

Yakima Valley Homeless Planning & Policy Council Meeting
June 13, 2017

Present: *Lowel Krueger (Yakima Housing Authority) Rhonda Hauff (Yakima Neighborhood Health Services); Janice Gonzales (NCAC); Josh Jackson (Rod's House); Kate Baber (Housing Alliance); David Hacker (Noah Ark); Duane Monick & Neiri Carrasco (UWCW); Stacy Kellogg (People for People 211); Beth Dannhardt (Triumph Treatment); Joan Souders (City of Grandview); Lee Murdock (Self); Brian Ketcham (Catholic Charities); Andrea Reyes (Yakima County); Larry Mattson (YVCOG); Teresa Carlson (DOC); Sara Watkins (City of Yakima); Anita Monoian (YNHS); AL Manza (Entrust); Jason White (Self); Ryan Enright (Landmark); Debra Whitefoot (YNHA); Leah Ward (YNHS); Molly Rosbach (Yakima Herald); Andy Ferguson (TYT)*

Staff: *Chris Wickenhagen, and William Denton*

Call to Order and Introductions Chairman, Lowell Krueger, called the Monday June 13, 2017, Yakima Valley Homeless Planning & Policy Council Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes Minutes were not approved during this meeting due to errors in recorded minutes. Errors to be fixed and brought back to the board for approval.

Public Comment Policy *It is the policy of the YVCOG Homeless Planning and Policy Council to accept public comment on agenda items at the time the item is being discussed. Public comments regarding items not on the agenda will be heard at the end of the meeting.*

The following individuals made statements to the board David Hacker, Janice Gonzales, Rhonda Hauff, Kate Baber, Beth Dannhardt. (see attached for details)

Old Business

End of Inaugural Terms Mr. Mattson discussed the end of the first two year terms for HPPC Board Members. Stated an email will be sent by YVCOG staff too each member that has a term expiring.

Motion made by Ms. Kellogg: To extend term of service of the board chair and Vice Chair until elections and to extend to all 9 members that their terms are ending to extend till but no later than 31 July 2017.

2nd by Joan Souder

Amendment by Brain Ketcham: Limit 2 weeks or until elections

2nd by Duane Monick

Vote: 13 yes and 0 no

Vote: Passed

Joni Canada Group for Stakeholders Nomination

Stacy Kellogg nominated Lowel Krueger

2nd by Rhonda Hauff

Vote: 11 yes 0 no with 2 abstentions (Larry Mattson and Lowel Krueger)

Vote: Passed

Budget

Ms. Wickenhagen stated that one agency is in the process of moving and their invoices are not reflected on the presented budget. Ms. Wickenhagen stated that the chair of the EFSP committee has asked that YVCOG to pay for the advertisement in the paper and a 2% administration fee.

Motion made by Larry Mattson: To approve the 2 % administration fee and the legal document advertisement fee for the EFSP.

2nd by Beth Dannhardt

Vote: 11 yes 0 no with 2 abstentions (Stacy Kellogg and Debra Whitefoot)

Vote: Passed

Ms. Wickenhagen stated that wanted HPPC approval to take forward to the executive board that YNHS be award \$414,000 in HEN funds.

Motion made by Joan: To approve the \$414,000 of HEN funds be awarded to YNHS and there is ample advertising to the lower valley so families know what programs are available.

2nd by Larry Mattson

Vote: 6 yes 7 no with one abstention (Rhonda Hauff)

Motion made by Sara Watkins: Moved to award \$414,000 of HEN funds to YNHS.

2nd by Janice Gonzales

Vote: 12 yes 0 no with 2 abstentions (Rhonda Hauff and Debra Whitefoot)

New Business

Homeless Program Manager's Correspondence

Mr. Denton told the HPPC that all annual HUD reporting deadlines have all been met, to include the PIT, HIC, APR. Mr. Denton stated from his knowledge that the stakeholders report is tentative for release in August.

Coordinated Entry Subcommittee Update

Mr. Denton reported that a Coordinated Entry is on track to meet the July 1st deadline of having Coordinated Entry up and running. Fridays at 930am at YVCOG there will be a Coordinated Entry Meeting.

Yakima Homeless Network

Ms. Murdock stated that the videos for current housing in Yakima housing will be released on Facebook. The networks approvals of articles of incorporation to continue the process of becoming a 501c3.

