

**MASON COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
HOUSING AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH BOARD**

415 N 6th STREET, SHELTON, WA 98584

Zoom Meeting held

**Regular Meeting Minutes
May 24th, 2023**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Commissioner Shutty

2. ROLL CALL:

Board Members:

- Kevin Shutty, BOCC
- Beau Bakken, Citizen
- Peggy VanBuskirk, MC Board of Health
- Eric Onisko, Mayor City of Shelton
- Mark Freedman, BH Administrative Service Organization (ASO)

Staff Members:

- Todd Parker, MC Public Health
- Melissa Casey, MC Public Health
- Haley Foelsch, MC Public Health
- Cheryl Craig, MC Public Health
- Jamie Ellertsen, MC Public Health

Guests/Public:

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

Approval of the agenda was postponed as there was no quorum at the beginning of the session. When a quorum did assemble in the meeting, they revised the minutes approval but not the agenda.

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

Motion was made by Beau Bakken and seconded by Peggy Vanbuskirk to approve the regular minutes from January (amended), March & April 2023. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Meeting Topics:

a. RFP Scoring Discussion & Funding Recommendations:

Todd Parker spoke and reviewed the RFP scores with the group via PowerPoint presentation. 100% of the board members were able to score so that is great as it helps in monitoring via how high or low a score ranked. For example, a lower score may mean that we monitor sooner, like in the first 1-3 months versus monitoring at the 6-9-month mark on a higher scoring RFP. Eviction prevention funds posed a little less than what commerce predicted. It is creating a bigger difference than what expected,

we were in the negative anyway and now it's just a larger amount. Eviction prevention, emergency shelter and diversion/coordinated entry/care coordination are the biggest categories to focus on as a group as there are deficits in these three categories.

Kevin asked if Todd could compare some of the financial numbers to what was requested and funded last time RFP's were reviewed and awarded. Todd explained that we configured it a little differently this time, as last time was more open-ended, each agency had a specific role they played but that was 4 years ago and there has been a lot of change, so it is hard to compare an exact before and after. Todd explained he can still compare a little bit though, like centralized permanent housing is posing a typical ask of \$400k, and last year there was a lot of funding for rapid rehousing through the pandemic, so we don't exactly have the same pot this year. Quixote is seeking assistance to fund employees there at the veteran's village, I am unsure if they are splitting funding between Thurston-Mason or if their person is going to split time between the two, I didn't really pick up on that detail in their RFP. Kevin said there is capacity in that fund for both of those requests so that's good.

Progressing through the presentation, Eric asked in the central permanent housing category if there was enough to fund those asks. Are we going to have to look to cut eviction prevention and emergency shelter? Todd confirmed that some percentages will have to change. Peggy asked, can we do a percentage down depending on scores? Crossroads score was not as high as the Youth Connection, can we do a percentage down on each of them to make it come out right? Kevin said, I think that's probably what we are going to have to do. Crossroads ask is more than we could grant out in that whole program together. Eric asked if we know what the Youth Connection got last year, and Todd explained that it is harder to track as eviction prevention has gone through many iterations, and there was more money in the past due to different funds. What we are working with now is kind of what is set going forward, we can access some of this money in the last 6 months or so, but this is the first time really contracting this forward as a permanent eviction program. Kevin asked if there are caps on how much an individual can receive on these programs and included that if there are caps it would pose another way to break down the available resources to see how many people the available funds may serve. Todd said there is not a cap on how many times they can access, but a prioritization has been set up for new or first-time applicants to have prioritized access. If we look at rent, \$1,500-\$1,700 a month, that will only serve so many households. Haley, if you'd like to jump in, what is the average household need for Crossroads? Haley replied that Crossroads is a little higher, around \$2,000 per household, and Youth Connection is on the lower side, and for families we see around double that (\$4,000/mo). The Youth Connection focuses on the under 25 age group so there aren't as many and that's one of the reasons their asks are proportionately different, says Todd. The Youth Connection and Crossroads Housing awards were agreed upon by the group. Peggy asked for a refresher on the Crossroads capacity of the onsite versus the scattered site. Todd said that the onsite is 7 units like studio apartments, and the scattered site is a total of 9 units in 3 homes, with each bedroom considered a unit. A reminder, when we set priorities on the annual report from the board to help piece out some of these fundings – we did prioritize the family shelters. We prioritized permanent housing and then emergency shelters for families was the 2nd priority. Turning Pointe is a staff person and help with some others like

utilities and some other things, so it is supplemental while these other things essentially fund the whole shelter. Peggy asked, if we don't fund the on-site, are they still going to be able to do it? Todd said no because this is pretty much 100% funded by this ask. Peggy said that she would like to keep it, and would rather have the on-site housing, but that is just her opinion. Todd said, given that Turning Pointe was the highest scoring, does anyone want to make any adjustments there? The allotted amounts were agreed upon by the group.

