



MEETING MINUTES
HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF WASHINGTON COUNTY
September 23, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

<u>COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT</u>	<u>STAFF PRESENT</u>
Katherine Galian (Chair)	Komi Kalevor, Executive Director
Melinda Bell (Vice Chair)	Josh Crites, Assistant Director
Dave Bachman	Jacob Boyett
Vince Chiotti	Melisa Dailey
Alma Flores	Annette Evans
Sheila Greenlaw-Fink	Yaling Huang-Dressel
Cindi Otis	Jes Larson
Narendar Sahgal	Liz Morris
Eric Schmidt	Will Seals
Sid Scott	Melissa Sonsalla
Ben Sturtz	Shannon Wilson
Balen Younis	
	<u>GUESTS</u>
<u>ABSENT</u>	Teresa Payne
Alma Tapia Hernandez	
	<u>STAFF ABSENT</u>
<u>HABOD</u>	

I. ROLL CALL – 9:04 a.m. A quorum was present.

II. DISCUSSION - ORAL COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBER UPDATES

MEMBER UPDATES

Sheila Greenlaw-Fink reported the Community Housing fund currently have seven loans outstanding and one that has been paid off, the Valfre at Avenida 26, has commenced with several projects leasing this fall. She added they have enough funds to make one or two additional loans. They have also provided a loan for West Tuality Habitat for their next subdivision site that is adjacent to their current one.



Alma Flores announced the Maryanne received a temporary certificate of occupancy, with the first family moving in this week. There are 30 families who have been approved with space for 24 additional families. She offered to share the flyer to spread the word out about vacancies at this property.

Balen Younis expressed his thanks to Komi and his staff with the offering of five units for the refugee agency he works with to assist in providing housing for those refugee families to obtain housing until their certified paperwork is obtained to provide permanent housing.

Dave Bachman with Cascade Management reported they have received occupancy on a property in Portland and one in Lebanon which will house veterans. He also noted they are working with Brawner and the county to relocate tenants within the county owned portfolio.

Ben Sturtz, project manager at Bridge reported they have submitted a building permit for the Goldcrest project in South Cooper Mountain. He added their 213 unit development in the Hollywood district which includes several 30% units has submitted for funding with PHB with Metro bond funding.

Melinda Bell shared the Union Gospel Mission will be kicking off their Operation Overcoat event virtually via their website at ugmportland.org. This provides the homeless with not only coats, but socks, hygiene items, and various other amenities to stay warm during the winter months. This program will run through the end of September.

Sid Scott stated lumber prices have come back to a normal level but there are still delays in getting product in some instances.

Katherine Galian, director of family community resources at Community Action reported one of the big issues they face is requests for rent assistance and emergency rent assistance. Another issue is bringing the large federal investments in housing stability to those who have been applying and have been protected under the eviction moratorium. The safe harbor period for those who have applied is 60 days and the county Board of Commissioners extended the safe harbor period to 90 days for unincorporated Washington County. Right now, they have about a 3,000 application backlog for Washington County of which many are applying for future rents as well as arrears. People have until March 2022 to pay off the arrears they owe. They are working on a semi-permanent lottery utility assistance program that is funded currently with ARPA funds with the hopes to move this to a permanent program.

III. ACTION - APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM August 26, 2021 @ 9:27 a.m.

Motion: Alma Flores

Second: Eric Schmidt

Vote: All approved

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Komi Kalevor announced two people within the Housing Authority have been promoted to Senior Occupancy Specialist. They are also recruiting for a new supervisor with the hiring process close to completion. With the approval of new ACC with HUD by the Housing Authority Board the change has been submitted and are awaiting HUD's response. The Supportive Housing Services intergovernmental



agreement has been delayed but is moving forward. There are ongoing challenges with the Bridge Shelter program with community pushback from the Econo Lodge site. Housing Services staff have been meeting with local businesses and elected officials to address these concerns. The Aloha Inn shelter location's renovation is moving along well with the move toward permanent housing in the future. He noted the absence of a financial update in the packet. He added the financial position is strong and presented a summary of the budget which has increased three-fold in the last two years with the passing of two bond measures. Finally, he noted with the addition of an extra building to the portfolio rehab, transaction costs have increased from 75 million to 116 million, and rehab cost increased from 25 million to 48 million. With this increase, approval is needed from the Board of County Commissioners. The rehab project will be financed primarily with 58 million in private activity bonds and over 40 million in low income housing tax credits. This will result in temporary and possibly permanent relocation of tenants who are above the income limit. The hope is to close in March of 2022 with rehab work starting shortly after.

V. RESOLUTIONS / ACTION ITEMS

A. HUD Section 3 Administrative Guide

Will Seals explained Section 3 requires housing authorities to provide employment, training, and contracting opportunities and other economic opportunities to very low-income persons within the local community being served. HUD updated the CFRs in September with an effective date of November 2020. This update streamlined the reporting requirements, added exceptions for small housing authorities for some of the reporting requirements, and outlined some of the qualitative measures that need to be met. The Housing Authority has updated their plan to coincide with these updates. The intent of the plan is to integrate some of the current HUD funded contracts such as creating a hiring plan so opportunities for apprenticeships or employment can be matched to those individuals. They will also be working with residents to create a database. Elements of the FSS program will also be integrated to find ways to connect residents with opportunities in fields of employment they might be interested. This will be a living document to connect with other programs to expand training opportunities.

