

**Thurston County HOME Consortium
MEETING MINUTES
September 8, 2014 11:00 AM-1:00 PM
Thurston County Public Health & Social Services Department
412 Lilly Rd NE, Olympia WA 98506-5132
Conference Room 107ABC**

In Attendance: Consortium Members					
Karen Valenzuela	Thurston County	X	Jeannine Roe	Olympia	X
Virgil Clarkson	Lacey		Dennis McVey	Rainier	X
Neil McClanahan (Chair)	Tumwater	X	Craig Lester	Tenino	X
<i>Vacant</i>	Yelm		<i>Vacant</i>	<i>Bucoda</i>	
Other Attendees					
Danny Kadden Diane Harris Meg Martin Tim Ransom Adam Frank Danille Kettel Bonnie Hill Kellie Patton		Bob Ricks Anna Schlecht Jill Severn Andrew Oommen Charles Shelan Theresa Slusher Tammie Smith Val Karjale		Commissioner Cathy Wolfe Don Sloma Gary Aden Dan Schnabel Linda Abell *Minutes*	
Welcome and Introductions					
<p>The meeting was called to order by Chairman McClanahan at 11:00 AM. Introductions followed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman McClanahan pointed out that with today's absence of Councilmember Clarkson and the board vacancies of members from both Yelm and Bucoda that the board is just barely close to having a quorum. He suggests sending a formal letter to those cities asking them to find board representation. Gary Aden will draft a letter. 					
Public Comments/Announcements					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Val Karjale, moderator and board chair at the First Christian Church gave a background of their congregation. She stated that the congregation began meeting with Interfaith Works five months ago to discuss the First Christian Church hosting The Peoples House shelter. Ms. Karjale reiterated that the congregation is excited to continue their mission to serve and help. 					
Approval of Agenda for September 8, 2014					
<p>ACTION: A motion was made by Councilmember Roe and seconded by Commissioner Valenzuela to approve the agenda for September 8, 2014. Motion passed unanimously.</p>					
Approval of Minutes for July 14, 2014					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No changes <p>ACTION: A motion was made by Councilmember Roe and seconded by Chair McClanahan to approve the Meeting Minutes for July 14th, 2014 as written. Motion passed unanimously.</p>					
Review of Financial Report - Gary Aden					
<p>Gary Aden reported that there are still a few agencies that have not turned in their final billing. The contract year ended Aug 31, 2014. Contract extensions were approved for Community Youth Services and Family Support Center. Mr. Aden notes that there will be a carryover balance however, until all bills have been received and processed the amount of that balance is unknown.</p>					

Review HOME Consortium Timeline Calendar - Gary Aden

Gary Aden reported that he expects to have the new HUD contract any day as it was mailed out last week. He shared that the HUD representative we have been working with for the last 8 years has moved to a different division and we will be working with someone new. To make for a smooth transition Gary requested Technical Assistance from HUD which amounts to a thorough review of our current processes, documents and contracts. This review is wholly funded by HUD so there will be no cost to the county. Looking ahead, Gary pointed out that the October meeting will include discussion about allocating funds for a Cold Weather Shelter. In November the 2015 RFP Review will take place. Staff will continue monitoring existing contracts for compliance.

HOME CONSORTIUM RETREAT FEEDBACK / DISCUSSION - THERESA SLUSHER, Consortium

During the retreat members asked for the performance measures which Ms. Slusher provided today. The Performance Measures Tracking form provided some information about the populations served by Homeless or Affordable Housing between 2013 and 2014. Members had comments and questions about the information.

Mr. Sloma stated that the performance measures are difficult to interpret without additional information such as how the income growth of the homeless population is being measured and if income includes services such as TANF and Social Security. Ms. Slusher will dig deeper for the demographics.

Mr. Shelan would like to know the costs for providing each of the housing options covered in the data.

Mr. Sloma received clarification on the definition of "exit to stable housing". Mr. Sloma would like a breakdown of what the social service needs are for those in the homeless housing system and if those needs are being addressed. Additionally he would like to know if those services are following them when they exit.

Councilmember Roe added that with the increase in those returning to homelessness, she would like to see a breakdown of the issues of those who return to homelessness.

Ms. Slusher indicated that there are a variety of reports from HMIS that can be run monthly or even weekly and she agreed to provide deeper demographics to answer these questions.

Mr. Aden shared that the state is pushing for all sub grantees to be timely and correct in their HMIS reporting. He pointed to the Performance Measures Tracking number for those assisted with Rapid Rehousing (RR). The form indicates that 62% of those assisted with Rapid Rehousing exit to stable housing. In actuality, it should be close to 100% since RR assistance provides the financial means to exit to permanent to housing. Mr. Aden reiterated that in order for reports to have quality data, the information entered into HMIS must be correct.

A discussion followed about "telling our story" and the different ways to get the word out that there are positive changes being made. Councilmember Mr. McVey suggested posting short vignettes on agency websites featuring people who have been helped with housing assistance. Mr. Sloma shared that within the recent Board of Health conversations about Thurston Thrives there was discussion about making sure that all the work being done; health improvement, housing, infectious disease, etc is kept in the community mind and that perhaps Thurston Thrives becomes the place to tell all these stories.

