



Homeless Coalition Friday Meeting

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SPEAKERS

Jeff Rodgers, Tori Forsman, Patricia, Allyson Griffith, Jeffrey Boyce, Jennie Schoeppe, Andrea Haug, Gerrit Nyland, Kevin Glackin-Coley, Ivy Mori, Cathy Pick, Karla Martinez, Emily Reed, Video Speaker 2, Sally Perkins, Sara Irish, Ed Jacobs, Rob Huff, Jennifer Ammons, Theresa Power-Drutis, Video Speaker 4, Video Speaker 3, Video Speaker, Meghan Brocato, Rosemary Powers, Calvin Kennon, Heather Wiley, Liam McEvelly, Janet Runbeck, Ivan Tudela, Valeri Knight, Jenny Lorton, Monique Brown

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Rob Huff

All right, well, let's go ahead and get started with this morning's meeting. Good morning, everyone. This is the weekly meeting of the Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness. If that's not what you're thinking you're attending you might be in the wrong zoom. But I'm glad to see everyone I we have a lot of early attendees this morning. So that's fantastic. And we have a lot to talk about today. So let me hand things off to Rosemary to get us started with today's meeting rosemary.

Rosemary Powers

Good morning everyone. This today, you know I'm holding my breath is probably we all are as the devastating events unfold in Ukraine. And at the same time, I read in the local set a local service provider is providing gas cards for an unhoused worker who's just found a job it needs a way to get there. And then I learned about the nomination of Judge Caetani brown Jackson to the US Supreme Court. Notice of these events appeared next to each other in my email at least next to each other as far as I can say that they're in the mall. But getting ready to welcome everyone this morning I was reminded of a line from a poem of Walt Whitman's song myself where he says every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you. That connection that of all of us to one another seems important to make



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today. Many of us may not know enough about the conflict in Ukraine to have a clear opinion but we do know that there will be there are already and will be more devastating effects to life in Ukraine and even minimal effects initially to live here even if it's about the higher cost of that gas card. So for the nomination of the first African American woman to the Supreme Court, we need to balance the promise of the nomination with the resistance that's already emerged to creating a broader connection that we all have to one another. We are all connected and this is simply true. As the atoms that swirl about us from centuries of living humans and other creatures, let us know there is no isolated self when it comes to atoms. So yes, I started today holding my breath about Ukraine and as we heard from Verna a couple of weeks back, that's not such a great way to stay resilient in challenging times. If we're going to be able to carry on putting one foot ahead of the other, taking care of one another and changing things one breath at a time. It's good to pay attention to our breathing. So I invite us to start today just with a brief attention to our breath. Breathe in deeply, and then breathe out. Do that a few times and then I'll do a little bit more. So welcome everyone to our meeting in the context of the world and connected to one another. For those of you who are new just to remind you of the way we do our meetings, we ask people who want to be recognized to use the raise hand function in the chat and in the in the bar you see at the bottom of our screen. And if you can't do wave your hand and someone will probably help Rob to recognize you. Also, limit distractions by turning off our videos when we're not speaking. And use the chat for sharing information about events that are coming up or questions you have especially if you're a new person and would like to know something but are not sure about interrupting whatever the flow of the group is. It's a good place to network. And it's not just disrespectful to do and with regard to our community norms, pay attention to how we come across. Take responsibility for our actions. Be sure to share things when we want to and take time to listen so we're not taking up too much space. And with that, I'd like to welcome anyone who's new or returning after some time away. If you could just raise your hand I'll try to recognize you and let's just say who you are and if you're connected to a group to let us know what that group is. Megan, or man, I'm sorry. Megan, go ahead. Hi,

Meghan Brocato

I'm Megan. I'm with Pierce County elections. And I specialize in voter outreach and I just wanted to hop in here today and at some point share just a brochure that kind of helps go over people who are lacking a permanent address and how they can get registered and how they can get access to a ballot. We just ordered those and I plan to distribute them to the to come on rescue mission and they had agreed to disperse them throughout the county. So it's at some point today, I can just go over that briefly with you guys.

Rosemary Powers

Thanks, Megan. Welcome. So I realized I won't be able to see everybody. So I'd say just unmute yourself if you're new and introduce yourself.

