



## Whatcom Co. Housing Advisory Committee MEETING AGENDA

Thursday June 9, 2022 8:30-10:00 AM

Hybrid: Garden Level Conference Room,  
322 N Commercial St in Bellingham, Bottom Floor & Zoom

Agenda Items		Time
1.	Call to order, introductions and roll call of members present (Michael, Ashley)	5 min
2.	Agenda review (Michael)	
3.	Action item: Approval of April 2022 Minutes (Michael)	
4.	Action item: Election of new chairperson and vice-chairperson (Michael)	
5.	Action item: Vote on proposed bylaws (Michael)	
5.	Reports/Discussion A. <i>Public Health Advisory Board Membership (Steve and Leah)</i> B. <i>Families with Children Shelter Project (Ginger and Sarah)</i> C. <i>WCHD Housing Programs Presentation (WCHD Housing Staff)</i> D. <i>WCHD Housing Program Update: Community Health &amp; HS Merge, HS Supervisor, Affordable Housing Specialist, Capital Projects (WCHD Housing Staff)</i> E. <i>City of Bellingham Update (Samya &amp; Tara)</i> F. <i>Whatcom Homeless Service Center Update (Teri)</i> G. <i>Hybrid Meeting Review and Meeting Format Going Forward</i>	75 min
6.	Public Comment (2 minutes per person)	10 min
7.	Next meeting date: Thursday, August 11, 2022, 8:30am to 10:00am	
8.	Adjourn (Michael)	

*Community members who require special assistance to participate in a committee meeting are asked to contact the meeting facilitator at least 4 business days in advance.*  
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## Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date/Time/Location:** April 14, 2022 8:30 AM to 10:00 AM – Virtual Meeting

**WCHAC Members Present:** Ann Beck, Ashley Thomasson (left early), Bruce Bosch, Dawna Morse, Dean Fearing, Deanna Wildermuth, Diana Phair, Hadrian Starr, Michael Jones, Samya Lutz, Tara Sundin, Teri Bryant

**WCHAC Members Absent:** Brien Thane, Marc Walker, Satpal Sidhu

**Whatcom Co. Health Dept. Staff/Guests:** Ashley Geelyne / Generations Forward, Helen Campbell, Joel Kennedy, Katy Sullivan, Kaylee Galloway, Paul Schissler, Rosie Crow

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
<b>A. Call to order, introductions</b>	Introductions commenced and quorum present.	<b>Michael</b>
<b>B. Minutes Approval</b> Feb 2022 Minutes Approval	Samya moved that the minutes from the December meeting be approved. Ann seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed.	<b>Ayes: 12 Abstain: Motion Passed</b>
<b>C. Agenda Review</b>	There were no proposed additions to the agenda.	<b>Michael</b>
<b>D. Reports/Discussion</b>  1. Membership Updates  2. Bylaws Update and Review	Dawna's Morse's appointment was confirmed on March 8 <sup>th</sup> . This is Dawna's first meeting as an official member of the committee.  Additional changes were made to the bylaws. The amendments were distributed to the committee and there will be an item on the next agenda to vote to adopt the proposed amendments. Members were asked to review the bylaws and send changes or corrections to staff, prior to the next meeting.	<b>Ashley G</b>  <b>Ashley G</b>



Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
3. Capital Projects Supported with ARPA Funds	Ann introduced two capital projects that could potentially be supported by American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars; Dean and Samya provided more information about each of the projects. 1) About \$1M is being proposed to help Kulshan Community Land Trust obtain a parcel of land on Thornton Rd in Ferndale. The project would be 55-75 units of affordable housing for people at 50-120% AMI. 2) Evergreen Ridge at the corner Barkley and Sunset provides 145 units affordable housing for people who are at or below 60% AMI. The affordability compliance period for these units expires at the end of 2024. Mercy Housing is the only current potential buyer of and would be able to preserve at approximately half the cost of constructing new units. Committee members discussed and asked questions and were generally supportive of using ARPA dollars for these projects.	<b>Ann Dean, Samya</b>
4. Local Affordable Housing Funds Report 5. Upcoming RFPs	Ann reviewed a document outlining affordable housing funds eligible uses, fund balances, and what local housing dollars have been committed to contracts in 2022. The health department will be putting out RFPs for Interim Housing, Master Leasing, and Facility-Based Behavioral Health Services this summer. 2060 funds in particular will be used to fund Interim Housing projects, and the committee was asked for their feedback what should be considered when reviewing proposals. Committee members discussed and gave feedback on priorities for interim shelter in the community. The health department will look to committee members to volunteer to help score applications, keeping in mind that some members may have a conflict in interest. A Severe Weather Shelter RFP is also slated to be released next week and due at the end of May. The County will continue working with the City of Bellingham on the daytime warming center programming.	<b>Ann</b>
6. Health Department Staff Updates	Ann provided a health department staffing and division restructuring update. GRACE and LEAD are now a part of the new Response Systems Division (RSD), and other health department behavioral health programs including Mental Health Court will also be moving to the new division. Interviews for the Human Services Supervisor and Affordable Housing Specialist positions will be taking place over the next couple of weeks.	<b>Ann</b>
7. City of Bellingham Update	Tonight, the Community Development Advisory Board will be making a recommendation on the action plan for their budget that funds capital projects and continuing services. ARPA funds continue to be prioritized for housing and childcare and other economic recovery efforts and there may be an update on the families with children interim housing facility at the next meeting. Whatcom County will not be bringing a project forward to the Finance Commission for 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits this year because we have received more than our fair share over the years and need to sit out. Now is the time that the Affordable Housing Planning Group will start	<b>Samya, Tara</b>

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action/Who
8. Whatcom Homeless Service Center Update	<p>looking at projects for 2023. Michael shared about a potential 80-100 unit project in Blaine that he's working on with the help of Dean and Paul Schissler.</p> <p>The Whatcom Homeless Service Center is hiring for Landlord Liaison and Family Shelter Specialist positions and Coordinated Entry will be fully staffed up starting next week. The Point-In-Time Count was postponed due to a COVID surge, and there likely won't be a draft of the report until May. The WHSC continues to partner with PeaceHealth, Unity Care Northwest and the County to develop the Way Station, which will be a day use and recuperative respite care for people experiencing homelessness. The Whatcom County Coalition to End Homelessness has developed a small group to work on the annual issue of severe weather shelter operations. The group is creating a companion resource for interested organizations to share their skills and experience to support and encourage qualified operators to apply for the upcoming RFP.</p>	Teri
<b>E. Public Comment</b>	<p>Paul Schissler shared about his involvement assisting the Cities of Ferndale and Blaine in applying for the Washington Community Development Block Grant funding that's been allocated for planning only activities. Paul is in touch with the Housing Authority, Kulshan Community Land Trust, and the Opportunity Council so far and Paul is available if any other organization would like to talk about it.</p> <p>Kaylee Galloway shared that she and Councilmember Frazey are working on a resolution around some comprehensive plan priorities, and is eager to work together with members of the committee on housing issues.</p> <p>Samya shared there is a Special Programs Manager for Strategic Initiatives position open with the County Executive Office and encouraged people to share the opportunity within their networks.</p>	
<b>F. ADJOURN</b>	Meeting was adjourned at 9:31 am.	Michael
<i>NEXT MEETING</i>	<b>Next regular meeting June 9, 2022 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.</b> <u><b>VIRTUAL</b></u>	

**WHATCOM COUNTY HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
BYLAWS**

As amended 4/6/2022

**NAME AND ESTABLISHMENT**

**NAME**

Name of this organization shall be the Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee (WCHAC), hereafter referred to as the Committee.

**ESTABLISHED**

The Committee is established by the Whatcom County governing authority per Interlocal Cooperation Agreement Between Whatcom County and the Cities of Whatcom County, Section D, and in accordance with RCW 39.34.030 (4) (a). The Committee is referenced in Whatcom County Code 3.45, 3.46, 3.47, Section 3.36.050, and referenced in RCW 36.22.178.