Lower Valley Homeless Coalition

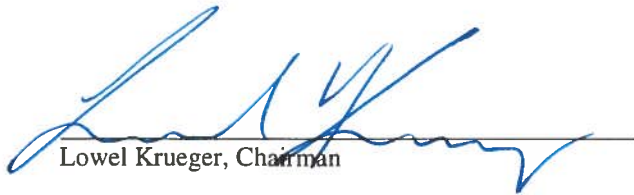
Ms. Souders stated that Entrust has been working on an entry system for the lower valley and that they are going to use their bus to become a mobile food bank or soup kitchen.

Public Comment None.

Announcements None

Adjourn adjourned the meeting at 11:37am.

Respectfully
submitted,



Lowel Krueger, Chairman

Date signed: 5/9/2017

Attest:



William Denton, Homeless Program Coordinator

David

Generating Hope through Noah's Ark has provided shelter to some of the most vulnerable people now for almost 10 years. Every year has been a struggle, to get people to pay attention to us, to fight against all those who would much rather just get rid of the homeless. And now after all these years, here I am having to compete and fight with those who should be our partners in this effort. Every year we have had to fight for dollars to keep the place open, always on the verge of closing, and yet we are still here.

By the end of this our 10th year Noah's Ark will have provided over 90,000 shelter bed nights, served close to 300,000 meals to thousands of people. Just before we opened in 2007 we did lose someone to the heat of the summer, who died on the streets, and we know that the radical hospitality we have provided so faithfully all these years has literally saved lives.

We provide so many services on such an incredibly small budget. Daily people have access to hygiene services, laundry and mail services, transportation to appointments, and case management for long term solutions. A drop in center provides many activities. A resident community manages the daily operations. It is an amazing community of very vulnerable people who are caring for each other.

We have been privileged to be a part of so many stories of recovery. People get clean and sober at the shelter, get critical medical care, access needed benefits, find employment, stable housing and regain their lives. We have also mourned the loss of those, who so many deem "the undeserving poor," who did not escape their disease, who still fell victim to the street.

Over the years we have been a faithful partner with many around this table. We have done our part to advocate for the very funding we are now being denied. 10 years ago with 2060 funds Yakima County invested more than \$200,000 getting Noah's Ark started, investing in needed renovations to the building, fire and sprinkler system, and our first year of operations.

Since then we have not asked for additional funding until recently. Just last year the committee approved a special allocation to help us through the summer. This year we came to you with a solid proposal to adequately fund us, to help us build our capacity, to put us on the path of some stability. But you have turned your backs on us and on years of investment.

And now we are in the same boat as we have been for years, living off the scraps that fall from the table of this bounty, uncertain how we make it from month to month, just like so many of our clients live each day. I wish it were not so. I wish you would reconsider your decision. I wish we would all be better stewards together of these public funds entrusted to us. I wish that we would be a truly collaborative body dedicated to working together to continue to save lives.

The vision of Generating Hope is of a Community Where No One is Homeless, Hungry, Abandoned, or Discarded. We do not want to abandon those we are serving. Though others may abandon us, discard us, we hope that we will still to be here. Please, help us continue to be Generating Hope.

Comments to HPPC

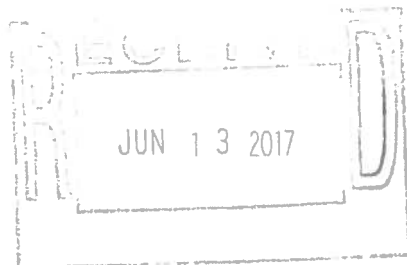
June 13, 2017

By

David Hacker

Executive Director

Generating Hope/Noah's Ark Homeless Shelter



Junice Gonzales

Lluvia Orozco was a homeless 25 year old, single mother. Her only source of income was Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Prior to becoming homeless, Lluvia and her four children, ages six, four, two, and one, lived with her mother along with two other children in her mother's a one bedroom apartment. Eight people were significantly more than the small apartment was designed to accommodate and certainly more than were permitted on Lluvia's mother's lease. Once the landlord discovered this overcrowding situation, he threatened the entire family with eviction. Lluvia had no other choice but to leave. With no other options and snow on the ground, they took up residence in the family car.

Lluvia was reluctant to seek help for fear of losing her children but heard that there might be help at Northwest Community Action Center. Made possible, in part, by the CSBG grant, she and her family were immediately given a voucher for a week's stay at a local motel. During this seven day period, the case manager worked with Lluvia to develop a plan to address her barriers to stable housing. Together, they agreed that Lluvia would concentrate on increasing her household income and identifying a suitable permanent home for her family. With encouragement from her case manager and a strong desire to create a better life for her children, Lluvia diligently searched for housing and applied for employment.