Calvin Kennon



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Hi, I'm Calvin. Kevin from CLR comprehensive life resources, the supervisor for homeless outreach. It's been a while since I had the opportunity to come to the coalition and join it but I just wanted to kind of get reengaged and if you guys wanted any updates at any point in time during this, so the locations that we've been conducting outreach on feel free to let us know or let me know and just glad to be back.

Rosemary Powers

That was welcome back Calvin and we look forward to hearing you in the next section of the meeting. That's when we do talk about such things. So look forward to hearing your updates. Well, thank you

Tori Forsman

Ty. I'm Tori Forsman, and I'm a former school teacher for White River School District and I'm currently working part time for the city of pol IP is a housing case manager. And there's a trailer park community mobile home community that is going to be displaced as of October 1. And so I'm just here to listen and learn and glad to be here.

Rosemary Powers

Welcome to orient. I've heard about your passion for being with people who are in house. So congratulations on that appointment and I look forward to having you work with us. Thank you.

Tori Forsman

Hi.

Emily Reed

Go ahead. Hi, Emily Reed. With the Salvation Army. I am the new caseworker for the jarvee Memorial family launch shelter. So I'm just here to learn what's going on and just connect with people so we can get these people the best support that they

Rosemary Powers

need right now. Welcome Emily and the Salvation Army. has been a great supporter of the coalition so it's nice to be connected with you.

Heather Wiley

I'm Heather, I'm with helping hand house and you all up. I used to be with the coalition a while back ago when it was at the Salvation Army in Tacoma. And so I'm just excited to be back with you guys on Zoom now and seeing all these familiar faces. Hi, Teresa. Um, but yeah, just um, I work with helping hand house I manage two programs the permanent supportive housing and also the emergency shelter with open hearts ministries.

Rosemary Powers



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Well, welcome back, Heather. It's good to see you again. Thank you.

Ivy Mori

Good morning. My name is IV and I also work with Heather at Helping Hand house. I work on the Rapid Rehousing side of things and this is my first time joining the coalition. I'm just here to learn and absorb and grow a little bit understand what you folks are all about and contribute where I can. I'm actually heading out of town and so you won't see me on video or anything like that. I may lose reception at some point. So I apologize. But it's great to be here.

Rosemary Powers

It welcome very much in your as you're traveling self, whatever. We look forward to working with you as you continue in this position. So thank you for coming. Good morning to you all. Thank you all right. Well, Rob, I think we can carry on thank you all for introducing yourselves and we look forward to working with you as much as possible.

Rob Huff

Thank you, rosemary, and thank you everyone for being here this morning. So the first item on our agenda is our standing conversation that we have every week around what's happening this week on the streets. Calvin it would be great to have you weigh in, in this section, but you can take that drink of coffee first. And again, we're we know it's been a cold week. We know that the county has been convening severe weather calls daily to try to coordinate to some extent the outreach to folks who are out on the streets this week. And so we would love to hear what people are seeing what needs they can identify and, and we've carved out a log longer portion of today's meeting than usual to continue that conversation so why don't we go ahead and get started. I see Monique has her hand up.

Monique Brown

Oh happy so my hand. I was like that little dark hand. I don't know if you can see it or not. I got it. Alright, awesome. So listen, I just wanted to give a little update, you know like we talked about opening this encampment in November. Here we are coming up into March and we're not open yet. However the issue is with supply chain. So the city is having a hard time getting all the supplies that we need here to be able to open right now there's a hold on the fencing. So we have the fencing laying at the site, but there are no I guess it's the foundation pole. I don't know what you call it, but the pole that needs to be permanently cemented in. So we're waiting for that. And then they say that we're opening on the seventh of March. I say that's impossible. I say that's impossible. Right Rob? Don't clap yet. The reason I say that is because even when we get access to the site, we've got a lot of prepping to do we've got platforms to build for the ice fishing shelters and shacks to pull up put up and feeding tent and put up so we're going to do our best once we get access to the site. But more to come on that I will keep you posted every Friday as I learned more. We also got a great connection yesterday with Costco. And I think that they may be looking for more folks. So what they do is on Fridays, the food that



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has been left, they give it to nonprofits. And then they also will give some of their returns and stuff. So if your 501 C three, you might want to check into them and see if there's something that you can get. Hopefully that doesn't kill me but you know, I like to share the wealth. All right, that's it. Thank you.