**PURPOSE AND ROLES**

**PURPOSE**

The Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity to Whatcom County Health Department staff on all issues related to uses of funds collected under RCW 36.22.178, RCW 36.22.179, and RCW 82.14.540, RCW 82.14.530, and other related housing funds and is charged with making recommendations to the Whatcom County Executive regarding the use of these funds. The Committee shall support and promote the objectives stated in the above-noted RCWs.

**COMMITTEE ROLE**

The role of the Committee shall be to:

1. advise on policy decisions that ensure the utilization of funds in a manner consistent with RCWs 36.22.178, 36.22.179, 82.14.540, and 82.14.530
2. participate in the review of applications for funding if needed,
3. make recommendations regarding the use of these funds to the Whatcom County Health Department and the County Executive,
4. give guidance on the Local Plan to End Homelessness,
5. advise on priorities for the distribution of housing related funds based on the Local Plan and relevant sections of county and local government plans addressing low-income housing.

**STAFF ROLE**

Whatcom County Health Department staff, hereafter referred to as Staff, will:

1. provide leadership, strategic planning and program development activities in response to funding availability and the federal, state and local service environment,
2. provide program and contract management responsibilities directly related to the use of housing funds and program planning,
3. act as a resource for the Committee and support its members in the performance of their duties,
4. keep and distribute Committee meeting minutes.

## RESULTS/OUTCOMES EXPECTED

The Committee shall support Staff to:

1. achieve a balance between accountability and the public benefit,
2. employ application, fund distribution and monitoring processes that are efficient, simple, short and easy to understand and in compliance with local and state law,
3. invest in quality projects that are conceptually sound and financially feasible and that respond to identified need and strategic planning within Whatcom County,
4. fund projects and programs that leverage other resources, when appropriate,
5. Fund projects that demonstrate coordination or collaboration with other Whatcom County service providers,
6. fund projects that produce intended results,
7. uniformly and consistently apply policies and procedures.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### MEMBERS

Committee members shall be appointed by the County Executive and will not be compensated for their participation. The Committee shall consist of 15 members. Committee membership is open to Whatcom County residents and shall strive to include representatives from diverse sectors that have relevance to the purpose of the committee. These sectors include special needs populations, social/supportive services, urban and rural housing, tribal nations, housing finance and business.

Required membership positions include:

- Homeless Advocate/person with lived experience
- Two representatives of Whatcom County (Health Department and County Executive)
- Two representatives of the City of Bellingham
- Two representatives from the Small Cities of Whatcom County

Designated membership positions include:

- Whatcom Homeless Service Center
- Bellingham/Whatcom Housing Authority

Other membership positions will include:

- Two Housing Advocate positions
- One non-profit Housing Provider
- Two Housing Industry positions
- One Tribal Nation Representative

In the event that a required or designated membership position representative is unable to attend a meeting, a designated alternate may serve as the representative.

### MEMBERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Each member selected will commit to attendance at the meetings.
2. If the member cannot attend, the work of the group will be trusted and the group is therefore accountable to one another and the good of the whole.
3. Be familiar with all the primary and supportive documents, as well as the appropriate federal, state and local governmental regulations concerning the provision of low-income housing and/or related services.
4. Uphold the locally established low-income housing related legislation.
5. Act in the best interest of the county as a whole and disclose potential conflicts of interest

according to Whatcom County policy.

6. Ensure public participation, when appropriate in the application and/or evaluation process.

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All Committee members shall avoid conflict of interest with the activities of the Committee. If Committee members find themselves with a potential conflict of interest, they will acknowledge their conflict of interest in such a manner as to allow it to be noted in the minutes. Any member with a conflict of interest will withdraw from direct action on the issue.

### TERM OF OFFICE

The term of office for Committee members that do not represent required or designated positions shall be three consecutive years. A member may serve two full terms; a member serving a partial term shall not have that term considered as a full term. A member may serve until a replacement has been appointed and is ready to serve.

