



## Whatcom County Housing Advisory Subcommittee Severe Weather Shelter Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date/Time/Location:** June 14, 2019 8:30am to 10:00am - Garden Center Conference Room, 322 Commercial Street, Bellingham

**Subcommittee Members Present:** Tyler Schroeder, Barry Buchanan, Kelli Linville, Dan Hammill, Flo Simon, Doug Chadwick, Mike Hilley, John Gargett, Michael Shepard, Bridget Reeves, Rick Qualls, Laura Harker, Michael Heath, Ann Beck, Karen Burke

**Subcommittee Members Absent:** Lynn Serbenz, Mike Parker

**Whatcom Co. Health Dept . Staff/Guests:** Anne Deacon, Human Services Manager, Barbara Johnson-Vinna, Human Services Housing Specialist; Samantha Murdoch, Coordinator; David Crook, Michael Lilliquist, Victor Nolet, Helen Campbell, John Campbell, Derek Delvalle, Javier Flores, Eve Smason, Lynette Allen, Marcus D, Jim Peterson, Rachel Duvall

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
<b>1. Call to order, introductions</b>	Introductions commenced and quorum present.	<b>Anne Deacon</b>
<b>2. Review of Minutes and Decisions</b>	Barry moved that the minutes from the May 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2019 meeting be approved as presented. Laura seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed.	<b>Ayes: 13 Nay: 0 Abstain: 2 Motion Passed</b>
<b>3. Discussions</b> a. <i>Qualifications of Shelter Operator</i>	Previously the subcommittee agreed on using the following criteria for severe weather: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Temperature determined by NOAA at the Airport</li> <li>• Forecasted 28 degrees standard low for overnight, which will include wind-chill</li> <li>• 1 inch of precipitation forecasted or currently on the ground if temperature requirement met</li> </ul> <p>Further research was conducted after the last meeting to determine how many days a severe weather shelter would need to be operational during the months of December through February utilizing the above-noted parameters. Using historical weather data factoring in</p>	<b>Anne</b>



Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
<p>b. <i>Emergency Declaration Status</i></p> <p>c. <i>Volunteer Orientation and Trainings</i></p>	<p>average wind chill, it appeared that most days of a month would require opening a severe weather shelter. A severe weather shelter is intended to provide a short-term response to temporary conditions. Given the assumption that a winter shelter will also be operating, it did not seem reasonable to factor in wind chill in the method previously agreed upon for opening a severe weather shelter. During our last severe weather situation there were many beds available and not used. It is recommended we either remove the wind-chill factor from the criteria or modify the temperature threshold.</p> <p>Bridget motioned to use temperature only at a 28 degree threshold without wind-chill included, as determined by NOAA for opening a severe weather shelter. Mayor Kelli seconded. Motion was approved with Dan Hammill and Karen Burke opposed.</p> <p>Last winter during the severe weather situation an emergency was declared which allowed access to resources and funding. It was agreed that the declaration of an emergency should not occur in future years. Having contracts with severe weather shelter providers in place, with budgets and permitting done prior will eliminate the need for an emergency declaration.</p> <p>It is necessary for our volunteers and operators to be trained and prepared for operating a severe weather shelter. It was discussed that the following criteria be a part of the basic orientation and training provided for leads on site, with volunteers receiving an orientation at a minimum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trauma informed care</li> <li>2. De-escalation skills</li> <li>3. How to be supportive</li> <li>4. Confidentiality</li> <li>5. Basic information on substance use disorders and mental health             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Triage of the situation and knowledge of available resources</li> </ol> </li> <li>6. Personal boundary training</li> <li>7. First aid awareness             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Narcan/naloxone</li> <li>b. AED</li> <li>c. CPR</li> </ol> </li> <li>8. Basic code of conduct for volunteers</li> <li>9. Background checks             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Using WATCH and national sex offender list</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><b>Ayes: 13</b> <b>Nay: 2</b> <b>Abstain: 0</b> <b>Motion Passed</b></p> <p><b>Anne</b></p> <p><b>Anne</b></p>



Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
<p>d. <i>Potential Locations and Partners</i></p>	<p>b. Connect with volunteer center on guidelines and determinants for criteria</p> <p>When considering locations and providers there are some things to consider. Severe weather conditions could make transportation difficult for relocation during the day. A facility that can offer day services is preferred, but may not be possible. If a chosen facility is also designated as a Red Cross Shelter, we should be aware of potential challenges if a true emergency is declared and the shelter must open for Red Cross obligations.</p> <p>Location options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Port of Bellingham (old armory, holds up to 100, must have contracted provider)</li> <li>2. Fountain Community Church (holds up to 60)</li> <li>3. Norway Hall - Christ the King (holds 40 on 2 floors which is a total of 80, kitchen)</li> <li>4. Community room at Eleanor Apartments (elderly and medically fragile)?</li> <li>5. YWCA Ballroom?</li> <li>6. WWU depending on if in session?</li> <li>7. Schools depending on if in session?</li> <li>8. Christ the King on Meridian?</li> <li>9. St. Paul Episcopal Church</li> <li>10. Adventist Church</li> <li>11. COAD list for reference?</li> </ol> <p>Daytime options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Drop in center</li> <li>2. Library</li> <li>3. EWRCC</li> <li>4. Fountain Community Church?</li> </ol> <p>Provider groups that could provide services, but with no space to offer:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Churches</li> <li>2. Opportunity Council?</li> <li>3. Define qualifications to do this</li> </ol> <p>Previously discussed, the minimum requirements for shelter operator are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trained personnel - whether paid or volunteer</li> <li>2. Space - Depends on population served               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Plumbing - <b>Added:</b> could be mobile sewage, consider temps and freezing,</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><b>Anne</b></p>



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inability to empty</li> <li>b. Fire marshal approval</li> <li>c. Electricity</li> <li>3. Pre-approved emergency permitting if necessary</li> <li>4. Drinking water</li> <li>5. Accessibility               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Bus routes</li> <li>b. Transportation options</li> </ul> </li> <li>6. Sleeping area</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Public Comment</b></p>	<p>There will be a meeting on Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am at the Lighthouse Mission to meet with invited community partners to begin conversation about a three-month winter shelter with low barriers to admission.</p> <p>Public comment received from five individuals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three recommended the sub-committee revisit the wind chill factor as a factor in determining the weather threshold for a severe weather shelter.</li> </ul> <p>Other comments included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rethink the possibility of using the Port of Bellingham property near the airport.</li> <li>• Western Washington University staff has 8 hours of paid volunteer time per year, which is around 700 staff members so please reach out to them.</li> <li>• Let's not exclude the Red Cross designated shelters as possible locations for severe weather shelters.</li> <li>• Volunteers from "Homes Now" are willing to help</li> <li>• Consider a number of smaller severe weather shelters for those willing to shelter just a few people</li> <li>• A potential resource is the Community Response Team Training (CRTT) volunteers. We have these volunteers show up asking how to help. They had emergency training, familiarity in the community, and response training.</li> <li>• Happy with the intent and resulting action of this subcommittee in order to avoid what happened last winter</li> </ul>	<p><b>Tara Sundin</b></p>
<p><b>5. Next Meeting</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication needs - organization needs and the community</li> <li>• Participant screening for most appropriate shelter</li> <li>• Communicate the current efforts for winter shelter</li> </ul>	

**WHATCOM COUNTY**  
Health Department



**Regina A. Delahunt**, Director  
**Greg Stern, M.D.**, Health Officer

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
	Last meeting: June 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2019 8:30am to 10:00am, same location	
<b>6. ADJOURN</b>	10:02 AM	<b>Anne</b>



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