Rob Huff

Appreciate that when he can and good news that you're getting closer to being able to open so and again for folks who aren't aware that site is that ace East 82nd in Pacific or is that South 82nd Pacific

Monique Brown

south at second and Pacific 208 Pacific Avenue.

Rob Huff

Yeah. And and again, just briefly, how many how many sites or spaces will be accommodated there,

Monique Brown

there will be 25 spaces with enough room to accommodate 30 Just in case someone comes as a couple and I might even do a couple of the tents larger for those who come in as a couple. So there might be like two tents that are bigger than the regular 10 by 10.

Rob Huff

Got it. Thank you Monique.

Monique Brown

You're welcome.

Rob Huff

I see Theresa has her hand up.

Theresa Power-Drutis

This is actually two questions for Monique. One is the one that Garrett posted in the chat. He says what's the name of your shelter? Yes,

Monique Brown

I can respond to that. The name of the shelter is called FOB hoax Veterans Village. We have a couple of big signs to put out there to show that it's a Veterans Village. However, don't let that lead you astray. If we have openings and we can't fill them with veterans, we will take anyone else. So if you have someone just contact us. We have a list right now. of people who are waiting to get in. But if we can't fill that with 25 veterans we definitely will take others so just reach out to me if you have somebody that you want to get placed but not yet.



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Theresa Power-Drutis

So the other My question is it this looks like a great opportunity to have a community work party. I don't know if you're thinking about that. And if you are, go ahead.

Monique Brown

I had not thought about the community at large. My first thinking is always oh my gosh, which veterans organizations can help me right. So we have an ROTC group at U DUB that needs to do some work and they're just waiting for us to get ready to so they can volunteer and then I was going to reach out to the Mission Continues. And I'm part of Task Force 12 which is 12 nonprofits and the Seattle Seahawks who work together so I'm going to reach out to them but I will be putting out a call and a blast to get some volunteers and I see that Janae is asking if there's a sign up. You know what, Janae I didn't have that. But I'm creating that. Today I will get a sign up on my website and FOB hook.org and I will let you know what that is ASAP.

Theresa Power-Drutis

So the reason I asked that question is just that so so many times communities are a little resistant. And it's just even if you only had a few people in your community you're building in who could get involved, I would just recommend it. That's, I think, a flaw in the way the stability site came to be. So just a thought that

Monique Brown

you have a suggestion on how I can reach the people that live in that area. Could you just, you know, email me or something because I just don't know how to reach those people.

Theresa Power-Drutis

Let's chat after.

Monique Brown

Okay, sounds good. Thank you.

Rob Huff

Fantastic. And, Andrea, I see you have your hand up as well and then we'll get to get to Calvin to talk about what CLR is doing on outreach. Thank you,

Andrea Haug

Rob. I'm just really quick. Monique, use your neighborhood council. Like us the Southside neighborhood council we have our membership we can send it out to everybody. And



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Monique Brown

I'm so sorry.

Andrea Haug

No, no. No and most people don't even know they have a neighborhood council so that's like our uphill battles. So um, yeah, no, please email. I

Monique Brown

know that we have it. We you and I talk all the time. I don't know why I didn't think of that. I'm going to use you

Andrea Haug

Yeah, please do. That's why we're here. I also wanted to give a huge shout out. My little outreach group, the grassroots 253 Merrymakers received a \$350 donation from sidewalk ministries. He had applied for a grant and has been sharing with a smaller you know, not we're not official nonprofits, but we still need supplies, too. So thank you to Rodney Richardson and it's been cold out there burning through those handwarmers. Thank you.

Rob Huff

Thank you. So speaking about it being cold out there. Calvin, what is your take you and your team busy in this week?

