



Homes for All Leadership Group

“Providing innovative leadership toward ending homelessness”

Meeting Notes

May 14, 2019

Welcome & Introductions

Kirsten Jewell, Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division, opened the meeting and welcomed participants. Commissioner Garrido is out of town at a conference and regrets that she cannot be in attendance today. Minor corrections to the dates stated in the April minutes were noted from members. Attendees introduced themselves.

Presentation

Lorraine Ralston, US Census Bureau, represents 14 counties in Washington for the upcoming 2020 US Census. She presented information about the upcoming census and how our community can be involved.

Key Points and Questions:

- This census, there are multiple ways in which information can be collected. The best way to help the census is to complete the survey online so that enumerators will not have to be sent to your home. The online submission can only be completed once and it must be completed all at one time -- there is no saving your work and you can't come back. There are no required fields, so questions can be skipped, and the survey can still be submitted. However, if all the questions are not completed, an enumerator may be sent to the home to collect the information.
- How do we make sure that we are not double-counting, artificially inflating counts and how does the Bureau respond to these questions? The Census Bureau recognizes that these situations do happen sometimes. There is an entire division of people within the bureau who do data quality control and verification. These specialists have ways of ensuring that the data reported is accurate, and they check this data against estimates and predictions.
- There is an ongoing discussion about the inclusion of the citizenship question on the census form. The concern is that people may be hesitant to provide information. How has the Census Bureau prepared for this possibility? The Bureau has prepared for this possibility. The Census will need to work harder to get out appropriate messaging and reassure people about how their information will be used.
- The last day of the Severe Weather Shelters will be March 31. If needed, the shelters can be available to help guests in completing their census forms.

- To prevent scams, part of the media outreach will be to educate people about what questions will be asked, especially what the census doesn't ask and to beware of possible scammers that ask for this information.
- DOD is counted differently; there is a separate group which handles DOD personnel.
- The Census Bureau is hiring. They are looking for people with specialized experience such as people with lived experience of homelessness. The work is temporary, but well paid. The census needs to find trusted voices in the community to help make sure that enumerators count everyone.

Attendees split into smaller groups discuss how their organizations can help share information about the Census.

Legislative Update – End of Session Report

Kirsten passed out a legislative update packet and reviewed bills that had passed. This handout is a draft and a final version will be sent out to the group later.

Bills that Did Pass

Tenant and Homeowner Protections

- HB 1440 requires providing longer notice of rent increases -- least 60 days prior written notice -- and prohibits rent increases during the term of the lease.
- SHB 5600 extends notice to tenants from 3 days to 14 days before eviction proceedings for non-payment of rent. This legislation also allows judges to use discretion and consider extenuating circumstances such as job loss or hospitalization. Kurt Wiest, Bremerton Housing Authority, noted that this bill has an exemption for households with subsidies and is not applicable to Housing Choice Vouchers.

Affordable Housing Funding

- HB 1406 allows local jurisdictions to retain a small portion of sales tax for new affordable housing and permanent housing, operations & maintenance, and rental assistance. This bill is very complicated and still in the process of being interpreted.
- HB 1219 allows cities and counties to use real estate excise taxes (REET) to support affordable housing and homelessness projects. These funds were previously limited to public works projects. It is uncertain if and how much money this will make available, but it does add another option for a funding source.
- SB 5025 changes the pay scales for self-help housing and exempts them from having to pay REET. This makes things easier for self-help sweat equity programs.

Land Use Related to Affordable Housing

- HB 1377 allows more flexibility for religious organizations to develop housing on their properties.

- SSB 5383 allows cities and towns to adopt ordinances regulating the creation of tiny house communities with a binding site plan method. This may have some impact on what this group is doing. This bill also legalizes the ability for cities, counties, and local jurisdictions to have a legal permitting process for tiny houses.

Youth/Student Homelessness

- SB 5324 allows the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to provide grants to school districts for identification of students experiencing homelessness.
- SB 5800 establishes pilot projects in four community colleges (possibly including Olympic College) to support students experiencing homelessness.

Bills that Did Not Pass

A breakdown of the bills that did not pass was provided on the handout. Often bills will come around as a good idea but are not a priority that session. Many of these bills will likely come back again in later legislative sessions.

The legislative process is complicated and that we are lucky to have great advocates including the Washington Low-Income Housing Alliance, League of Women Voters, Kitsap County’s lobbyist, and the Washington Association of Counties. We also had great representation from our county in Olympia this year including Kurt Wiest, Renee Kimball-Rouse, and the Commissioners. We need to make sure to thank our legislators. Please drop them an email to tell them how much you appreciate their work.