### TERMINATION

Membership on the Committee shall be terminated if a member is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings without excuse, except for required and designated positions. At the discretion of the Committee, the member may be reinstated or the position declared vacant and a successor recommended to the County Executive. Members may be recommended for removal from the Committee upon agreement of two-thirds (2/3) vote of the remaining Committee members. The County Executive shall be advised of the recommendation and make final determination.

### VACANCIES

The County Executive will fill vacancies as required.

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A leave of absence due to extraordinary circumstances may be granted in writing by the Chairperson upon petition by a member. If granted, the member's term will continue to run but the member relinquishes all privileges and is relieved of all obligations during the leave. The member's position will remain vacant during the period of the leave. Such vacancies shall reduce the current membership of the Committee for purposes of a quorum establishment.

### REIMBURSEMENT

Members shall not be compensated for their duties as members of the WCHAC, but may be reimbursed for Whatcom County approved training and related travel costs (for example: registration fees, overnight accommodations, meals, mileage) as per Whatcom County "Employee Travel Policy".

## **MEETING**

### **MEETINGS**

The regular meetings of the Committee shall be conducted as required. All Committee members shall be notified of the meeting ahead of time and advised of the agenda. Election of officers shall be held during the first quarter of the year.

All Committee meetings shall be open to the public.

A Consensus Model will be used for decision-making. The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice Sturgis, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure when Committee is unable to reach consensus. If consensus is not achieved, a majority/minority report may be forwarded to the County Executive office at committee members' discretion.

### **AGENDA**

Staff, in conjunction with the Chair, shall prepare an agenda for each meeting.

Any Committee member, community agency or county resident may request to be placed on the agenda notifying the Staff liaison 10 business days prior to the meeting. Staff, in conjunction with the Chair, will approve requests.

### **MINUTES**

Minutes are kept and distributed to the official mailing list for those meetings in which formal Committee action may be taken. Reports and recommendations to the full Committee will act as the record of sub-committee meetings.

## **OPERATING PROCEDURES**

### **QUORUM**

A majority of all the current membership of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. A quorum shall be required to take action and approve all formal Committee recommendations.

The formulation and adoption of recommendations, positions, and other activities shall be how the Committee works in an advisory capacity to the Health Department and the County Executive.

### **VOTING**

Each member of the Committee shall possess one vote in matters coming before the Committee. Voting may be done in person, or through real-time communication technology, such as virtual or telephone attendance. In the event that a required or designated membership position representative is unable to attend a meeting, a designated alternate may vote in their place. Non-designated membership positions, such as housing advocates, non-profit provider, and housing industry positions may cast votes only if the appointed committee member is in attendance. A vote by a majority of the quorum present shall carry.

## **OFFICERS**

### OFFICERS

The officers shall consist of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.

### ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The officers of the Committee shall be nominated and elected by a majority vote of the membership present at a pre-determined Committee meeting during the first quarter of the year and shall serve for a term of one calendar year. Officers can be re-elected for a second calendar year.

### VACANCIES IN COMMITTEE OFFICES

In case the position of Committee Chairperson becomes vacant, the Vice-Chairperson shall automatically become Chairperson and a new Vice-Chairperson shall be elected. A general election shall be held within 2 months to fill the Vice-Chairperson's position.

## **RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY OF OFFICERS**

### CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson of the Committee shall provide general leadership to the Committee in all areas of its involvement. He/she shall preside over all meetings of the Committee and shall have the authority to sign official correspondence on behalf of the Committee. He/she may call special meetings of the Committee. At his/her discretion he/she may assign duties to the Vice-Chairperson and serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.

### VICE-CHAIRPERSON

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall assume all responsibility and authority of the Chairperson. He/she shall perform such other duties as assigned by the Chairperson.

## **SUB-COMMITTEES**

### SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Committee shall recruit the members as needed for their sub-committees from the membership and/or from the community. Sub-committee chairs must be Committee members and are elected by WCHAC.

## **AMENDMENTS**

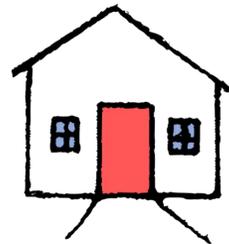
These bylaws may be adopted and amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the Committee membership at a regular Committee meeting. The Committee members shall receive at least 30 days prior notice of proposed by-law amendments.