Calvin Kennon

Yeah, so Rob, it's been. So we've extended our hours I've had about I have four case managers that are working on till six o'clock starting to seven or starting at nine o'clock. You know, you know, emphasizing you know, the the warming shelters and resources, you know, trying to get people out the cold. We've upped our outreach this week, back the last couple of weeks. In fact, I want to say these guys are going out every day. We are going to town board Tacoma downtown Tacoma, obviously Tacoma Avenue anything heading on up towards new Tacoma, formerly known as hilltop Sixth Avenue. We're just trying to, you know, hit every area that we possibly can send the message that you know that we can, you know, get you to the warming shelters. That are creating space, you know, due to inclement weather. So we've upped our outreach, most of our conversation has been for that. We've been having that conversation on Tuesdays and Thursdays when we have our walking hours from one to three. So we're just really placing emphasis on getting out there but boots to the ground. And putting in a little bit of extra hours and see if we can kind of you know get some people displaced from you know, this these elements and then to some a warm environment. So, yeah, we're doing the best we can. We're gonna we're gonna connect with greater lakes. They've been trying to get together with us. We've been trying to get together with them. And I think we're going to hopefully, at some point in time,



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bridge that gap and kind of tag team some areas, you know, and just see what we can do collectively individually and keep the ball rolling.

Rob Huff

Thanks, Calvin. Do you know is the the latest enforcement information on CLRS? county resources website about the outreach sites? Is that pretty accurate at this point?

Calvin Kennon

Sure. Sure, especially the mobile clinics. So what I do typically, I deploy at Chick fil A to scout scout the locations you know and then I made sure I set it up to my data gal and so she makes it public knowledge obviously exceeded Tacoma and anybody that wants to access it. We kind of pretty accurate and this phone call phone with a fob little window where we want to be on we want to be able almost location we like to follow up on the same location the following week, and sometimes depending on how big the encampment is, and how many people we need to be paying like to you know, hit that spot at least two maybe three weeks back to back. So yeah, we try to get that out. That we get that out and by Tuesday, instead said dated immediately and so feel free to follow us. Any provider here at the table who wants to join us. Please feel free Wilma joint and Nasugbu collectable.

Rob Huff

Great, thanks Calvin. So do we have others with things that they would like to share about what they're seeing on the streets this week? I know. I did see Richard on the call although he think he's out of town. And I know you've been doing direct outreach, anything you would like to share? Not to put you on the spot or anything.

Ed Jacobs

Maybe you don't want me to share. It's very apparent that we have a delay in delivering services from the onset of weather or or any type of disaster because well, there's a process. You know, first it has to happen. Second, it has to be reported. And it gets reported to the city or the county. And then the county or Well, I'll talk about County in this case, has to make a decision whether it's a an emergency or not. To see if they're going to jump in and and help out. Meanwhile, as happened in December, on Sunday, most of the outreach people especially the the paid out outreach people were not there on Sunday, because they don't work on weekends. And Monday was a holiday. They weren't there on Monday either. And I'm not berating anyone I'm just saying this is the case many times. And so we have volunteer outreach, folks that go out and try and distribute what they have. Well that's two days gone. And then if the county decides that it's going to be an emergency and their criteria of other organizations exceeding their capacity, and whatever else, the decisions are within the county, then they then they open up which is great. Now we have declaration of an emergency and they're hard working people go to work ordering materials. Now that's day three. The materials, as we all know, may take two or three or four days to get there. Worst case scenario. So we've gotten, what 567 days



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without materials from the county or the city being available to distribute. Now, this is this is the process as I've come to know it and hate it but you know, at the same time, this is what we're working with. I the other day in a meeting said what would I like I'd like the keys to your warehouse there is no warehouse. So what do we do for the first four days of a cold hot weather emergency while the county is making these decisions and going through the process?

Rob Huff

Yeah, you raise a great question.