Village Updates

Physical Site and Plan

Judy Rae-Karlsen provided a quick overview of the process for developing the village. Once the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and agreements are executed the preconstruction phase can begin, including the permitting phase (20 permits will be needed). Pre-construction also includes site prep, utility connections, and scheduling manpower. After the pre-construction phase, the construction phase will consist of coordinating many tasks including roads, parking, foundations, scheduling the moving of assets and finishing the cabins.

Currently we need to identify a steward for the existing tiny cabins. Some of these cabins have been filled with construction materials and storage and some have been in place for over a year. A steward will check on the cabins regularly to check for theft, leaking, damage, and readiness to be moved. A thorough inventory of the cabins is needed.

Theresa Deno offered to volunteer as the steward for the cabins.

Kurt Wiest reminded the group that the Housing Authority will provide the tables as previously committed. The tables have not been purchased but will be provided when they are needed.

Tim Blair, Project Share, discussed the custom moving trailer they have available. It has a winch and they can load and move tiny houses as needed. Work has been ongoing on the mobile trailers including interior and exterior painting. The mobile kitchen has been painted and the electricity has been completed. It will have vinyl flooring. That One Place restaurant has volunteers to have a fund raiser on the 2nd Sunday in July at the car show. Proceed will support the project. A flyer will be sent out to the group.

Village Management & Human Services

Kirsten gave an update on the Village Management Plan. Currently the final version of the MOU has been sent out to all partners and is being reviewed by their legal teams. The hope is that these MOUs will be signed within the month. The transitory ordinance permit documentation is also being prepared.

Reports/Updates

KMHS Permanent Supportive Housing Project

Kurt Wiest shared information about Pendleton Place. He noted that there has been a lot of outreach to the neighborhood. There was a presentation at Abundant Life Church with 75 people in attendance. The focusing of the message is that this project is not a shelter; it is an apartment building that provides services. There are some concerns among some members of the church. The plan is to continue to educate, educate, educate.

Judy Rae noted that the first tiny house village in Seattle was started next to a Lutheran Church and they have expressed willingness to come and share their experience.

Kurt added that the outlook is good for funding this housing project. The legislature has opened opportunities for funding, added funding, and has made homeless housing projects a priority.

Navigation Center

There is a lot of work happening in the background to keep moving this project forward. Doug Washburn, Kitsap County Human Services, has been talking to each of the mayors and commissioners about finding a location. The ideal site would allow for a 75 bed shelter close to transit, services, and resources. The land could be leased or purchased, but there have not been any conversations yet about fund raising. The need for this project has been acknowledged by the Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Coalition, and this leadership group, but there will need to be a lot of work to do community will-building.

Affordable Housing Needs Assessment Study

Kirsten updated the group about a joint project between the Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and the City of Bremerton. This study will assess the current housing situation across all county jurisdictions, determine current needs, and provide projections of future needs. It will include recommendations for steps that can be taken to make changes on a policy level. EcoNorthwest has been selected as the consultant to do the study. They have done work for Skagit County and with the City of Bainbridge Island. Once the report is completed, public presentations will be made, and the report will be made available to the public.

Housing Stability Coordinator

There is a position open in the Housing and Homelessness Division for a Youth Housing Stability Coordinator. The position was created through the efforts of the Youth Homelessness Working Group and the University of Washington. The position will be hired in the Housing and Homelessness Division but will spend most of their time in the Juvenile Court. The goal of this position is to help youth that are involved in the Juvenile Court and who are housing insecure, unstable, or homeless.

Closing Comments

Thank you to everyone who has attended and special thanks to the Salvation Army for use of this meeting room and the wonderful food.

Next Meetings: 9 a.m. at the Salvation Army
June 11
July 9

Meeting Participants

Cathy Brorson	Kitsap Credit Union
Connie Syapin	League of Women Voters
Cory Derenburger	Kitsap County Human Services
Jim Jimmy	Kitsap Public Health District
Joe Roszak	Kitsap Mental Health Services
John Hayes Larson	Habitat for Humanity
Judy-Rae Karlsen	Kitsap County
Kirsten Jewell	Kitsap County Human Services
Kurt Wiest	Bremerton Housing Authority
Lorraine Ralston	US Census
Randy Spitzer	Citizen
Roland Arper	Project Share
Scott Ramsey	Salvation Army

Theresa Deno	Citizen
Tim Blair	Project Share
Tom Pinkham	Developer / Builder
Yvonne Brown	Peninsula Community Health Services