

# REGIONAL HOUSING COUNCIL

Wednesday April 27th, 2022 Meeting Minutes

## **ATTENDEES:**

Lacey: Carolyn Cox, Andy Ryder, Kelly Adams, Rick Walk

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

Olympia: Jim Cooper, Dani Madrone, Keith Stahley, Darian Lightfoot

Thurston County: Carolina Mejia, Ramiro Chavez, Keylee Marineau, Tom Webster, Arielle Benson, Jacinda Steltjes

South County: Brian Hess

Public: Kirsten York, Tamra Donohue

Meeting began at 4:00 pm.

**Agenda Item 1:** Agenda approved, motion and second

**Agenda Item 2:** Public Comment

Kirsten York, CEO of Community Action Council of Lewies, Mason, and Thurston Counties. Kirsten gave an overview of CAC programs currently under review for funding with the RHC, including Rapid Rehousing and Housing Essential Needs funding through CHG. Kirsten outlined the number of clients served, process, and number of years CAC has been providing these services.

**Agenda Item 3:** Minutes from April 13 meeting, motion and second, approved

**Agenda Item 4: 2021- 2022 Contracts report**

Tom gave an overview. In the 2021 RFP process, a series of contracts were awarded as 2-year awards. Contracts are written as 1-year contracts with a second year renewal clause. Renewal is based on performance as well as sufficient funds available. This item is for RHC to review these contracts and vote on renewal. The RHC Funding Group met last week to review these contracts and has forwarded a recommendation. First set of contracts for review is CHG contracts, then the 2163 contracts. These two sets of contracts are recommended at the same funding level as 2021. For the third set, the Basic Needs contracts, there is an increase in total funding proposed to be split between existing contracts, so those contract amounts are slightly higher than the 2021 award amount.

Reports from these agencies are included in meeting packet, with information on progress, challenges, and spending level. A few agencies are having staffing challenges and are therefore below expected spending levels, the RHC funding workgroup determined that these agencies are improving and have a plan for increased spending. The RHC Funding Group has recommended a second year funding for all of these contracts.

Councilmember Cooper asked about the County's confidence in their ability to move this list forward given the current circumstances with the County and one of the agencies. County Manager Chavez suggested that the RHC make 2 motions for the CHG contracts, one with the Family Support Center and

Interfaith contracts, and one with the CAC contracts, to allow Commissioner Mejia to make separate actions.

HSF contracts: motion and second to approve as proposed. All in favor, motion passed.

2163 contracts: motion and second to approve as presented. All in favor, motion passed.

CHG contracts: motion and second to approve CHG/HEN awards to Family Support Center and Interfaith Works as presented. All in favor, motion passed.

CHG contracts, CHG/HEN CAC contracts: motion and second to approve CHG/HEN awards to CAC as presented. 3 in favor, 1 abstention, motion passed.

County Manager Chavez thanked the RHC for these motions, and added that the BoCC may consider awarding the CAC contracts with additional conditions.

### **Agenda Item 5: Point In Time Report**

Arielle gave a preliminary results report for the Point In Time Count for the night of February 4<sup>th</sup> 2022. The two page report was included in the agenda packet. They completed a seven day count using surveys completed through the outreach community. Counted 416 unsheltered individuals, 294 were staying in Emergency Shelter, 56 individuals in Transitional Housing, for a total of 766 individuals. They are in the middle of the de-duplication process to ensure each individual is counted once. Health conditions continue to be highly identified in the population, with mental health being the number one condition (over 40% of respondents) and chronic health condition a close second. On the night of the 24<sup>th</sup> the majority of people were sleeping unsheltered outside in tents or under awnings, or in vehicles. Where do people identify as their last physical address? 72% were from Thurston County, 13% from neighboring counties, 11% from other WA counties. Question from Councilmember Hess, were some of these people surveyed in Yelm? Yes 56 respondents were surveyed by Love Abounds Here and are staying in Yelm currently.