Ed Jacobs

Well, and Janet Janet, a director are searching for the answer. And we think we found it in that is the faith community can step up and take care of these people for three four days. The way we do that, is we have the warehouse in various churches. And so we're looking for churches that will house blankets, water, hand warmers, various various things, they won't cost them anything because we anticipate we will find somebody or many somebodies to donate these things. And then once we have an emergency people within your your church, faith based organization, whoever you are, we'll get phone calls to come down and unlock and then our just our people that are doing the distribution within the that area of the city can pick up the materials and go out and distribute it. All the while. The city and the county are making their decisions on on what they're going to do. Hopefully, we can keep people alive until the county in the city have made their decisions done their shopping and ordering and the materials are delivered for our regular outreach people to come in and pick them up and distribute them on a larger scale. We are not looking to become an answer to homeless or a continual support to homeless folks. We're looking for the first three, four days of an emergency. That's what we need to cover. And if you've ever sat in a meeting or in your church, hopefully the church council or something and said Gee, I wonder what we can do. I got it, this is what you can do. So with that being said I have a phone number for you. My cell phone number is 206-369-0297 I'm ready to become a answering point. Yell at me. Let me know what you think is possible within your sphere of influence or the sphere of influence you would like we can help you with that and we're looking for probably under 10. Certainly, churches in the Tacoma area distribute not to comment area, the Pierce County area distributed out so that for example if 705 falls down or I five falls down we've got locations on each side of it that can serve the population on each side of it. So this is a project that Jeff Janet NIHR are working on. And if you'd like to say a few things, Janet, that would be wonderful. And we're we will be asking other folks within the coalition to help with this. This is not a sanctioned project within the coalition, because we haven't voted on it. So with that, I'm gonna shut up oh, by the way, I've been out every day. It's really hard to get people to agree to go into a shelter when they're sitting in the sunshine. Lots of blankets have gotten out lots of 18 our hand warmers and quite frankly, what we tell folks is take one of these blankets, put it inside your sleeping bag, put yourself in there, start the 18 hour hand warmer. It'll keep you warm and you can take a nice long nap and it'll still be keeping you warm when you wake up. So that's what we've been doing and any questions. I'm happy I can put that phone number in the chat if you would like



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Rob Huff

to be graded, thank you and Sally, also encourage folks in the chat to join us at the Monday meeting of the safe sites for all committee well, where there will be more conversation about this, this effort. So I know we're a little over our time for the agenda but I did know we definitely wanted to talk about the cold weather impacts this week. And for the last word on that carrot, is there anything you could share in terms of I know you helped run the severe weather meeting yesterday. Do you have a sense of where we're at on shelter availability? Probably has already yesterday.

Gerrit Nyland

Yeah, not much has changed in terms of shelter availability, our non congregate options continue to be full as they were prior to this. We, we and by we I mean shelter providers in the community have opened additional beds, Mats at our congregate sites and those continue to have availability. So they tivity house the rescue mission brotherhood rise, folks have all done a good job of ensuring that there's places for people to go but there hasn't been a lot of usage which is pretty typical. Right? So that's not It's not uncommon for the cold weather spells like this to have little utilization of the extra bed mats. There's been I mean, they've been used but not stress to capacity. So you know we have cold tonight we'll continue to have extra capacity at the rescue mission activity house and a few other shelters. So websites the coalition's website that today and I'll throw that link in. And you're just Sally's point, like could the government be agile enough to be able to do our outreach work that we've we've been so slow to do that Ed Said, I think yes, and I think we as a community need to keep pushing for that role. And and I think we'll get there, but it just will take you know, we'll take a lot of energy thrown into it, I think from inside the government and from outside so it's new, right? This is a new idea that Pierce County Human Services has a responsibility to run inclement weather adequately, right. That's not that's not something we did last year or the year before or the year before that so so i i appreciate how we've filled in year after year after year as providers and volunteers in the community and I, I think that the government's going to be able to do this so that we feel like it's adequate, but that it's it's just new and will take some time. So yeah, so thanks for everything you're doing to keep people alive until the government agencies that shouldn't be accountable to do this are able to do all the tests necessary.

Rob Huff

excuse for it. So if there's additional information you want to share about what's happening on the streets this week, please do use the chat as a reminder, you know, as Rosemary said at the beginning of the meeting, we retain the chat and use that as a resource going forward. So thank you for all you're sharing there as well. So let's shift to our community spotlight for today. And community spotlights about heart harbor Hope Center. So, Liam, would you like to tell us spend a few minutes telling us about what you do?

