

REGIONAL HOUSING COUNCIL

Wednesday, August 23rd, 2023 – Meeting Minutes

PANELISTS:

Lacey: Carolyn Cox, Jennifer Adams

Tumwater: Joan Cathey, Brad Medrud

Olympia: Dani Madrone, Darian Lightfoot, Jacinda Steltjes, Clark Gilman, Rich Hoey

Yelm: Gary Cooper

Thurston County: Carolina Mejia, Ramiro Chavez, Tom Webster, Keylee Marineau, Elisa Sparkman, Leah Tangeman

Affordable Housing Advisory Board: Talauna Reed

Meeting began at 4:00 pm.

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

Agenda Item 2: Minutes from June 28th meeting, motion and second, approved.

Agenda Item 3: Public Comment – No Public Comment

Agenda Item 4: Quince Street Village Funding Presentation

Darian gave a presentation on the Quince Street Village Tiny Home site. The presentation described the history of the Tiny Home Village, the specifics of the site, the criteria used to determine who can reside at the Village, the unit size comparison to other tiny home villages, and a breakdown of the operating budget. The Village is operated by Catholic Community Services 24 hours a day, beginning in 2019. The Village has 100 Tiny Homes, 6 bathrooms, 6 showers, washers, dryers and 2 full time Case Managers. The operation cost of the Village is approximately 1.3 million dollars and includes services such as 24/7 Village Operations (including safety and security), Case Management, site/facility maintenance and repair, community engagement, and administration. The city expanded the site in 2022 and was able to move individuals occupied on Ensign Road to Quince Street Village.

Rich Hoey, Assistant City Manager for Olympia, said that he is attending the RHC meeting this month to bring the City of Olympia's funding request to the RHC. Rich highlighted that Quince Street Village is an important emergency shelter for unhoused individuals in Thurston County and is one of the largest shelter facilities within the county. He detailed the historical context of Ensign Road at a high level. Rich said there was recognition that this was a regional challenge and not one for Olympia to address alone. The city anticipated 1.2 million dollars in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars to support the operation of the Tiny Home Village. Rich asked on behalf of the City of Olympia for a recommendation from the RHC to the Thurston County Commissioners to allocate \$600,000 ARPA funds to operate Quince Street Village.

County Manager Ramiro Chavez responded by stating that there was not a supplemental agreement that addressed that the ARPA set aside funds for Franz Anderson would be moved to Quince Street. Further, he said he was not a part of conversations around the move to Quince Street and

recommended that the City of Olympia bring this conversation to the RHC to discuss sustainability options for operating the site. He does not believe it's appropriate for the RHC to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) how to allocate its APRA funds.

Dani Madrone responded that although the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) was initially intended to be for Franz Anderson, the intent is clear that Ensign Road was a regional problem and that the city and county were going to work together to create a solution and share costs.

Carolina stated there are up to \$600,000 of ARPA funds that the County may be able to allocate to Quince Street and that County Commissioners have had discussions around the use of these funds. Before the County would move forward with making a funding decision, she asked that a long-term funding plan be put into place.

The RHC requested that the RHC Tech Team add to the RHC Annual Workplan the task of developing a long-term funding plan for the Quince Street tiny home village.

Agenda Item 5: Affordable Housing Advisory Board Recommendations

The Chair of the Thurston Affordable Housing Advisory Board (TAHAB), Talauna Reed, presented the funding recommendations from the TAHAB. Talauna began by thanking the RHC in engaging the community in this process and emphasized that the TAHAB is one of the most diverse boards that she has served. She shared about the process of selecting applicants for the 2023 Capital Affordable Housing Projects. On May 24th, 2023, the RHC approved issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) for 5.5 million dollars in funding from multiple funding sources. The RFP was issued on June 9th, 2023, and applications were due July 20th, 2023. There were 17 total applications requesting approximately 14.6 million dollars. Staff determined that 2 applications were ineligible resulting in 15 applications that were reviewed and scored. Talauna stated that the advisory board did not take this task lightly and took two weeks to individually review and score the applications through a lens of equity. They met on August 17th to make recommendations. Four of the members on the board were associated with organizations that submitted applications so to ensure there were no conflicts of interests, those members scored applications other than their own and did not participate in the August 17th meeting. The list of recommendations from the TAHAB, including details of the projects, was included in the agenda packet.

