

# REGIONAL HOUSING COUNCIL

Wednesday March 23rd, 2022 Meeting Minutes

## **ATTENDEES:**

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

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

Olympia: Jim Cooper, Keith Stahley

Thurston County: Carolina Mejia, Ramiro Chavez, Keylee Marineau, Tom Webster, Jacinda Steltjes, Elisa Sparkman, Meghan Porter

South County: Brian Hess

Public: None

Meeting began at 4:00 pm.

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

**Agenda Item 2:** Public Comment- None

**Agenda Item 3:** Minutes from February, motion and second, approved

## **Agenda Item 4: 1277 Funding Recommendation**

Tom gave some background, in October a 1277 fund RFP was issued for Rapid Rehousing and hotel programs. They received 6 applications and all 6 were awarded funds, some awardees did not receive their full request. The BoCC approved the contracts. Prior to execution of the contract, the BoCC directed staff to reallocate funds from the CAC award. Therefore, staff is returning to the RHC for direction on how they would like to reallocate \$100,000 of 1277 funds. This has not been brought to the funding work group yet, the RHC could direct staff to bring this item to the Funding Workgroup prior to making a recommendation.

Councilmember Hess asked for feedback on how effective the hotel program has been so far, did clients get needed services to move on from hotel? At this point, these activities have just begun, contracts were signed in February, therefore no progress reports yet. Keylee added an update from OlyMAP, they took over some of the hotel stays that were a result of some camps being cleared in December. About 6 – 8 people have been moved into housing recently from these hotels.

Chair Cox asked for a bit of background on why the contract with CAC was pulled, and information on how their activities will be taken on by other organizations? County Manager Chavez responded, he cannot provide specifics on the CAC contract, however Tom is able to give an update on the replacement agency for rent assistance. Discussion followed regarding eligible use of the funds, option to hold the \$100,000 and allocate later. Councilmember Cooper asked if there is another applicant that has a similar scope to the CAC project? Some are similar but more specific populations served compared to CAC. Councilmember Althaus confirmed that the RHC is not voting to take funds away, the RHC role is to vote on what to do with the \$100,000. Tom confirmed this is accurate. Councilmember Althaus asked to clarify if awarding more hotel funds now would result in additional people getting a hotel room

sooner? Discussion followed regarding the current funding awards and benefits of awarded now versus later. Councilmember Althaus proposed funding a 50/50 split between Family Support Center and OlyMAP. Councilmember Hess added that 50/50 may not be appropriate, better to do a percentage based on total request. Discussion follows regarding need in the populations, as well as knowing additional funding will be available in the coming months.

Motion: Councilmember Cooper moved to reallocate the \$100,000 of 1277 funds, \$50,000 to FSC and \$50,000 to OlyMAP, second from Councilmember Althaus. Councilmember Hess amended motion to \$65,000 to OlyMAP and \$35,000 to FSC. Councilmember Althaus commented on how the funding serves people now, the additional funds to FSC now means they can provide more service throughout the duration, funding for OlyMAP would add more services later. Chair Cox asked if there is a second on the amended motion. No second. Vote on original motion: all in favor. Motion passed.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Treasury Rental Assistance Update**

The County has executed a contract with Livestories, they provide similar services for Spokane, Skagit. Staff is working with Livestories to get the program running, focusing on prioritizing approved clients. Also working with 5 local agencies to assist Livestories this includes FSC, Senior Services of South Sound, CIELO, Innovation Human Trafficking Collaborative, and Safeplace. CAC has been providing information on existing clients to facilitate the transition. Councilmember Cooper asked about mechanism to prevent eviction for people approved for funding. They are working with landlords and Dispute Resolution Center. Discussion followed regarding the importance of minimizing harm related to this change. Tom added they have also reached out to jurisdiction utilities regarding pausing utility shut offs.