Alma Flores asked to ensure equity, if the business certification forms in these programs can be translated into other language with staff available to guide people through the process. She added many of these business owners will need more support than what is generally available and asked how staff will address those issues.

Mr. Seals stated they are looking into those concerns and will be breaking the contracts into smaller contracts making it easier for businesses. They are also working with the Office of Equity and Inclusion to integrate some of the goals the county and the Housing Authority has as well.

Josh Crites noted documents are translated into different languages and others are translated upon request. They use the language line as well.

Ms. Flores shared Micro Enterprise Services of Oregon (MESO) is a wonderful organization that provides capacity building and assistance that might be helpful in working with some of the businesses with whom they are working alongside.



Sheila Greenlaw-Fink asked if the Housing Authority had good experience with Section 3 historically and what their intent is by using it as she hasn't seen it well utilized.

Mr. Crites believes as the Housing Authority gives more attention to the programs it will take time and resources to allocate to them. He has seen very successful Section 3 programs and staff has spent a lot of time thinking through how to implement the Section 3 and appropriately resource it making sure that every contract is a priority and build up the program with strong relationships.

Ben Sturtz believes Section 3 has been a missed opportunity in Washington County from what he's seen in the last 12 years. He conveyed it would be helpful to focus in getting people certified, on lists, or residents participating with subcontractors. He added along with the business side, the residents can be the next step by participating on these jobs or with apprenticeship and journeyman opportunities.

Mr. Seals noted they do not have any Section 3 data but are looking forward to the development of the database as they engage with residents to move toward positive metrics with the implementation of this plan.

Eric Schmidt moved to recommend the approval of the HUD Section 3 Administrative Guide to the Housing Authority Board. Alma Flores seconded the motion. **Vote: Motion passed.**

Motion: Eric Schmidt

Second: Alma Flores

Vote: All approved – 9:41am

VI. ONGOING BUSINESS

None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

October HAC Housing Forum

Komi Kalevor announced the theme for the October HAC forum will be *Homelessness in Washington County, Major Contributing Factors and Paths Forward*. An invitation has been extended to the Board of Commissioners and mayors in Washington County and their top staff. The speakers will include Chris Bouneff, Executive Director of the National Alliance of Mental Illness, Katrina Holland with JOIN (homeless service agency in Portland), Pat Rogers, Homeless Program Manager with Community Action, Andy Silver, Vancouver Housing Authority, COO, and Dr. Marisa Zapata, Director of PSU's Homelessness Research & Action Collaborative. Also speaking will be Shannon Wilson from the Housing Authority along with representatives from Hillsboro and Beaverton who will be giving a brief update on the housing production pipeline. Lunch will be provided through Door Dash.

Cindi Otis asked if there is a Zoom link available to send to those who are not on the attendee list that may want to listen to the forum. Melissa Sonsalla stated that she and Jacob Boyett are looking into the exact process, but it the forum is available to the general public.



VIII. DEPARTMENT UPDATES

A. Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Programs

Annette Evans explained the county developed a vision and ten year plan in 2008 to end homelessness. As that plan ended, a new plan has been authorized which is called *A Road Home, Community Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*. This guides the system level and programmatic response to homelessness in the community. This new plan garnered input from over 100 stakeholders and was adopted in 2018 by the Board of County Commissioners. It uses both public and private funds to address the socio-economic factors that drive poverty and homelessness within the community.

She presented an overview of the structure of the Continuum of Care which includes the Housing and Supportive Services Network (HSSN), the CoC Board, and the Homeless Plan Advisory Committee (HPAC). The CoC manages the countywide planning and process through the CoC governance as well as the homeless management information system administration for the Washington County CoC implementation. They also perform grant writing fiscal management and reporting for compliance of public and private funds. The programs that are managed within the CoC are the Continuum of Care under federal regulation focusing on housing and services through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the general fund investments, public safety levies, and applying for and management of grants.

Within the CoC 820 people and 500 households were served. She noted while they have made great strides in moving toward racial equity last year of those served 74% were Caucasian and 26% were persons of color which is an increase from previous years. She conveyed the lack of availability of outreach to those experiencing homelessness in the county's rural areas and will be working toward a rural assistance and transition from homelessness initiative. This will provide funds to address persons at risk as well as those experiencing homelessness living in the county's rural cities. An RFPQ has been released to connect with agencies already doing outreach in the rural areas. They are in process of working with the Forest Grove Foundation and the Salvation Army to undertake this work.

Under the safety levy there is a new program called the Employment Specialist and Housing Navigation which utilizes Community Action staff working in partnership with the year round family and youth shelters to help reduce the length of time of shelter stays through housing navigation support. Relationships are established to maintain relationships upon exit of the shelters as they enter into housing to help increase economic stability through employment.

