

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL
Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

COUNTY COURTHOUSE
311 Grand Avenue, Suite #105
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038
(360) 778-5010



COUNCILMEMBERS
Barbara Brenner
Rud Browne
Barry Buchanan
Tyler Byrd
Todd Donovan
Carol Frazey
Satpal Sidhu

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

Homeless Strategies Workgroup

Friday, November 1, 2019 Meeting #15 Agenda

Time: 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Location: Whatcom County Civic Center Annex,
322 N. Commercial, Garden Room

1. **Welcome and Introductions**, HSW Chair, Whatcom County Councilmember Barry Buchanan
 - The purpose of the Homeless Strategies Workgroup, is to identify
 - Additional temporary winter shelters,
 - Added capacity for year round shelters.
 - Additional opportunities to address the needs of the county's homeless population, and
 - An additional purpose of the Homeless Strategies Workgroup (as per 8/9/19 meeting) is to create a communication network for organizations to work together better.
 - Strategies to prevent people from having no other option than to sleep outside.
 - Approve Meeting Summary, Meeting #14, October 18, 2019
2. **EMS/GRACE Program**, Malora Christensen, GRACE Program Manager
3. **Discuss HSW Update to Council Committee of the Whole**
4. **Status Updates on Shelters**
 - Winter Shelters (3-month shelters)
 - Severe Weather (Emergency) Shelters, Ann Beck, Vanessa Blackburn
5. **Communications Subcommittee**
 - Communications strategy to the broader public, in addition to communications effort to homeless populations, and customized messaging for small cities (Communications Subcommittee)

- Near term needs
- Long term services (toward permanency)
- Broader community (education, engagement, coordinated messaging)
- Promote HOT number
- Create a dashboard of information on programs, funding, outreach, etc.

6. Action Items

- Strategies Chart review and updates
 - Rest Stop
 - Unity Care (Chris Kobdich) – grant/agency funding, site location, and implementation
 - Identify additional rest stop locations and operators (varied types)
 - BasicsPNW (Carmen Gilmore, Brittany Jones)- Sign contract with City of Bellingham and County for permanent locker operations.
 - Identifying long-term management of lockers
 - Safe Parking (Tara Sundin, Rick Sepler) – identify locations in Bellingham
 - Karen Burke offered to reach out to First Baptist Church downtown regarding the use of their parking lot and to learn about their homeless outreach efforts
 - Shelters
 - Identify city and county owned properties as potential shelter locations (requested by Commissioner Shepard)
 - HomesNow (Markis Stidham) - Identify sites for future tiny home villages in Bellingham and in the County. ¼ acre with electricity.
 - Secular shelters – identify more spaces at secular shelters
 - Identify an estimated budget for a winter shelter (Ann Beck, Tyler Schroeder)
 - Partner with Lummi Nation on shelters and housing opportunities
 - Shelter operators - Shelter space is available through the Port (as per Commissioner Shepard) – need to identify operations
 - East Whatcom Regional Resource Center- (Karen Burke) potential shelter facility location for east Whatcom County residents in need of warmth during severe weather. Need to identify operations.
 - Online applications for shelter (Markis Stidham) – potential app
 - WTA Transit Station – identify staff and volunteers for an emergency shelter
 - Volunteer Training (Whatcom County, Opportunity Council) – trainings for shelter volunteers will be held in October and November.
 - Work with local organizations for volunteer construction of tiny homes at new sites
 - Create an asset map. Summarize information on number of beds and locations (requested by Commissioner Shepard)
 - Small Cities Partnership – keep them updated about the work of the Homeless Strategies Workgroup and how they can help.
 - Coordinate with St. Peters Church in Deming to offer more services to the 150 people fed there each week (Bridget Reeves, Lighthouse Mission)
 - Need for more access to treatment for mental health and substance use disorders

- Funding
 - 1406 Funding – City and County approved resolutions. Next step is approving a county ordinance, which identifies funding allocations.
 - Coordinate city and county funding allocations (Council Member Lilliquist) – create a countywide comprehensive approach
- Reunification – (suggested by Karen Burke)
- Case Management – identify funding for case managers (better pay, retention, more case managers)
- Communications– *see Communications Subcommittee above*

7. Discussion of Next Steps

- Next meetings:
 - November 15, 2019, 8:30-10:00 a.m., Garden Room
 - December 13, 2019, 8:30-10:00 a.m., Garden Room

8. Public Comment

Time will be divided equally among speakers with 3 minutes maximum per person. Written input can also be submitted.

Whatcom County Councilmembers have been invited to attend the meeting. It is likely a quorum of the Council will attend.

Thank you for helping to end homelessness in Whatcom County