

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, January 3, 2020 Meeting #18 Agenda

Time: 8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

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

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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 #17, December 13, 2019**
 2. **Status Updates on Shelters**
 - Winter Shelters (3-month shelters)
 - Severe Weather (Emergency) Shelters
 3. **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)

4. Action Items

- Develop an HSW call to action in 2020 – identify recommendations of the HSW and identify agencies or policy makers to ask. (Mike Parker, Councilmember Buchanan)
- Rest Stop
 - Unity Care (Chris Kobdich) – funding, location, and implementation (in partnership with Opportunity Council)
 - 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.
 - Identify 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
 - Partner with Lummi Nation on shelters and housing opportunities (Nick Lewis)
 - 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
- 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 – County and cities submitted required documents. Effective date of December 1, 2019 to impose the Affordable and Supportive Housing State Shared Tax authorized by Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1406 and Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 82.14.540
 - Coordinate city and county funding allocations (Council Member Lilliquist) – create a countywide comprehensive approach
- Reunification – (Karen Burke)
- Case Management – identify funding for case managers (better pay, retention, more case managers)
- Communications– *see Communications Subcommittee above*

5. Discussion of Next Steps

- Next meeting: January 17, 2020, 8:30-10:00 a.m., Garden Room
- Additional Meetings:
 - January 31, 2020
 - February 14, 2020

6. 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