Liam McEvilly



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Sure. Thank you so much for this opportunity. I've already made some really great connections attending these meetings that will ultimately better help our residents. How about hopes and we are a transitional housing program out here on the key Peninsula in Gig Harbor. And we were initially we started initially three years ago to fill the gap between Tacoma in Kitsap. County. We serve in our homes we have a male home and a female home that each have space for, for residents who are single and aged 18 to 21. And during their time here, we help them get back on track. We partner with a local alternative high school and Tacoma Community College if education is something that our residents want to focus on. You're not homeless at 1819 without experience in some kind of trauma. So we work very closely with CMR behavioral health, who work with our residents and also provide us with some staff training. Our houses are staffed 24 hours a day. And we do serve young people under the age of 18 through our host home program, and we are currently recruiting for host homes if that's something we can spread the word about. We partner with actually from this meeting. I've made the connection with act and reach in order to help our residents take that next step in becoming self sufficient and finding housing on their own. We have a really great mentor program. Which we're constantly recruiting for if there's anybody out there who thinks they can really make a difference in a young person's life by walking alongside them. And their mentors help with everything from teaching our residents how to drive taking them to open bank accounts, that kind of stuff. We partner with Crossroads treatment facility in Tacoma to help our residents who might be struggling with minor drug use. There is a requirement in order to move into our program that young people can pass a UA and a background check. Those two things don't rule people out from joining our program, but they are something that we consider you know during their time in the house, we help them with everything from getting ID to opening a bank account and finding work you know, and everything that comes with that right and a resume and a cover letter and job interview skills. And then kind of what's expected the first couple of weeks have been in a job. We have a really wonderful partnership with our local Kiwanis group who very graciously provide clothing for our residents when they first move in. Everyone is eligible for our program and we will quite happily take referrals from from anyone. So I've that's anybody who just because they're not embedded between Tacoma Kitsap County doesn't roll them out either. So if you work with young people who you think are eligible for our program, please get in touch my email address will be posted everywhere. I believe we currently have one space in our female house. And we're working on ways to expand that capacity in order to serve because more and I think the members of the coalition can help us by as you were already been doing and connecting with us and better better serving our residents. I think that's it and I'm not sure oh, here at the boy's house. We have a resident Beagle. He was rescued from a medical research facility in China about a year ago. And he's going he's Alain. He's, he's going to be licensed therapy dogs eventually. His name's Henry and he's kind of come and knock the door. He comes and greets you.

Rob Huff

That's awesome.

Liam McEvilly



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Does anybody have any questions for me?

Rob Huff

Yeah, let me see if anybody has wants to raise their hand or just kind of wave and let me know Monique. I see you waving.

Liam McEvilly

Hey, money. What's up?

Monique Brown

Liam? I was taking notes and forgot what the ages were you said is 18 to 21. Or what was our transitional

Liam McEvilly

housing? It's currently 18 to 21 but we are working on a host home program. For people younger than 80.

Monique Brown

Okay, thank you. No worries.

Rob Huff

Anyone else with questions for Liam?

Could you repeat the name of your program

Liam McEvilly

haba Hope Center

Rob Huff

and I will say a few received the agenda for today's meeting Liam's email addresses in the agenda. But Liam if I don't know if he if it's a good way to refer folks to you to give you a call as well, you might want to put your phone number in the chat. If you could just share that contact information that would be great.

Liam McEvilly

For sure. Yeah. And then I see. Tory's asking about helping out maybe to be a mentor. Definitely give me a call and I can I get that ball rolling for you, Tori.



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Rob Huff

Fantastic. Well, thank you very much for sharing about your program today. And we hope you can come back and make more connections here.

Liam McEvilly

I hope so too. It's been amazing so far. Thank you.

Rob Huff

Great. Great. And if you have additional questions for Liam, please do use the chat and reach out to him there. So thank you. Let's shift to our next item on the agenda and I'm happy to welcome a long time friend of the coalition and are only part time in play we've ever had. Kevin Glackin Kohli back to talk with us today about the block project. So Kevin, you've got the floor.

Kevin Glackin-Coley

Thanks Rob. Nice to see everyone. It's good to connect with you all, even if it's still on Zoom. I've for those of you who don't know I'm the director facing homelessness in Seattle now and I'm going to share a little bit about our approach to to homelessness. But I wanted to start with a little video because the folks in the video are much more articulate than I and hopefully Rob can can get that playing. It's just a few minutes long.

Rob Huff

Yeah, let me set that up. Thanks and send me a chat if this is not working for some reason.

Video Speaker

I have my own set of problems, you know, depressed, you know, off and on in my life and different stuff like that. But I've always had a job and I was married and had kids and not a home and now my home was my car people are suffering and they don't have places to go to get support and most importantly I think facing homelessness is important because it creates connections with people a sense of community that direction sorry guys giving out the window.