Councilmember Althaus asked if landlords have rejected any payments as invalid? Staff has heard this does happen occasionally, hesitancy seems to be linked to the terms that come with the funds around not raising rent for a period of time after payment.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Technical Team Working Group Update**

Home Fund update from Tom, developing an ILA for merging the City and County Home Fund. Keith added they have started drafting an ILA, expect feedback from the City and will set a meeting soon.

Hotel Acquisition update from Scott Spence, the next steps are to find a service model that will work and a provider for services. Need to identify a non-profit that has capacity for large number of units.

Property acquisition update, Keith gave an update. The City and County acquired the Franz Anderson property in March. In the development process right now. Timing for next steps include hiring a consultant for design work, anticipate first part of 2023 before have a useable facility. Councilmember Cooper asked if the funding group is considering the needed funding for this property development. The funding group has not met, they are waiting on guidance from Commerce on what will be eligible uses of 1277 funds, also the Home Fund ILA will impact funding availability. Councilmember Althaus asked about new State funds for acquisition and capital, any possibility to access new state funding sources.

Keylee gave an update on the Scattered Site Pilot project. This is a vital program that they are getting a lot of good information from, there are not any funds currently designated to continue this project after June. Pilot was funded from 2163 fund balance, this year they are seeing decreases in 2163 revenue so there is not a fund balance to continue funding this project.

Keylee gave an update on Built for Zero, they are nearing the end of first 6 months of the process. Topics being developed/discussed: identifying if there is adequate coverage/services for homeless population, HMIS data assessment, vulnerability index, provider meetings, developing outreach policy.

#### **Agenda Item 7: HAT and RHC Retreat Update**

Two dates in May have been set for the retreat, with one of the dates intended for HAT members to attend. Keylee added that they have a scope of work with the consultant, and have added more interviews. Two locations are identified, the Lacey Community Center and the Olympia City Hall Council Chambers. Working on a hybrid model to accommodate those who would like to attend remotely. Have not started to develop discussion topics yet, topics will be developed from the Interviews. Carolyn asked for RHC members to provide any important agenda topics for the retreat. Councilmember Hess asked for a topic on how to stop people from becoming homeless. Councilmember Cooper added two topics: 1) how to structure the RHC and HAT going forward, and 2) how to implement the jurisdiction's affordable housing plans. Discussion follows regarding the hybrid model, request to have any jurisdiction representatives let staff know if they will be attending remotely to make sure adequate accommodations are made.

#### **Agenda Item 8: RHC Revised Meeting Schedule**

Reminder that the next meeting will be on April 13, 2022 at 4pm. This will be a one hour meeting to address time sensitive issues, there will not be technical team updates or public comment. Request to discuss an option for virtual monthly meetings to continue, or move to in person meetings? Consensus is to keep meetings virtual, suggested that quarterly do one in person meeting.

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

Councilmember Hess: Yelm is working on water rights, and they are also discussing mixed-unit developments. Keith suggested Yelm can get information on these developments from Olympia staff.

Councilmember Cooper asked Keylee for information on the Homeless Hero Award at the HHH, can Keylee share the link for the meeting? Keith added that Olympia is discussing and reviewing proposals for the Boulevard Rd property, they received 10 proposals with a range of housing types.

Councilmember Althaus added that Tumwater reallocated some CDBG funds to Habitat for Humanity. They are also working on tenant protections, and housing stability policies.

Keylee added that staff would like to add a review of the HCRP on a regular basis with the RHC.

Carolyn gave an update for Lacey, she will share a presentation from Land Use and Environment with the RHC, summarizes incentives and affordable housing units being developed. Carolyn recently met with ORCA regarding air pollution generated by homeless camps, such as burning of substances that have impacted local air quality. Councilmember Cooper added that houseless population does not come near to other entities that contribute to air quality. The best solution would be to get safe heating option in place for houseless that is not a campfire. Scott added that they just finalized an agreement with Homesfirst for single home acquisition for low income housing.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:55 pm

Next Meeting: April 13th, 4:00 pm