# INTERIM HOUSING FACILITY FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN WHATCOM COUNTY: NEED AND FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS

Presentation for Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee  
June 2022

Completed by:

Ginger Segel, GS Consulting LLC  
Sarah Lindsley, Sarah Lindsley LLC



**GS**Consulting

BUILDING HOUSING. SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES.

# PROJECT BACKGROUND

- Core Team: City of Bellingham, Whatcom County, Mt. Baker Foundation, Opportunity Council & Lydia Place
- Surge Since 2020 in # of Unhoused Families with Children
- NEED: Feasibility Analysis for How to Best Serve Families Experiencing Homelessness with Interim Housing
  - Provide Trauma-Informed Housing & Services to Help Families Stabilize
  - Offer Healthy, Safe Place for Families Awaiting Permanent Housing Placement
  - Reach Functional Zero in Family Homelessness



# PHASE I: CORE TEAM FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

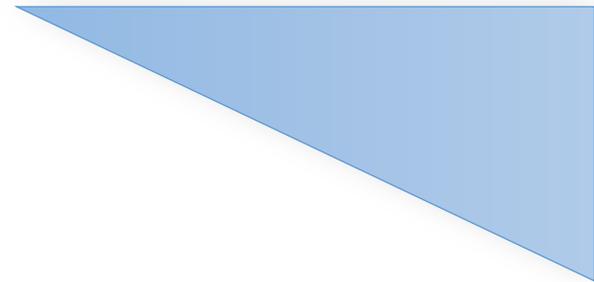
- 25-30 Unit Facility in Bellingham
  - Trauma-informed design including private units for each family, and onsite therapeutic & recreational spaces
  - Potential partnership between Opportunity Council & Lydia Place
  - Currently on pause
- 10-15 Units in North and East County
  - Multiple Small Facilities in Different Communities OR
  - Single Location in North County to Serve Multiple Communities
  - Additional research to develop program options



# FAMILIES OUTSIDE BELLINGHAM

- About 41% of Families Experiencing Homelessness are from outside Bellingham (2018 – present):
  - 14% from Ferndale (average 21 per year)
  - 12% from Lynden/Everson/Nooksack/Sumas (average 19 per year)
  - 8% from Blaine/Custer/Birch Bay (average 12 per year)





# INTERIM HOUSING OUTSIDE BELLINGHAM: PROS AND CONS

## PROS FOR FAMILIES FROM OUTSIDE BELLINGHAM

- Job stability (no need to “choose” between housing and job)
- Improved student outcomes
- Maintaining social support networks, including cultural ties, esp. for Native American and Latinx families

## CONS FOR FAMILIES FROM OUTSIDE OF BELLINGHAM

- Less access to social services, health care, new employment, education/job training due to centralization in Bellingham
- Relocating may benefit some families fleeing DV, seeking fresh start

# PHASE II: RECOMMENDATIONS

“Scattered site,” 12 units (minimum), about 4 units per location, 1 case manager rotating between locations, partnerships/referrals for additional support services

## Ferndale:

- Need (14%); Ferndale Service Collective; City officials support increasing affordable housing; Proximity to Lummi Tribal services & Latinx farmworker community hub (SeaMar outreach services)

## Lynden or Everson:

- Need (12%); SeaMar Clinic; Proximity to Nooksack Tribal services & Latinx farmworker community hub (SeaMar outreach services)

## Blaine:

- Need (8%); Blaine Community Action Program



# PHASE II: RECOMMENDATIONS

## Additional Considerations:

- Model not designed to serve highest need families
- Transportation issues to be addressed
- Need permanent affordable housing for people to move into
- Interim housing in Bellingham – also needed



# NEXT STEPS

- Identify owner & operator for 12 units of emergency housing for families in Ferndale, Blaine, and Everson or Lynden
- Develop interim housing model that will serve needs of higher need families, including those with untreated SUD and severe mental illness
- Increase permanent affordable housing for families in North and East County

