

Kitsap Housing and Homeless Coalition – February 15, 2023, 2-4pm
Zoom link: <https://krl.zoom.us/j/82262235936>, Meeting ID: 822 6223 5936

Link to recorded meeting (courtesy of The Conduit): <https://youtu.be/Jb07NzyPElw>

COMMUNITY BUILDER: Favorite Super Bowl traditions

STATEMENT OF KHHC VISION, MISSION, VALUES: Read by Lisa Lechuga

JANUARY MINUTES: Approved (moved by Bridget, seconded by Priya)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Lisa Lechuga (Chair), Matt Garrett (Vice Chair), Priya Charry (Secretary), with support from Bridget Glasspoole, Katie Sharp, Leif Wagner, Kirstin Jewell

Updates:

- *New Homeless and Low-Income Resource Guide* is now available on the KHHC website: <https://kitsaphhc.org/>
- We are working on updating the *Free Meal Guide*. If you know of any meal resources in Kitsap, please share with us at admin@kitsaphhc.org.
- KHHC membership: by attending these meetings, you are already participating in the Coalition; however, we ask that you fill out the membership [application form](#) on the website so we know more about your organization/agency.

AGENCY PRESENTATION: Kitsap Regional Library: Supportive Library Services – Jason Driver, Kitsap Regional Library Director

Jason joined KRL in 2022, coming from a career in social services and the Chicago Public Library. KRL has about 185 staff across nine library locations and mobile services in Kitsap County.

Public libraries are de facto day shelters and severe weather shelters for homeless community members. Libraries are publicly accessible and open to all, even without a library card. Once people are in our spaces, we see other needs arise, including lack of housing, mental and physical health issues, low incomes, and more. For the most part, the library is not seen as a government entity, so people feel more trusting of library staff than they would at other social service locations. We are a safe space for all ages and try to meet people where they are.

In 21st century libraries, we need to stay nimble, figure out where our gaps are, and identify how to/who can fill them. We offer more than just books: digital resources are booming, we serve as multiuse spaces, do outreach to community settings, help access online services and apply for jobs and benefits, navigate local resources, and more. We also offer free wifi, computer use, printing, and meeting spaces.

We have information professionals available to help connect people with resources they need. Library staff aren't necessarily trained to help people find and access social services; we learn on the job and deal with societal issues along with our patrons. Partnerships are essential to help fill in the gaps, especially with organizations and providers like KHHC members.

For questions relating to Kitsap Regional Library or library services in general, contact Lisa Lechuga (branch manager, Downtown Bremerton), llechuga@krl.org or Priya Charry (adult services librarian, Downtown Bremerton), pcharry@krl.org.

PRESENTATION: The State of Housing and Homelessness in Kitsap County - Kirstin Jewell, Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division Manager

HH Division responsibilities: strategic planning (Kitsap Homeless Crisis Response and Housing Plan), strategic investment of public funds (~\$6 million annually), gathering data and reporting on results, and coordinating community efforts to end homelessness and increase affordable housing.

What we've learned:

- **183** people experienced homelessness in Kitsap in 2022 (currently compiling 2023 data)
- More emergency housing is needed: in 2022, 1,778 households requested help with housing, including 1,111 households who were literally homeless and 479 households with children.
- 1 in 258 people in Kitsap experienced unsheltered homelessness in 2022. Data shows that the vast majority people are homeless for less than a month.

We learn this through:

- Annual Point-in-Time count (24-hour count of people experiencing homelessness, sheltered and unsheltered). This is a definite undercount, as it only includes who can we find that day that will take the survey
- Homeless Management Information System: documents every person receiving homeless services through public funding; this gathers demographic and programmatic data and allows for sophisticated analysis

Homelessness is an economic problem, compounded by the breakdown of our social systems:

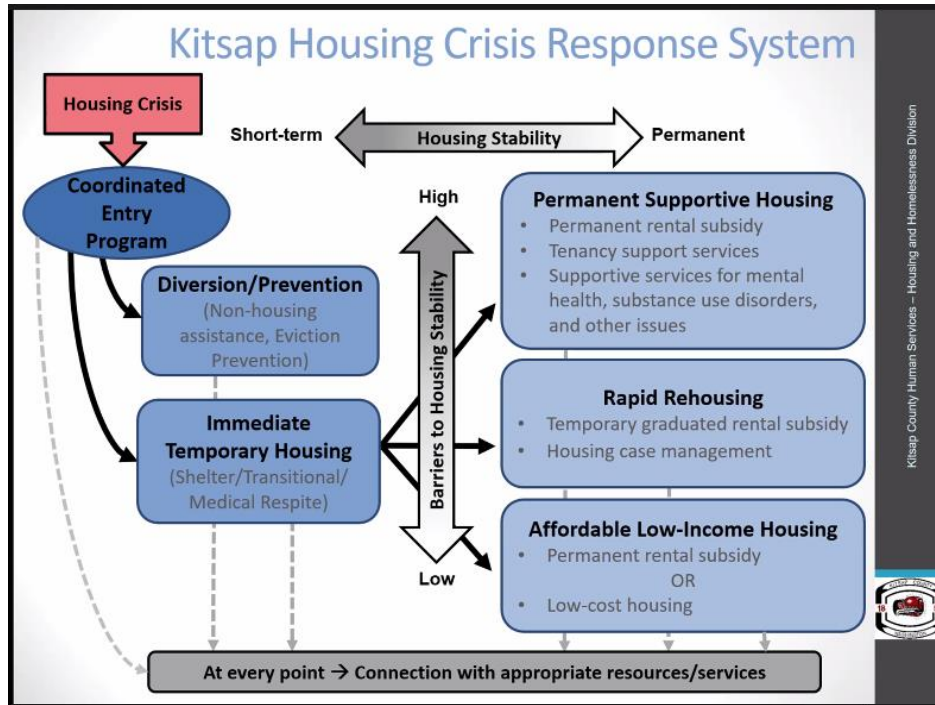
- The cost of housing has increased: rents increased >40% in last 5 years.
- Wages for many are stagnant: minimum wage is \$14.49 vs. 1-bedroom \$26.31. The largest gap is between people on disability/fixed income.
- Not enough affordable AND available housing: 13,875 renter households pay more than 30% of income for housing, often 50%. Statewide we are 120,000+ units behind population growth.
- Once displaced, there are huge barriers to finding housing again.

Intersecting problems cause homelessness: housing shortage, untreated addiction, lack of living wage jobs, chronic physical health issues, not enough shelter/housing assistance, unmanaged mental health issues, fixed incomes, low incomes, domestic violence.

Goals:

- Make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time
- Continuously improve the homeless crisis response system
- Increase community engagement

KHHC members are the backbone of the HH Division's efforts.



Current housing initiatives:

- Increase shelter beds: Added 150 beds during the pandemic; more to be added with the South Kitsap Shelter Project (below)
- Emergency motel program: an additional \$500,000 contracted with KCR
- Increased move-in assistance (first, last, damage deposits) for lowest income households: \$350,000 a year, additional \$2 million contracted to KCR

- Kitsap Eviction Prevention Assistance (KEPA) program: spent \$27.5 million on back rent for 3,605 households; wrapping up in early 2023. <https://www.kitsapgov.com/hs/Pages/HH-KEPA.aspx>
- Foster Youth Independence (FYI) program: housing vouchers and case management for 30 foster youth
- Community investments in affordable housing (CIAH), in development: commissioners approved 1/10th sales tax increase dedicated to affordable housing. We anticipate first distribution of funding in 2023 and estimate \$5-6 million annually for affordable housing projects.
- Countywide racial equity and homelessness analysis: action steps include developing a requirement for homeless providers to have racial equity training, racial equity targets for providing assistance, and contracting with “By and For” organizations
- HEART program: current encampment response initiative, addressing encampments on county-owned and managed property. The encampment policy was approved by Commissioners in November 2021. The program includes a full-time coordinator, dedicated encampment outreach team, and emergency motel program (piloted with the Veterans Park closure)

Pacific Building Shelter Project (Mile Hill): the County purchased this former fitness center in 2021. It’s currently in the permitting phase and will put out a bid for general contracting soon. They’re working with Kitsap Transit to develop a transportation plan. There will be an official public comment period to get feedback from the community.

- 75 guests: families with children, singles, couples
- Pets allowed (facilities are being upgraded to accommodate): co-sheltering model, working with Humane Society to develop
- Residential style: guests qualify and stay a while, no lining up at the door
- 3 meals a day, laundry, showers, stuff storage
- Onsite connection to robust support services: medical, mental health, recovery, job placement, case management, housing stability planning
- Contract with a nonprofit to provide these services: Kitsap Rescue Mission

Annual Report and Performance dashboard can be found on the HH website: <https://kcowa.us/housing>

HH Division team: Virginia McCaslin, Leah Noldan, Cory Derenburger, Jarrod Moran, Kirsten Jewell

Questions:

- Housing Trust Fund – WA state takes a regional appropriation approach, in which Kitsap is part of the Salish region. We want an equitable distribution of this funding across the state but it’s difficult to compete with other areas with more dedicated grant staff.
- HSC outreach – HSC has a new team of 4 outreach staff, working closely with Northwest Hospitality. They go out to connect with homeless individuals where they are.
- HH Division staff available to support with data for agencies – Cory Derenburger, cderenbu@Kitsap.gov
- Current funding including supportive housing? – Yes, CDBG and Home funding is available to support this
- Are tent cities feasible? – At this point there aren’t any sanctioned tent cities or safe camp locations in Kitsap. We would need an organization to help sustain and manage it.