The county is investing funds to expand the Sojourners House which is tenant based rapid rehousing administered by the domestic violence resource center for victims of domestic violence. The county is investing to expand to serve an additional 10 households above the 20 already being served through the CoC. She noted with the modernization of the entry system they expect to see an increase in numbers in the system as more agencies are able to access the entry system as they assist individuals who have not had the resources to connect to services in the past. She will update the committee of the data related to the rate of persons coming into the coordinated entry system. With the passing of the Supportive Housing Services (SHS) bond, gaps will be filled for individuals who were not able to be served previously because of lack of funding.



B. Supportive Housing Services (SHS)

Jes Larson explained, the role of the SHS is to work in tandem with the CoC to fill in the gap of services needed especially related to housing in Washington County. The SHS is funded through a voter passed bond in May of 2020, with collection of taxes began in January 2021 with funds becoming available in July 2021. She expressed her gratitude to the entire SHS staff for their hard work in making this program successful. She noted with the limited funding available for the CoC (\$15 million), the SHS measure adds an additional 50-75 million dollars per year to the system of care. This allows the gaps in the system to be addressed and housing case managers to connect and keep people in housing.

The long-term rent assistance is a key tool providing subsidies to low income residents. These SHS bonds will significantly increase the funding in conjunction with the federally funded housing choice vouchers. The full capacity of revenue will not be received in the first year, so the programming has been scaled back to the anticipated funding this year. The program has a goal to house 500 households in supportive housing placements and help an additional 500 households with other stable housing solutions (eviction prevention or short-term rental assistance). Additionally, there is a goal to add 100 year-round shelter beds and sustain the winter shelter capacity.

When at full capacity, the goal is to sustain a total of 1,665 supportive housing placements in Washington County and establish and sustain 250 year-round permanent shelter beds and permanent programs. To help achieve these goals, 7 million dollars in service contracts have been distributed to 15 organizations to provide housing case management services. Each of these organizations will receive two to three housing case managers with each serving 20 different households to move toward the 500 housing placements goal. As the program grows, additional organizations will be added, and a list will be kept of qualified organizations. Next week a boot camp training series will take place giving all the new and existing workers the fundamentals to begin using the resources of the expanded system towards housing placement across the community.

The Regional Long-Term Rent Assistance (RLRA) is a regionally coordinated policy for implementing and deploying vouchers using the best practices of the housing choice voucher program, leaving aside the unnecessary bureaucratic work of a HUD program. With these vouchers a tenant will generally pay 28.5 percent of income toward rent to allow for other housing costs with the voucher subsidizing the remaining portion. This allows tenants to live in both affordable and market rate housing.

The winter shelter programs will begin next month with the goal of providing year-round shelters. The three Bridge Shelters will create new shelter capacity programs helping meet the 100 new shelter bed goal for the SHS program. Both the Hillsboro and Aloha shelters are temporary bridge shelters that will eventually be turned into permanent supportive housing. When this occurs, these shelters will relocate to other areas to keep the goal of 100 year-round shelter beds. All of these shelter programs will be focused on serving both families and people experiencing prolonged homelessness with disabling conditions. With needing an efficient and effective way to move people through the system, Community Connect will be utilized to make this possible. Until SHS programming can be deployed and buildings found and improved, winter shelter capacity will be sustained with about 187 winter shelter beds spread across the county.

There is a need for the Homeless Plan Advisory Committee's work to expand to advise and oversee the ongoing implementation of SHS. A work group is revising HPACs work and will present the revisions at



their October meeting. Outcomes and quarterly reports will be tracked using a potential dashboard that will track how many people have been housed, who is waiting to get housed, the percentage of retention rates, and demographics of tenants. Community engagement is a priority when moving forward in this work, especially related to shelter work.

Balen Younis asked Ms. Evans if ending homelessness for all is a feasibility in the county.

Ms. Evans stated the vision is to address ending homelessness to attain function zero. This means when people become homeless there is a system in place which has the capacity and responsiveness to provide access to resources, quickly moving them toward housing.

Ms. Larsen added there is specific data that supports the 1,665 permanent supportive housing placement number for Washington County. There are approximately 2,500 households in the region that were counted to be chronically homeless at the last point-in-time count in 2019 with an anticipated 2,500 more households who are on the fringe of that crisis and need for housing stability or are uncounted in those point-in-time counts, totaling 5,000 households. The SHS program is designed to create 5,000 supportive housing placements with Washington County's portion of this is one-third resulting in 1,665 placements.

Sheila Greenlaw-Fink asked Ms. Larson for clarification on how we will move through the change from temporary sheltering at places like the Aloha Inn to a permanent supportive housing system, specifically in regards to what will happen to the people using the location as a temporary shelter after the location has been converted.

Ms. Larson stated that a lot of people staying in the shelter program, if all goes according to plan, may end up moving into the Aloha Inn as a permanent resident. Permanent supportive housing is the fundamental goal for everyone we are serving, and these buildings can really help provide that capacity for our system.

C. Additional Department Updates

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

Komi Kalevor
Secretary/Executive Director