By the end of the first week, Lluvia was hired at a local grocery store. She then found a trailer for rent that was within her price range. Things were looking up. Sadly, the trailer was found to be infested with cockroaches and otherwise uninhabitable.

Undaunted, though facing many obstacles, Lluvia continued to search for a suitable rental option. Without any immediate prospects for housing, her case manager decided to grant Lluvia a 30 day stay in a temporary emergency shelter at the Cosecha Apartments. Cosecha is a seasonal farm worker housing unit administered by the USDA that is traditionally vacant from November to March and only occupied during the harvest season. However, with the help of the Yakima Housing Authority, that all changed this winter. For the first time in the nation, the USDA granted a waiver that would permit the Yakima Housing Authority to open these units up for use as emergency shelter. Again, supported by CSBG and other local funds, Northwest Community Action Center was able to provide 30 more days of safe and secure housing as Lluvia sought more permanent solutions.

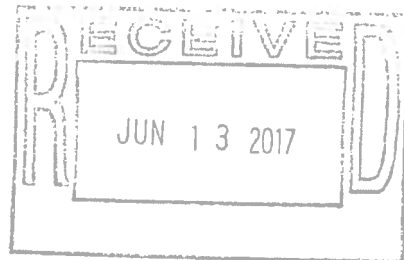
Lluvia continued to apply for rental units but her lack of rental history, less than perfect credit, and limited income presented formidable barriers. Facing rejection after rejection Lluvia persisted in her search. Finally, she found a low income housing unit that was willing to accept her. With assurances from her case manager that the program would provide preliminary support for Lluvia's rent, the management firm agreed to enter into a six month's lease agreement for a four bedroom apartment.

Northwest Community Action covered her first month's rent and deposit. She was also approved for Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) without which she would not have been able to afford her own place.

CSBG helped support her temporary hotel vouchers, her stay at Cosecha and even a portion of her initial costs for her new apartment. Without CSBG it is uncertain where the Orozco family would be today.

A few months after landing her apartment, Lluvia got more good news, she was being promoted to department manager at the grocery store. Lluvia would now be able to support her children without any further assistance and easily pay her rent.

Over the course of less than a two month period, Lluvia and her family's life changed dramatically. She went from homeless and hopeless to stable and thriving. Recently, on a rare day off from her new job, Lluvia stopped by to see her case manager and thank her for what she had done for Lluvia's family. She brought in the whole family. The oldest child screamed when she saw the case manager "Thank you so much for our apartment. We love it so much!" The six year old proceeded to tell the Case Manger that their home was big enough for her to have her own room now but her mother made her share it with her sister.



Rhonda

Statement to the Homeless Planning and Policy Council June 2017

In May, 26 formerly homeless individuals in downtown Yakima were given eviction notices as a result of a new funding process developed by the YVCOG leadership. They were offered refuge at the local encampment. One of these individuals, a man with special needs, barricaded himself in a house Neighborhood Health was master-asing, putting us in a legal stand-off for weeks between the owner, us as the lessee, and the tenant as the sub-lessee.

All our tenants are being offered short-stays in local motels until the end of June, when some may move to the encampment. Some may find their way into housing, and others will move to hidden places not meant for human habitation.

This is not the direction our Continuum is supposed to move ~~from housing~~ to homelessness. It's supposed to be the other way around.

Most organizations have participated in an RFP process, but this RFP process was flawed. Applicants were given different instructions. Only a few answers to questions were shared among all applicants. The scoring committee was not provided a process to discuss match considerations or the impact of lost programs. In fact the scoring committee was given little to no guidance on a consistent review and scoring process.

You know what has been funded. Understand what homeless services were de-funded in our communities:

- A family shelter in downtown Yakima established in 1985 that provides shelter to 40 families a year was de-funded.
- Transitional housing for 46 addiction-recovering families in Yakima was de-funded.
- An emergency shelter in Wapato serving chronically homeless, established in 2007 serving about 50 individuals per day and filled to capacity each night was not funded.
- A medical respite program for ill and injured homeless needing a place to recover from hospitalizations, or to prevent hospitalizations in the first place was de-funded.
- Permanent supportive housing for 30 chronically homeless residents in Yakima was de-funded.

What reasonable RFP process would prioritize an encampment over any of these safer, stable, Evidence Based Practices?

There is a lot of expertise on effective homeless solutions in Yakima. Some of that expertise was represented on the seven-member Scoring Committee. However, the Scoring Committee was not a fully objective body.