DISCUSSION: Project Connect and Point-In-Time Count – Reflection, Celebration, and recommendations

Team: Kirsten Jewell, Shannon Turner, Terry Schroeder, Roland Arper, Eric Harrold

Great reception all around for Project Connect events. They were good networking opportunities in addition to resource sharing for the community.

One piece of feedback: try to provide Spanish/Mam translation capacity at future events

AGENCY UPDATES:

Spirit of Life Lutheran Church – There is an emergency food bank located in the lower part of their building, open on Saturdays 9am-1pm. Guests can get food once a month. An RN is available to connect with guests.

Michelle Jayroe, Kitsap Transit – A proposal has been made for Sunday service to return. They're thinking of a phased-in approach starting in February on main routes, as well as some on-demand services. More information: <https://www.ktheadways.com/blog/first-look-sunday-bus-service-proposal>

Matthew Garrett, KCR HSC – Matt is stepping down as HSC director at KCR. Carla Foster is stepping in as interim director and will also take the vice-chair position for KHHC. Matt is extremely grateful for the opportunity to serve our community and work with this group. [We'll miss you, Matt!]

Jason Doty, Kitsap ALTC – There is a Senior Resource Faire on Saturday 2/18 at the Silverdale Library, 11am-3pm. Kitsap Aging and Long Term Care and other organizations will be there.

Theresa Ballew, Housing Kitsap – We've exhausted one of our waitlists at Kingston Ridge, and it's still available for applications. Email if you know anyone interested: BallewT@housingkitsap.org

Priya Charry, KRL – We are providing tax forms (1040, 1040SR, and instructions, English and Spanish) at all library locations. We can print other forms if needed. We also host AARP Tax Aides at the Poulsbo and Bainbridge branches. See dates, times, and requirements here: <https://www.krl.org/taxes>. Additional Tax Aide sites in Bremerton, Port Orchard, Silverdale, and Kingston can be found on the AARP website: https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/locations.html

Kirsten Jewell, Kitsap County – Severe Weather Shelters are open tonight, check-in 6-9pm. Rides are available through Gather Together Grow Together: call 360-373-3000. Please share widely.

Grace Ingram, Kitsap PCAP – PCAP is happy to receive referrals. Please ask them to contact Linda Segur, PCAP supervisor at 360-337-9078.

Danielle Gorman, PCHS – PCHS is offering covid vaccines on our mobile unit throughout the month of February and March as well as at our Gateway location every Friday.

Meeting ended at 3:45pm. Next meeting March 15, 2-4pm at Norm Dicks Building in Bremerton and virtual. Light catering will be available as we distribute December's KHHC awards.

In attendance:

Alec Bellis

Amanda Montalbo

Ami Leach, North Kitsap Fishline

Annika Turner, Kitsap Immigrant Assistance Center

Bernice Petty, WA Dept of Veterans Affairs
Bridget Glasspoole, Kitsap Mental Health Services
Carla Foster, Kitsap Community Resources
Charlene Marshall-Hitch
Chris, DSHS
Chuck Svac
Crystal Koch, Kitsap Public Health District
Cory Derenburger, Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division
Daniel Gardner, Eagles Wings Coordinated Care
Danielle Gorman, Peninsula Community Health Services
David Nelson
Donita Gomez
Eric Harrold, Salvation Army
Grace Ingram, Kitsap Parent-Child Assistance Program
Helen Havens, community member
Helen Kuchera, Kitsap Rescue Mission
Janae Jenkins, Benedict House
Jason Doty, Kitsap County Aging and Long-Term Care
Jason Driver, Kitsap Regional Library
Jeff Campbell
Jeri Delaney, Coffee Oasis
Jessica Campbell, Housing Resources Bainbridge
Kaela Moontree, Kitsap Public Health District
Kathleen Cottey, Housing Solutions Center
Kirsten Jewell, Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division
Leah Noldan, Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division
Linda Hollingsworth, WorkSource Kitsap Veterans
Lisa Lechuga, Kitsap Regional Library (Downtown Bremerton)
Madison Roszak, Kitsap Homes of Compassion
Maria Fergus, Kitsap Public Health District
Marwan Cameron, Gather Together Grow Together and the Conduit
Matthew Garrett, Kitsap Community Resources
Michelle Jayroe, Kitsap Transit
Mindy Tonti
Priya Charry, Kitsap Regional Library (Downtown Bremerton)
Rebecca
Raelenea Copus
Rochelle Karlsen, League of Women Voters Housing Committee
Roland Arper, Severe Weather Shelter (Port Orchard)
Sandra Ingram
Scott Willard, Kitsap Homes of Compassion
Shawn Nigh
Theresa Ballew
Virginia McCaslin, Kitsap County Housing and Homelessness Division
Yaneisy Griego, Kitsap Public Health District

Notes: Priya Charry