Chair McLanahan reminded the group that due to time constraints at the retreat the Community Investment Partnership (CIP) and Thurston Thrives (TT) were mentioned but not discussed. Commissioner Valenzuela agreed and briefly described the goals of the TT Housing Action Team stating she would like the HOME Consortium to be more familiar with the work being done. She also gave a brief overview of the CIP funding which just completed its first year. This funding source consists of revenue streams from both the United Way and the Human Services Review Counsel.

Commissioner Valenzuela requested that these items be placed on a future agenda when there is more time to discuss them in depth.

UPDATE POINT IN TIME COUNT / HOMELESS CONNECT EVENT- ANNA SCHLECHT, THERESA SLUSHER

At the request of the Consortium Ms. Slusher and Ms. Schlecht met with the HCAC to develop an event which includes the rural communities without raising costs. Ms. Schlecht explained that the City of Olympia will lead the Urban Hub event to take place during the last week of January 2015. The Homeless Connect Event will occur in conjunction with the 2015 Point in Time Homeless Census at a cost of \$3,500 to the HOME Consortium. Ms. Slusher will coordinate three Rural Hub connect events to take place in Yelm, Rochester and Tenino at a cost of \$1500 to the Home Consortium. Based on the Rural Assessment Needs report, all three of these rural communities have strong community partnerships. The goal for both events is to provide a meal, commodities, and personal services such as haircuts along with referrals for housing. Both events will rely on volunteers. There was agreement by all members to move forward with both the Homeless Connect Event and Point in Time Census as outlined in the attachments. Mr. Aden will create an Interlocal Agreement for both events to be approved by the BOCC.

COORDINATED ENTRY UPDATE – THERESA SLUSHER

Ms. Slusher continues to work on the plan for Coordinated Entry (CE) which is due in December and offered the draft for anyone interested in seeing it. She reviewed her timeline of plans for the Coordinated Entry process. Commissioner Valenzuela asked if we were anywhere near running out of units for rapid re-housing. Ms. Slusher explained that there is still plenty of housing available however there are barriers such as having a criminal background or very small incomes that make finding housing difficult. She went on to stress the importance of the CE team (CYS, Sidewalk and the Family Support Center) to build strong relationships with landlords and advocate for those in need, even if that means asking landlords to bend existing rules.

According to Bob Ricks, Deputy Director with the Housing Authority of Thurston County, voucher holders are having the most trouble finding affordable housing due to a local vacancy rate of 4%.

Commissioner Valenzuela requested Ms. Slusher to pull additional data from HMIS on what the barriers to housing are.

Ms. Slaughter added that during the initial intake to Coordinated Entry, questions about barriers to housing are not asked and that those questions and issues are addressed once a referral to housing is made.

Tim Ransom of Quixote Village (Permanent Supportive Housing) stated that he has had varying success with Sidewalk due to some technical difficulties. Mr. Ransom asked how recipients of the CE service can provide feedback about the CE process. He would also like to become involved in developing the draft policies and procedures. Ms. Slusher stated that a draft plan will go to providers for input.

Ms. Slusher presented a draft of the Thurston County Homeless Housing and Services Resources List which is designed to be a flyer for posting or handing out. The list provides the CE information and phone numbers to call including a toll-free option. In addition the flyer promotes other services available such as Eviction Prevention, Utility Assistance and Case Management. While still in draft format, Councilmember Roe is excited to see this and looks forward to sharing it.

PEOPLES HOUSE UPDATE

Meg Martin with Interfaith Works announced that the location of the new Interfaith Works Emergency Overnight Shelter (formally known as The Peoples House) was approved on August 31st and will open its doors on November 1st, 2014. The site will be located at the First Christian Church in downtown Olympia where the former family shelter was located. This site will be a 42 bed overnight facility for the neediest and most vulnerable adults. There will be mailboxes, personal storage space and pets will be allowed. Interfaith staff, with the help of volunteers, plans to go into the streets and camps to conduct 15 minute Vulnerability Assessments in order to recruit the 42 most vulnerable adults. In the spirit of a shelter with no barriers, there will be no limit on how long residents will be allowed to stay. The site will be open between the hours of 5 pm and 7 am and will not provide day services or meals. Assessments for rapid or other housing needs will be done between 5 – 8pm. Councilmember Roe asked how the financial outlook is and Mr. Kadden responded that despite a budget reduction, the budget still looks good because of very low rent at this new site. Councilmember Roe asked about community outreach. Mr. Kadden stated that the project is on a smooth route with transfer of an existing permit. Also, there has been significant outreach with both business and residential neighbors in accordance with city protocol and that the media will be contacted in the next 24 hours. Mr. Kadden shared that there will be a meeting for neighbors at the church on September 18 at 5:30 pm for a question and answer meeting and also that staff will be available if further follow-up is needed. Councilmember Roe extended a thank you to Ms. Martin for continuing to carry this project forward.

Homeless Coordinator Monthly Report - Theresa Slusher, Homeless Coordinator

Ms. Slusher reports that progress is being made with the conversion of the Holly Motel in cooperation with Homes First who is willing to take on the mortgage. Conversations are continuing with the formation of partnerships to provide the supportive services to address healthcare, behavioral health and homeless services. These services will need to be established in order to have support from St. Peter Hospital and Capital Medical Center. Councilmember Roe praised Ms. Slusher and Ms. Soucoup for their progress and for persevering.

Additional Public Comments/Announcements

No additional comments or announcements were made.

Monday, OCTOBER 13, 2014 11:00 a.m. – 1p.m.

Thurston County Public Health
412 Lilly Road, Olympia 98506

Meeting Adjourned at 1:00 PM