Rob Huff

Let me restart this.

Just the way that people connect here is just different than I've experienced any charity work. I've ever done in my life. This is not

Rob Huff



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we will try this again are people seeing the video there are seeing the screen there. Yeah. Okay. Let me go back to the very beginning and see if we are a

Video Speaker 2

veteran. I have my own set of problems and I've been depressed, you know, off and on in my life and different stuff like that. But I've always had a job and I was married and had kids and I had a home and then my home was my car

Video Speaker 3

people are suffering and they don't have places to go to get support. And most importantly I think facing homelessness is important because it creates connections with people, a sense of community that's bi directional, not just giving out the window. But receiving back I think just the way that people connect here is just different than I've experienced in any charity work I've ever done in my life. This is an organization that is just founded in that when I see the stories that were shared on facing homelessness Facebook page, and seeing the humanity in the people experiencing homelessness, I really understood the connection that we all have to people in our community and how we can impact their lives in positive ways if we just take a moment to to see their situation and have some compassion.

Video Speaker

Blog Project is an opportunity for a homeowner to host a resident who will live in 175 square foot home on their property and also afford someone who has experienced homelessness, to reconnect with community and to build relationships.

Video Speaker 4

What we do here in the shop is we build those houses. And what's really cool about how it's done now is that it's it's templated and we build all the components for the houses here in the shop. We put them on a truck and take them to the site and we assemble and it's just really cool. We're making a home for someone who didn't have one before

I tried to describe all the time to friends and family how the window of kindness works. We literally open the windows of the office into this enclosed space and we greet you know folks from the community experiencing homelessness with you know, a warm smile first and foremost. conversation and then we help provide supplies, hot drinks, snacks and if we're lucky and have a lot of donation we'll give out tents and sleeping bags that you know just really make people's days and lives better.



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If I can help one person by providing them with shelter, or a transitional home, then they can pay it forward in time and exponentially that can impact the crises that we're facing with homelessness. Now.

I would say for anyone considering the block project as a host to just saying yes and and be open to the relationships and the possibilities.

When I'm interacting with someone at the window which is you know, brief it can be one minute to 10 minutes. My goal is to make them feel like someone cares about them to try and bring a tiny bit of special to their day. Sometimes people come up people I know and I can tell they've had a really bad day. So I offered a listen. You know I say if you want to talk about it, you know I'm here and I'm interested. So I really I try and look at the person and try and empathize with how they're feeling and sort of match that. But my hope at the end of it all is that they they left her feeling better than when they came.

What I want people to know about me is that they're still really good people in the world was really good hearts and then I'm one and I'm going to do something someday if I can get that far and if not then I'm gonna inspire somebody else to

I think perspective is probably the biggest thing that I've gained being here. perspective how lucky I am. How much people like me and everyone really should to lean in and support people that don't have basic, you know, needs in life and really trying to understand people's stories. Really just not making assumptions, especially about the homeless. And that's something you know, I think I'll take forward in every part of my life.

I want to thank the people that have given their time and their effort and their their their donations or whatever it is that they've done.

I am in this because of my passion around homelessness. And that's that's good enough for me.

Kevin Glackin-Coley

Thanks, Rob. So the thing I most wanted to focus on today and is the block project because I think it's it's the one place where we found in kind of a our own niche of doing something that I don't think it's being done anywhere else. And just a little background. Our founder was an architect is an architect,



