Absent: Dawna Morse, Diana Phair, Kayla Schott-Bresler,

WCHCS Staff/Guest Presenters: Ashley Geleyense, Chris D'Onofrio, Janie Oliphant, Michaela Mandala

Agenda Item	Report/Discussion
1. Call to order, introductions, and roll call	Introductions commenced and quorum present.
2. Agenda Review	There were no requested revisions to the agenda.
3. Approval of Minutes	Ashley moved that the minutes from the June 2024 meeting be approved, Ann seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed. Yes: 11; No: 0; Abstain: 0
4. Resolution 2024-036 Supporting the Expansion of Year-Round Shelter Capacity	<p>Dan introduced a draft resolution which tasks the committee with forming a task-oriented subcommittee to provide recommendations on a County-run severe weather by September 30, 2024 and year-round shelter by December 31, 2025. Dan presented a memo draft with components from the resolution and list of potential subcommittee member positions for the committee to work off of in standing up the subcommittee. Councilmembers Galloway and Scanlon were at the meeting and shared more about the background and ask from the Council's perspective.</p> <p>The committee discussed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who should be on the committee, and how members will be selected • Who else should be contacted to provide input • Meeting frequency (every other week until September 30, then monthly) <p>Ann moved to form a shelter subcommittee comprised of the representatives that were included in the memo previously sent to Council. Ashley seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed. Yes: 11; No: 0; Abstain: 0</p> <p>The committee identified representatives for the following positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Advisory Committee chair (Dan)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach (Teri or designee) • Outreach – medical focus (ask Malora to designate) • Homeless services providers (Ashley T, Miranda, someone from Lighthouse Mission) • People with lived experience (Von, Lorelei) • Small cities representative (Mary Lou or Bruce) • City of Bellingham representative (to be decided at a later date) • Youth representative (Northwest Youth Services) • Law enforcement/EMS/fire (County will work on identifying someone) • Indigenous representative (County will reach out to Diana) <p>Ann moved to form the subcommittee with members that were just nominated, and that the County will follow up with the recommended representatives that have not been confirmed participation during this meeting. Tara seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed. Yes: 11; No: 0; Abstain: 0</p> <p>All subcommittee members will be confirmed over the next week and the committee will begin meeting every other week.</p>
<p>5. 2025 Funding Priorities</p>	<p>Chris presented the current 1406 and 1590 funds allocation plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For about the next 15 years, the County will collect \$656k in 1406 (includes the City of Bellingham) • 60% of 1406 towards direct service for families, including operations of supportive housing and rental assistance • 40% of 1406 towards small development/remodel projects • 1590 funds are sales tax derived, so they fluctuate year to year. The County estimates about \$2.5M each year (does not include the City of Bellingham) • \$1M of 1590 for 9% Low-Income Housing Tax Credit projects • \$500k for small development/remodel projects • 1590 can also be used or housing related services, including case management, operational costs <p>Samya advocated for using 1406 for rental assistance for families as much as possible since about 50% of the revenue from 1406 comes from City of Bellingham tax payers. Tara encouraged County staff to be flexible with the percentages based on what the needs are.</p>
<p>6. County/Health and Community Services Update</p>	<p>Ann shared the following County personnel updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A second Deputy Executive has been appointed • A new Finance Director has been selected • There's a County-wide hiring freeze over the next three months with the opportunity ask for an exception in certain situations • There has been a lot of public attention on 22 North recently, but that is dying down • Severe weather shelter planning is in full force in partnership with Communications and the Response Systems Division. • The Point in Time Count report is still in the process of being developed and will be released in the next couple weeks. The report will be in a new format, looking at various data sources to provide a more holistic picture of homelessness in Whatcom County.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The County has hired a permanent supportive housing consultant to do an assessment of permanent supportive housing across the county. The first products from the assessment will be delivered in January 2025.
7. City of Bellingham Update	<p>Samya and Tara provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The County-wide Planners Group appreciated this committee's input to the County-wide Planning Policies. The Group is meeting one more time to discuss updates to the policies, but so far, recommendations from this committee are going forward The Washington State Department of Commerce and the Housing Finance Commission were asked by the legislature to talk about the cost burden in affordable housing projects. Their final report will be delivered to the Governor in December. City of Bellingham will be proposing higher limits to funding specific to homeownership to the City Council at the end of the month. City of Bellingham has purchased a property on Northwest Avenue to be used for existing tiny houses that need to be relocated in the short term and a future affordable housing site long term. The neighboring business appealed the shelter permit so the project is on hold until the appeal is resolved. In October, Tara and local affordable housing developers will provide a presentation to City Council about land acquisition efforts and the affordable housing pipeline process. Base Camp will be relocating to Old Town this October. Additionally, market rate and nonprofit affordable housing developments are being seriously considered and planned for in the same area.
8. Whatcom Homeless Service Center Update	<p>Teri provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Homeless Service Center is hiring for open positions on the outreach team and program support to Coordinated Entry. Getting the Way Station ready to open will continue to be a focus over the next few months Almost 3,000 showers have been provided with the shower trailer.
9. New Business	<p>Dan encouraged committee members to provide comment on the Land Capacity Analysis Methodology as required for the County's Comprehensive Plan and shared that the City Council is going to make some changes to the Landmark Tree Ordinance to incorporate some of the feedback received about how that was affecting building housing.</p> <p>Paul asked that the committee spend some time on creating opportunities for homeownership and addressing the entire gamut of housing needs.</p>
10. Public Comment	<p>The committee heard public comment from two community members.</p>
11. Adjourn	<p>Dan adjourned the meeting</p>

Next Meeting: Thursday, December 12, 2024, 8:30-10:00am