

# REGIONAL HOUSING COUNCIL

Thursday February 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes

## **ATTENDEES:**

Lacey: Carolyn Cox, Kelly Adams, Rick Walk, Scott Spence

Tumwater: Michael Althaus, Joan Cathey, Brad Medrud, John Doan

Olympia: Jim Cooper, Keith Stahley, Cary Retlin

Thurston County: Carolina Mejia, Ramiro Chavez, Schelli Slaughter, Tom Webster, Keylee Marineau, Jacinda Steltjes

South County: JW Foster

Public: No speakers

Meeting began at 4:30 pm.

**Agenda Item 1:** Agenda approved

**Agenda Item 2:** Public Comment, none

**Agenda Item 3:** Minutes from January: Motion and second, all approved.

### **Agenda Item 4: Vote for Chair and Vice-Chair**

Jim acknowledged that the final ILA is signed. This election term will start in February for 12 months, so future elections will be after any new Council and Commission positions are filled.

Jim Cooper nominated for Chair. No other nominations. All approved, Jim Cooper will be Chair for 2021.

Reminder that chair or Vice Chair needs to be a representative from the Fiscal Agent.

Vote to approve Carolina Mejia as Vice Chair, all approve, Vice Chair for 2021 will be Commissioner Mejia.

### **Agenda Item 5: RHC ILA Amendment- add 1406 Language**

Tom gave an update on the ILA, the plan is to amend the ILA to add the 1406 allocation. RHC had planned to have a separate ILA for the 1406 funds, however the legal opinion is to incorporate 1406 into the existing ILA. A revised ILA is included in meeting packet. Legal counsel from each jurisdiction have reviewed the revised language. Scott Spence raised a concern about the County Commissioners having final decision-making authority over 1406 funds. He recommended that the 1406 funds be treated similarly to the Human Services Fund. Ramiro clarified that the County is the fiduciary agent and that the ILA original language addresses that, the Board cannot delegate funding decisions as the fiduciary agent. Following additional discussion, it was recommended to have managers and tech team discuss and bring solution/recommendation back to RHC.

### **Agenda Item 6: RFP**

Tom gave an update on the RFP: the Funding Team met last week to discuss and review the RFP recommendations. Goal for the RHC is to review the recommendations from the Funding Team and get any final decisions and comments.

HSF Fund: 2019 tax revenue, \$272K to award, to support basic needs activities.

Affordable Housing and Homeless Services RFP: includes state CHG and HEN and 2163 dollars. Tom reviewed Funding priorities as recommended by the HAT and RHC Funding Team, for uncommitted funds. Committed funds include set asides for Coordinated Entry, Housing Basic Needs, Cold and Hazardous Weather shelters, and new this year is a 5% allocation to By and For Organizations. Not included in the RFP are funds for the Point in Time Count, Emergency Fund, and a Consultant for Racial Equity Technical Assistance.

Tom asked Commissioner Mejia to share her proposal to add an additional set-aside. Commissioner Mejia requested a set aside for senior assistance for \$100K, to assist low income and houseless seniors. Michael asked for definition of Set-aside, for example if they set aside \$100K but do not get a satisfactory request for the \$100K, do they have to award it? Tom clarified that agencies would apply for these set-asides that are included in the RFP, but language in the RFP states that the County is not obligated to award these funds if no qualifying application is received. Tom clarified that adding the Senior Set aside reduces the total of uncommitted funds available by \$100K.

Tom gave a brief overview of 2163 fund balance, including projections vs actual for 2020, collections are much higher than what they projected, have roughly \$1.5M in additional 2163 funds. Tom asked if RHC wants to allocate all of the available funds this year, or if they want to reserve some of the funds for an RHC identified project. After discussion, RHC members agreed on option 2 to hold onto some funds for an RHC project. Tom clarified that they can choose to award more when they finalize awards in May. He also clarified that the \$3M does include the set-aside, and the intention is these will be 2-year awards.

For Affordable Housing Capital projects, we will have around \$1.4M to award. The Pipeline typically identifies 2 projects, with formal applications submitted in the funding year. There is one open space for a new capital project. Tom gave an overview of the priorities developed by the Affordable Housing Team and Housing Action Team. Also have a Request for Information for Capital 2024 projects.

The Review Team will review application and score them, and make recommendations to the RHC funding group, then bring their recommendations to the full RHC. One change in scoring proposed by the Funding group is to increase the score for supporting vulnerable and historically disadvantaged populations. For the RFI scoring, RHC discussed scoring for number of units created, leverage, strength of development team for 2024 pipeline projects.

HSF and Housing Basic Needs applications will be reviewed and scored by the elected members of the RHC Funding Group. For Homeless services and capital projects, a Review Team made up of staff from jurisdictions and TRPC will review and score applications.

Questions: why do elected officials score two types of applications? Answer: The HHSC wanted to take on that role, it is a carryover from the CIP and HHSC review process. Carolyn added that the HSF are local funds, so as the representatives from the jurisdictions, they felt they should decide how it is spent. Joan adds that they had a few years where they did have outside reviewers but to avoid any conflict of interest with reviewers, they decided that electeds should review these applications. Question about

making HSF and Cold/Hazardous weather 2-year grants so the RFP process happens every other year. Tom added that planning for cold weather is linked to opening of 2828 Martin Way, and it is unknown if that shelter will be open next winter, but they do hope to move this to a 2-year award in the future.

Motion to approve as presented with modification to add the \$100K for senior projects, and option 2 for additional 2163 funds, moved and second, all approved.

#### **Agenda Item 7: Safe Parking Update**

Keith gave an update, the County and City and tech team are looking to start a scattered site program in place of safe parking program. Focusing on site management with more garbage collection, sanitation services, working with LOTT to take the RV waste, enhancing case management.

#### **Agenda Item 8: Communication Planning**

Recently staff have seen social media conversations indicating that the general public does not know what the County and Cities are doing regarding homelessness. Staff is working to develop a plan to communicate to numerous outlets what the County and the Cities are doing. Could they add more information to ILA Press Release? Working on revising that draft and will circulate to the RHC. Information would focus on things that have happened or are happening currently.

#### **Agenda Item 9: Good of the Order**

Schelli gave an update, vaccine supply is limiting the ability to provide vaccine to houseless population, but County hopes that future weeks will have increased vaccine supply. Discussion followed regarding vaccine supply and how residents due for a 2<sup>nd</sup> dose are notified.

Keith gave an update on Community Solutions.

Keylee gave an update on the February Hazardous Weather event: First Christian added extra beds and St Mike's sheltered roughly 22 – 24 people. City of Olympia's Olympia Center opened a warming center. PiPE put out extra cold weather supplies to encampments.

Homeless Housing Hub is hosting the annual Homeless Housing Award, will be honoring every shelter and outreach agency for their work in the last year. St Mike's Parish will be receiving the Anna Schlecht legacy award.

Lacey's Open House on Homelessness is open for anyone to provide comments or feedback.

Future Meeting proposed change day and time, survey has identified the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month from 4 – 5:30 as an alternate meeting day and time.

#### **Agenda Item 10: Upcoming Meetings**

Meeting Adjourned: 6:00 pm

Next Meeting: March 18, 2021, 4:30 pm