Dani made a motion to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners the funding recommendations that were made by the Affordable Housing Advisory Board, Joan seconded, unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 6: Homeless Services Advisory Board Recommendations

Keylee presented the funding recommendations from the Homeless Services Advisory Board (HSAB). The HSAB has two recommendations. The first recommendation is regarding the Lived Experience Housing Steering Committee (LEHSC). Within the 2023 Consolidated RFP the RHC included a set aside of \$50,000 for an agency to apply to become the new facilitators of this group ongoing, taking over from the current consultants who stood up the HSAB. Two applications were submitted – Partners in Prevention Education (PiPE) and Interfaith Works. The two organizations were very close in score. PiPE scored 83 and Interfaith Works scored 87. The HSAB recommended that Interfaith Works receive the contract and the RHC approved the recommendation. However, Interfaith Works ultimately determined they do not have the capacity to move forward with the contract. The HSAB met with PiPE to determine if they had

the capacity to facilitate the LEHSC before making a recommendation. The board unanimously approved the recommendation for PiPE to move forward with the contract.

Carolyn made a motion to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners to award the new contract to Partners in Prevention Education, Dani seconded, unanimously approved.

The second recommendation is regarding the Housing Basic Needs (HBN) funds. The HSAB recommended that SideWalk receive \$40,000 in HBN to provide diversion services to single adults experiencing homelessness or on the verge of experiencing homelessness within Thurston County. On August 2nd, the Office of Housing and Homeless Prevention (OHHP) received an informal notice that SideWalk would no longer be in operation. After formal notice, the HSAB deliberated on how to distribute the HBN funding. The HSAB passed a motion to award the \$40,000 to Family Support Center with the stipulation that they distribute the funds in the spirit of the scope that it was written for SideWalk, which is single adults.

Dani made a motion to approve the recommendation to award Family Support Center with \$40,000 of the 2163 funds for diversion activities to honor the scope of the original award for SideWalk, Joan seconded, unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 7: RHC Annual Workplan

Tom presented the final draft of the RHC Annual Workplan. The draft RHC Annual Workplan was presented in June and the RHC Technical Team has modified the plan according to the feedback that was given during the June RHC meeting. Tom mentioned adding a Quince Street Long Term Funding Strategy to the workplan, but substantially, there are no new activities that have been added from what was discussed in June. The board gave positive feedback and approval of the final draft of the workplan.

Agenda Item 8: Communications Update

Elisa Sparkman gave a brief communications update. Elisa stated that in the past, an announcement was made once funding requests were approved by the BoCC. Recently, there have been request within the jurisdictions to provide more information during each process. Since the TAHAB funding recommendations were accepted and will be moving forward, there will be an announcement made from the RHC that explains what Talauna presented, including the lists of recommendations for funding, and announces that it will be recommended to the BoCC on September 12th, 2023. This announcement will be sent out to an email list and posted on the Thurston County Public Health and Social Services website and social media platforms. Next week, there will be a news release for the opening of Franz Anderson Tiny Home Village. She is working with Darian Lightfoot and expects it to be released on Wednesday, August 30th, 2023.

Agenda Item 9: Good of the Order

Olympia: Dani updated that last week, the Olympia City Council had a study session on a Rental Housing Registry, which is something that is going to be coming forward as a business item sometime in November for the Olympia City Council. It looks at registering rental homes in our community and incorporates an inspection component to make sure that they are preserving the housing stock that they have.

Tumwater: Joan updated that they are excited about a new project with the Housing Authority of Thurston County for seniors on Capitol Boulevard. Brad thanked the RHC for the funding

recommendations for two projects in Tumwater – the Habitat for Humanity Project and the Sequoia North Project.

Thurston County: No Update

Yelm: Gary announced they are excited about a Habitat for Humanity project set to be presented to the City Hearings Examiner on September 20th, 2023, for a residential development townhome community designed for the 30-50% AMI community.

Lacey: Carolyn announced that the Lacey City Council approved a \$50,000 mediation contract with Dispute Resolution Center which will be available for renters and landlords.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:52 pm

Next Meeting: September 27th, 2023, 4:00 pm via Zoom