Three members of the committee had clear biases for or against specific projects or organizations:

- One member regularly signed into Homeless Network and HPPC meetings as a member of Transform Yakima Together.
- One member has been aligned for months with Justice Housing in their efforts to develop Tiny Houses.
- One member has been very vocal, in print, on the radio, and in social media, of her bias against certain organizations, and in favor of faith based organizations serving the homeless.

YVCOG leadership should have recognized each of these conflicts and declined these participants as members of the scoring committee. You can see the bias by the wide disparity of the scorers on the scoring sheet.

Again, what sound process would prioritize an encampment over established shelters and permanent supportive housing? We've reduced homelessness significantly the last 12 years. Let's not go backwards now.

Kate Baber's
Comments
JUN 13 2017

Public Comments:

Good morning council members. My name is Kate Baber, and I work with the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance. The Housing Alliance is a statewide policy and advocacy organization working to ensure all people in Washington have access to safe, healthy, and affordable homes.

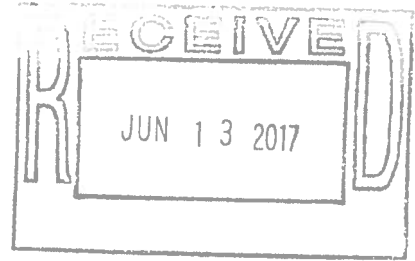
We are concerned about the shift in funding priorities from permanent supportive housing to tiny home encampments in the recent RFP process. Permanent supportive housing is a nationally recognized, evidence-based best practice to **ending homelessness**. This model pairs permanent, safe, healthy, and affordable housing with fidelity, high quality services to help people experiencing long-term homelessness access and retain housing—including people with disabilities, young adults and families with high-needs, and elderly adults. Permanent supportive housing has been proven to result in a significant return on investment that is often greater than the cost of providing housing and supportive services. These cost saving come from reduced utilization of emergency health services, avoidable hospitalizations, reduced involvement with the criminal justice system, and a reduced utilization of local emergency response personnel and resources.

Yakima County has an incredible opportunity to draw down new, federal resources to bring permanent supportive housing to scale and move vulnerable community members **from homelessness into permanent housing**. Washington State recently entered into a contract with the federal government to fund a five-year Medicaid Transformation Demonstration project, which includes \$200 million to pay for services delivered in supportive housing. Yakima County is home to many experienced supportive housing providers who are well positioned to expand their delivery of these services and draw down these new resources. However, in order for this to be possible, Yakima County must first prioritize and invest in the capital and operating resources that are also needed to bring permanent supportive housing fully to scale.

Preserving and expanding permanent supportive housing and leveraging the new Medicaid Transformation Demonstration resources complements Yakima County's 5-Year Homeless Housing Plan and would help this body reach a number of the Plan's goals, including but not limited to goals: 1.6, 3.4, 5.4, 7.1 and 7.4. For these reasons, the Housing Alliance urges you to reconsider the final prioritization of CHG, 2163, and other funding sources.

HPPC June 13 Public Comment Triumph Treatment Services

Beth Dannhardt CEO



The response to the RFP regarding the allocation of resources through YVGOG to agencies in Yakima County serving homeless individuals and families was alarming. There are a number of reasons for this including the process. However, I am going to speak predominately about how this will impact Triumph Treatment Services (TTS) and the clients we serve. TTS was the first agency to develop permanent case managed housing in Yakima.

You may be aware that TTS received no allocation of monies for their programs. Standing out is the family shelter. We have 12 apartments dedicated to families with children. Typically, the homeless families who come to our door have no income. The monies we received helped us to keep our building up and provide furnishings among other things. This building has provided a shelter since 1985. Frankly, we are not sure how we are going to continue this service to families with children. We are pretty sure there will be even more of these folks on the street. It is hard enough now to turn away families as we only have 12 units. You can imagine those children looking up at our case manager as we tell them there is no bed for the night.

You may not be aware that Housing Trust Funds were used to initially purchase this building. And because of that—the obligation remains to continue the shelter function for the full 30 years of the purchase. How are we going to afford that?

I understand the desire to provide a way to remove homeless from the downtown area. However, I find it hard to understand the business model of defunding successful programs that have been doing this for many years in favor of temporary places for individuals. It seems that by doing this, we are not helping the long-term solution but substituting one issue for another. Homelessness is just one issue individuals and families have. We need to look further and along with that—understand the funding that we delegate.