The group moved to the Diversion/Coordinated Entry/Care Coordination category. Very similar to eviction prevention, the Youth Connection would be serving the 25 and under community and Crossroads would be serving the 25 and over community. This makes 2 primary access points for coordinated entry, both working together, and both the lead agencies in their subpopulations. Peggy asked if both organizations had funding outside of these asks. Todd said that yes, they have been connected with some supplemental funding, like Pathway program – so there's potential of movement. We can't go so low that you can't fund an employee, for example. Peggy compared the scores and with the Youth Connection having a bit of a higher score in comparison, the group adjusted the financials a bit to make the awards more evenly distributed. With the end results, the group that agreed that the amounts looked reasonable.

In additional comments, Beau asked Todd if he could explain the supplemental process and what happens if additional monies come in after the initial RFP award. He asked if additional monies are distributed through a separate RFP process, or is it given to original applicants that weren't provided awards – what happens when supplemental income comes in? Todd explained that if additional funding were to come in, it would pose for discussion and it depends on the fund source. So, if we had consolidated homeless grant funds for example, we would look at the people who we have already contracted with in that specific scope. For open-ended funding, we would likely do an additional RFP. Beau then asked if applicants were alerted that some funding may change and come along the way and if they would be notified if that did happen. Todd asked, do we want to do a priority ranking if we got additional funding on who we would prioritize first? The group agreed to do this. Kevin suggested that we go with what priorities have been, as the scores go with that as well. Hopefully we have an opportunity to revisit that with more money. Peggy mentioned that this has happened before when they were able to come back with more funds. The group agreed. Beau asked if there are any programs that just cannot get going or if these asks are fair and will keep these programs chugging along. Todd said some of that is difficult to say without having conversations with the agencies because not all agencies disclose other funding on the RFP so that is hard to say. Kevin says this may be an opportunity for discussion once these numbers are agreed to here today.

Eric motioned to approve RFP recommendations to the County Board of Commissioners, seconded by Peggy. Voted, unanimously.

b. Law Enforcement Co-Responder Program Update with Melissa Casey

There has been an ongoing conversation with Mason County Sheriff's Office and Mason County Public Health, along with Olympic Health & Recovery Services. We are excited that as of yesterday our contract between our two entities was improved to implement

a law enforcement co-responder program. OHRS will staff two teams, a crisis clinician, and a peer – they will be able to respond to Behavioral and Mental Health calls and connect people to resources and care that they need on an emergency call. I'm excited about this, the DCR from my understanding will be permanent or at least in the next year I don't know, but the BHR side is going well. July 1st is the start date; we are now hiring for those positions, and it gives us an opportunity to restructure our Navigator program. That role in our program evolved to meet the need that is not being met by existing crisis services. There's been a much bigger need than what we have available to meet that need, we want to enhance and expand our reach instead of duplicating work already in place. Kevin says, this is a great opportunity not only to expand that social safety net but to tighten that safety net so we are losing less people going down a difficult path, having a predictable and stable and reliable response from our crisis team is going to provide quicker access to care and a layer of support for our law enforcement, this is going to work hand in glove in the program OHRS is working on with a designated crisis responder. As our folks are working with MCSO and will help people be placed where they need and get the best care they can get, alignment between Macecom, MCPH, MCSO, is pertinent so we can hit the ground running this Summer and hope to see immediate results. I really support OHRS and MCSO teaming together on this.

c. Community Lifeline Bed Count Update with Melissa Casey

Melissa reviewed the CLL bed count document and said it is consistent, this will be the last month we have the report, 35 beds filled every night except for 2 nights, one with 32 filled and 34. The document will be included in the minutes. Just for clarity, our funding of expanded hours of operation ends at the end of this month, right? asks Kevin. Melissa confirmed this was correct, ending May 31st.

- 7. GOOD OF THE ORDER:** Called by Commissioner Shutt. Beau Bakken asked if there are any updates on the transportation programs that Mason County has had up and running, as it sounds like it's been very beneficial to Mason County. Melissa said that Gethsemane is very much up and running, Paddy Wagon have spent down their budget, we had a meeting yesterday with others willing to cost share a little going forward so we can implement a program. We are on pause with Paddy Wagon as we don't have the funding but, in the meantime, we have been utilizing all others, or what we did before the program. It's been a lot of Mason Transit. The biggest gap at this moment is the very rural areas that are not serviced by Mason Transit Authority so that is something we are looking at. Because it's a pilot program, for the first 2 years we are having our epidemiologist look at the program. We are looking at ways to do things as it looks like a costly program. Even if Mason Transit isn't a formal partner, we have someone who needs daily transport now to a job, I don't think that is appropriate for our program as they are stable now, etc. We want to refer to programs who are ready to handle that aspect. Beau asked, is there a potential in rural areas instead of a bus or dial a ride for any Mason Transit funding sources that would support that program if those efficiencies can be built in? Any dialogue back and forth on that? Melissa replied that we haven't started that dialogue directly with Mason Transit, but that is on my list.
- 8. CLOSURE-** Meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

9. **NEXT MEETING**— June 28th, 2023

DRAFT