

Incarceration Prevention and Reduction Task Force
Triage Facility Subcommittee
Meeting Summary for August 3, 2017

1. Call To Order

Committee Member Jack Hovenier called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. at the Health Department Creekside Conference Room, 509 Girard Street, Bellingham.

Members Present: Jack Hovenier, Chris Phillips, Tyler Schroeder

Also Present: Jill Bernstein, Anne Deacon, Sandy Whitcutt (proxy for Betsy Kruse)

Members Absent: Jeff Brubaker, Kelli Linville, Ken Mann

Review May 18, 2017 Meeting Summary

There were no changes.

2. Update on Capital Funding

Schroeder submitted a handout on the estimated budget for the triage center additions and renovations (*on file*) and reported on the status of the State's capital budget. The State Senate has not yet passed the capital budget. The 45th District seat may change, which may shift the balance in Olympia.

The committee members discussed the upcoming process and what to do if there is no capital budget:

- The County administration will create a project budget at the County Council meeting on September 12.
- The administration will secure a contract with the architect, Ron Wright, to develop a schematic design.
- Schroeder hopes they will have a schematic by December.
- They will need a more than \$7 million for the triage facility. They have \$5.5 million now.
- If there is no money in the State budget for a triage facility, one option is to bond for the rest of the money, but that is the least preferred option.
- It would be better to delay the project if necessary than to bond for the money, so they don't lose funding from the State.
- The construction costs per square foot may be approximately \$232 for renovation and \$268 for the addition.
- Whether or not they should build a LEED-certified facility.
- Don't get too specific on the design before reaching out to the neighborhood and public, so they can provide input and feedback.

The committee discussed what happens if the North Sound Region becomes a mid-adopter of the Medicaid managed care process to integrate behavioral health and medical care.

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- The Behavioral Health Organization Executive Board, managed care organizations (MCOs), the Accountable Communities of Health (ACH), the Healthcare Authority (HCA), and County Commissioners are having meetings to talk about becoming a mid-adopter.
 - Planning for an interlocal structure
 - Define the categories of services
 - The MCOs in the pilot project are committed to supporting a triage facility in that area
- There is a financial benefit to becoming a mid-adopter and implementing the managed care process a year early.
- Crisis services are separate, and funding will go to the State or counties, which will likely impact the operating funds for the triage facility.
- Get confirmation from Joe Valentine that MCOs will support funding for triage facilities because they are cheaper to run than emergency rooms.
- Make sure the building and services providers are providing the best services possible so they don't lose funding.
- They need assurance from the director of the HCA that goes beyond verbal assurance.
- Convey the message to the County Council that this is a time of transition and there are a lot of moving parts, they will look for certainties, and MCOs are most likely to support the triage facility because they are cheaper.

4. Other Business

Schroeder stated that approval of a budget and fund with \$300,000 for architect Ron Wright is scheduled on the September 12 County Council agenda. He will look at the project scope and programming, talk to service providers, get verification from the State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and Department of Health on licensing requirements, look into the structural requirements, confirm requirements from all permitting agencies, and prepare an estimate of probable construction costs and a timeline. They want to build a stand-alone crisis triage center. The administration is going to investigate whether it's better to build a new stand-alone crisis triage center on the vacant lot between the work center and the road. One saving is that they won't have to move people from the existing program during construction.

The committee talked about the possibility of creating a backup option to build the triage center in phases in case there are problems with securing operational and/or construction funding and the importance of ensuring the triage facility is a viable option for law enforcement.

Hovenier moved for this Committee to ask the County to diligently explore making the triage and crisis respite facility a free-standing facility for three reasons: 1. The cost differential for the remodel and a new facility is only 16 percent, 2. Hidden problems often occur with remodels, so the new construction forecast will be more accurate, 3. It gives better use of the existing building by not eliminating what they currently have. The motion was seconded.

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Schroeder stated the property is County-owned property in the same location and would provide more flexibility.

The motion carried unanimously.

3. Next Steps: Ideas & Further Information

The committee discussed whether they can take steps to encourage State legislators to vote in favor of the capital budget, continuing to discuss operational funding, beginning work on the final Phase III Report to the County Council, and the timeline for Ron Wright's deliverables.

The next meeting will begin around 10:00 a.m. on September 21. The agenda items will include:

- An update on the State's capital budget
- An update on Council passage of the triage facility project budget
- A report on the North Sound BHO Executive Committee consideration of becoming a mid-adopter
- An update on architectural plans and scope of work
- An update on the public outreach plan
- Discussion of the final Phase III Report, which could include:
 - An update on the work of architect Ron Wright regarding programming, design, and other factors
 - Public outreach

5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.