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Alliance for Housing Affordability Joint Board

Wednesday, May 27, 2020

Via Zoom & Teleconference

4:34 – 5:48 PM

Meeting Minutes

Participating:

Christine Frizzell	City of Lynnwood
Patricia Love	City of Stanwood
Mark Smith	HCESC
Mike Hopson	City of Arlington
Jackie Anderson	SnoCo HSD
Robei Broadous	SnoCo HSD
Andrew DeDonker	Town of Woodway
Glen Pickus	City of Snohomish
Becky McCrary	City of Everett
Kelly Richards	City of Marysville
Jennifer Gregerson	City of Mukilteo
Kyoko Matsumoto-Wright	City of Mountlake Terrace
John Kartak	City of Snohomish
Frank Slusser	SnoCo PDS
Shane Hope	City of Edmonds
Duane Leonard	HASCO
Luke Distilhorst	City of Edmonds
Scott Bader	City of Everett
Amber Piona	SnoCo PDS
Linda Redmon	City of Snohomish
Kristen Holdsworth	City of Lynnwood
Paula Rhyne	Snohomish County
Megan Dunn	Snohomish County
Anji Jorstad	City of Lake Stevens

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Meeting called to order at 4:32PM by Jennifer Gregerson.

2. Approval of Minutes

Kyoko Matsumoto-Wright motioned, with Kelly Richards 2nd, to adopt 1-22 meeting minutes.
Motion passed unanimously.

3. Budget Report

The AHA Program Manager reported that AHA's financials remain strong, no further discussion.

4. AHA FY22 Draft Budget



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The Program Manager introduced the draft FY22 budget to members and explained the process for creating the budget using OFM's April 1 population figures for the previous year, and a per-capita distribution of dues. The Program Manager acknowledged the need for fiscal prudence with the looming impact of COVID on municipal budgets and had reduced the audit and consulting budget line items, effectively pausing member dues increases at FY21 levels. No comment from members.

5. AHA FY22 Draft Work Plan

The draft Work Plan was introduced, by the Program Manager and Jennifer Gregerson, as trying to quantify work activities and provide clarity on actions to be undertaken by the Program Manager in advancing issues of housing affordability at the municipal level.

Duane Leonard commented that he wished to see specific discussion in the Work Plan around AHA as working to create more housing affordability. Shane Hope responded that her perspective is this is can be inferred as the goal of the Work Plan.

Kyoko Matsumoto-Wright addressed the need for education of councilmembers, new and old, in the need and benefits of housing that is affordable and encouraged more robust outreach to all councilmembers county-wide to further that message.

Becky McCrary proposed the drafting of an AHA mission statement and including that in further work plan documents and in other forms. Shane Hope concurred.

Mark Smith suggested that AHA's role is as a testbed for new plans, tools and other work, and would like to see more leadership from the Board on that topic, as well as more proactively working with cities to implement such tools. The Program Manager provided background on AHA's founding, which was following the ARCH model of passive support, or not pushing cities to participate until the city comes to ARCH.

Patricia Love proposed including more language in this or future Work Plan updates that specifically addresses GMA/Comp Plan update support.

Becky McCrary brought up the HART report and its status within the County as a potential source of new workplan items. Councilmember Dunn said she would look into HART's status and report back to the group. Jennifer Gregerson followed up that HART left it unclear (and COVID-19 exacerbated the situation) where authority lies with HART action items.

Councilmember Dunn concurred. Jackie Anderson shared that due to COVID-19, she had no updates at this time on HART's status, given most of HSD's activation in County Emergency Management.

Changing topics, Councilmember Dunn encouraged AHA to engage with elected officials and Councils as a whole on the issue of housing affordability. Luke Distilhorst concurred that individual meetings with all elected officials to spread education would be a good goal. Linda Redmon concurred with the above.

Duane Leonard posed a question to the group: Staff at cities are reluctant to try and lead elected officials, understandably, but Councils are often reluctant to act without support of



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staff. This puts the Program Manager in an awkward position – who to talk to, to have productive discussion around addressing this issue.

Shane Hope responded that in her view, AHA has always been about raising awareness and allowing cities to take the approach that they see fit, and not prescribe or advocate for specific solutions. Duane posed the question of what happens when the information is presented, but no action is taken. The discussion was inconclusive.

Discussion strayed away from specific work plan elements, to include whether AHA could apply for grants, act as an emergency housing solutions partner, and other topics, that were not added to the Work Plan. Anji Jorstad concluded discussion that above all else, all action and work undertaken should be through the strategic lens of moving all municipalities towards a place of more housing affordability, with broad agreement from other members.

Jennifer Gregerson requested a motion to adopt the draft AHA FY22 Work Plan and Budget. Linda Redmon motioned, Anji Jorstad 2nd. Motion passed unanimously.

6. HB1406/HB1923 Utilization Updates

Kelly Richards, Marysville – The City will use 1406 money and may give money back as rental assistance. Considering other housing options, but the goal is to support tenants, given current events.

Patricia Love, Stanwood – 1406 will be kept in community, as previously discussed, for rent and utility assistance.

Shane Hope, Edmonds – 1406 has been adopted and funds are being collected. The Edmonds Citizens Housing Commission is considering, among other things, how to spend those funds.

Mike Hopson, Arlington – Arlington is looking to contribute HB1406 funds to local providers. HB1923 resulted in a housing needs assessment that was finished just before COVID-19 disruptions began, and it is already somewhat outdated as such.

Becky McCrary, Everett – HB1406 is still in discussion. HB1923 funds are being put into the Rethink Housing and Rethink Zoning efforts in the city. COVID-19's impact on the ability to do public outreach is considerable. Everett has retained consultants to assist with that public outreach work.

Anji Jorstad, Lake Stevens - Passed HB1406, and is seeking a housing solutions partner/provider to share the funds with.

Christine Frizzell, Lynnwood – Lynnwood is reviewing HB1406 funds through a policy guidance process, the funds' final use is not yet determined. HB1923 has been used to create a Housing Action Plan, in coordination with BERK Consulting and Makers.



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Jennifer Gregerson, Mukilteo – Mukilteo has enacted HB1406, still looking for partners. HB1923 was adopted 4-3 by the Council recently, and the City will be retaining BERK Consulting. Kristen Holdsworth suggested coordinating messaging between the cities around housing action plans.

7. COVID-19 impacts in cities and housing

Jennifer Gregerson introduced the final topic, if discussing the impacts of COVID-19 on cities and their housing issues. Kyoko Matsumoto-Wright responded that the pandemic does not change the underlying factors that gave rise to the housing crisis and hopes members will not let the pandemic slow down their efforts too much.

Kristen Holdsworth pointed out that if anything, the pandemic has only accelerated and exacerbated trends that led to the crisis. It has helped bring into focus the many, many households that are one paycheck away from homeless or desperate housing instability. She asked about members conducting online and other media outreach during this period of social distancing and how effective that has been. A brief discussion started around effectiveness, equity to underserved populations in sharing their voice, in moving discussion to online forums that may not be accessible to all. Shane Hope mentioned that Edmonds is considering a randomized, mailed survey to residents.

Becky McCrary discussed the cancellation of a large public form on Rethink Zoning and the City's attempts to work around current challenges, including social media platforms.

Jennifer Gregerson again encouraged collaboration, sharing and work on housing analyses and outreach efforts, given the number of municipalities all embarking on this work simultaneously.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held via Zoom and teleconference on July 22, 2020 at 4:30PM.

9. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by Jennifer Gregerson at 5:48PM.