Methods of PIT has changed in recent years, in 2021 due to Covid there were no surveys, just an observation-only count. The final report should be complete in the next few weeks. Councilmember Althausler asked for more information on the Homestead vehicle distinction. The Point in Time count aims to capture all experiencing homelessness, including living in vehicles. They counted 86 recreational vehicles but it is not determined how many people are in each vehicle. Councilmember Althausler asked about the future of PIT methodology so that data is comparable across years. This year's methodology was very similar to 2020, but missing the events they had in 2020, and events draw in more participants. Discussion follows regarding methodology, HUD methods and changes, Balance of State consistency across the state, and large changes in methodology in 2021 and 2022 due to Covid.

### **Agenda Item 6: Ensign Road Discussion**

Tom gave an introduction, this discussion is to recognize the pressure on Ensign Road and to be less reactive regarding a likely action taken before Franz Anderson is ready to accept vehicles. Idea is to make sure all jurisdictions are communicating and aware about possible actions. Keith added that each time there is a shooting/violence on Ensign, the pressure to move becomes greater. The hospital is impacted by Ensign continuously, the ER had to be closed last week due to a shooting. Franz Anderson is months away from being able to move people there. Operating Franz Anderson is anticipated to cost at

least \$1M a year, all jurisdictions will need to find a way to make that happen. County funding for garbage pick up is running out, and Olympia does not have the funds available to continue garbage service. Chair Cox asked for Olympia to communicate with other jurisdictions any timeline for changes at Ensign. Councilmember Hess asked about garbage, as this is a top concern for residents. Discussion follows regarding costs of dumpster service, cleaning up in state right of way including along Wheeler, cost of cleanup.

Keylee asked about centering the conversation on what can the RHC do in advance of a likely coming Ensign Rd sweep, to avoid similar situation to the Deschutes sweep. Councilmember Madrone adds agreement with Keylee, Olympia will need help from other jurisdictions. Property bordering Ensign is owned by Providence, and Providence is looking into how to develop that property for Permanent Supportive Housing. Discussion follows regarding how to proceed: return item to RHC agenda, Technical Team work to be done, and electeds need to communicate to their staff about what each jurisdiction can do, keeping in mind this is a political topic. Councilmember Althaus suggested that jurisdictions beyond Olympia and the County might discuss within their management what they can offer as assistance for Franz Anderson. Keylee added that this type of situation can hopefully be discussed and resolved at the retreat. Councilmember Cooper added that Olympia has continued to declare an emergency as they have each year since 2018, and would like to see other jurisdictions acting like this is an emergency, at a minimum they need to review the parking policies and come up with a consistent standard of enforcement.

#### **Agenda Item 7: Technical Team Working Group updates**

Tom gave an update on the Home fund, discussions between Olympia and the County continue regarding the ILA.

Hotel acquisition, there will be a meeting between Lacey and the County in early May.

Property Acquisition update on Franz Anderson was covered in Ensign Rd discussion.

Scattered Site update, contracts are set to expire on June 30<sup>th</sup>, with Olympia and OlyMAP. OlyMAP may be able to extend through July depending on funding availability. This contract is not part of the renewed contracts above, this was a special contract that used funds from the 2163 fund balances.

The Anchor Community Initiative is working on Youth and Young adult homelessness, this process is happening at the same time as the Built for Zero process. A goal is to develop a by name list, which is challenging with a system that has 3 points of entry for the HMIS system. The by name list is essential to ensure that they have quality data to reach functional zero.

#### **Agenda Item 8: Rent Assistance Update**

County is working with Livestories, they have about 1,000 applications to transfer over to Livestories, where applications need to be entered and updated into the Livestories database and system. They are working to increase capacity. Livestories will begin taking new applications from the public on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### **Agenda Item 9: RHC and HAT Retreat Update**

Darian gave an update, they met with consultants to set the agenda, expect to send agenda out on Friday. Day one is at Lacey Community Center, Day 2 is at Olympia City Hall. City of Lacey plans to

provide some snacks for day 1. There will be a conference phone for people to call in to for the Lacey locations, and there will be a Zoom link available for the Olympia location. Question on if the May 11<sup>th</sup> RHC meeting can be cancelled. No because the RFP recommendations need to go to the RHC on the 11<sup>th</sup> for new 2022 contract awards.

**Agenda Item 10: Good of the Order**

Councilmember Hess added that he looks forward to the retreat, gathering information from other RHC members, and sharing information on what others have learned about homeless encampments, and how the Yelm area can prepare for this issue.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:50 pm

Next Meeting: May 11th, 4:00 pm