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and he started from his office in Fremont 10 or 11 years ago, welcoming people who are experiencing homelessness outside his office to come in and have conversation. And at heart, he's a storyteller. And so he began telling sharing the stories of the folks he was getting to know and that led to a Facebook page and people responding to individual needs that he would share for for an individual who maybe needed a car repair or needed for deposit for rent or needed help with medication or a variety of things and has morphed into this organization. So we do the direct service, which many of you do in your own settings and with the same kind of spirit. But the block home started with the conversation that somebody had at one point in a in a point in time count it was estimated there were 14,000 people in Seattle who were experiencing homelessness and there's about 14,000 city blocks and so the thought was what if we built one home on every block not even I think that's possible. Teresa power Judas i but that was the the start of the the thought so the block home and as part of the continuum, you know, attempt is better than being under the bridge that tiny home is better than being in a tent. But housing permanent housing is really the long term solution. And so our block homes and it's a slow process we just broke ground on our 13th Block home and by the end of this year, we hope to have 18 in place. And as nausea, who's one of our host said it's 175 or 80 square feet of permanent housing. We have homeowners who sign a ground lease with us a five year ground lease and we put in this home but it's it's a permanent home. I tell people I would move into it if I was living by myself. It is small but it has a shower and a bathroom and a kitchen air kitchen area you know a small kitchen area and refrigerator as a couch that turns into a day bed. It's got a it's got a porch that covered porch area and storage and it's in a backyard. So it's scattered throughout you know we have we're building one now in Magnolia which is not a neighborhood that gets a lot of low income housing in Seattle. And so we do it block by block. And that's that's our approach recognizing it's a small thing. It's also more expensive than within a a than a tiny home but it's so it but it's a fourth of the cost of a unit of low income housing in Seattle which is priced at about \$300,000 So for \$75,000 we can put this nice ad a you attach I always forget the attached housing unit in the backyard of somebody's home and provide housing for someone that can be short term. Some of our residents stay for a while and then move on to the next thing they wanted to do. Some folks will be there. Our first resident has been in his home for four years and he's in his 70s Unless he gets to the point of eating some kind of additional health care services. It'll probably be where he lives for the rest of his life. We actually had a resident who passed away this year and my first thought when I heard about it was he didn't die. He died at home because he actually died in the home he didn't die on a street corner. And there were people who who noticed and cared that he had passed and then his sister the sisters came to visit from back east and I was with them as we walked into the backyard so they could get to the house - and you know see which one of his stuff they wanted. To bring with them as as mementos. And I could I was in front of them. But I can both hear and feel their their reaction when they walked into the backyard and saw this place where their brother had lived for the last months of his life and where he had passed away that it wasn't a street corner. He lived and they were the hosts were there and they have developed relationships with their brother. And so it's a slow process. We're learning that it moves at the speed of the resident. I think our the initial thought was it would be this great community setting and there'd be you know, you'd have dinner together and do all these kinds of things together. And there's another video we have and one of the



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residents says you know, for the first seven months I basically just stayed inside my home. Because one of the things about being on the street is you're always with people and he just needed a space to be by himself and even Deborah talking about it is another video she goes I'm finally liking myself again because she she talked about how she had lived in her car and had been sleeping in the parking lot at casinos because they let her stay overnight and there was a bathroom they let her use and just kind of recovering from all of that. So so that's our model block by block. The other thing though that is of interest might be of interest to you is that we have started the idea of partnering with other entities and selling them kits. So imagine IKEA on steroids. Our shop which is down in the Soto district of Seattle can turn out a kit, one kit a week there's no way we have the bandwidth to install that many houses in a year. But that the houses they come out in panels and they can be established. Once you have the groundwork done in the area where you're doing it they can be put up in four days. It used to take four weeks of people coming in and put them together. But now they kind of and I don't understand it because I'm a liberal arts major but they get put together very quickly on site. And they can also be taken apart and then moved as a result because they're they're attached through magic I think but but some kind of mechanical reasoning. And so we're working with a group now the NDN collective which is works with native folks around the country and they're we're going to be selling them a couple of kits that they're going to be putting up in South Dakota just outside Rapid City as part of a housing program they're doing they started a couple winters ago, They the be a tent city attensity But it was more it was traditional Native TPS and it was the first year that no one no no, no their members died of exposure. But now they're looking to figure out a way to do is on a more permanent basis and I think the plan is down the road. They'll get a couple from us. We'll send somebody to help them establish it, but they they want to build their own shop and start doing something similar and their place and then I think one thing we might be able to look at here is is you know we don't have the other thing we do is we have two social workers on staff because there's a lot of trauma for folks who are exiting homelessness. And so we provide some pretty comprehensive case management and if we were going to expand our program and do 1000s of homes, you know, we'd have to become a huge agency, but we might be able to partner with agencies that have land or have case management and then we can come alongside and sell the kit and then you can you can develop the homes and again, it's a permanent housing compliment. I think one thing that's exciting is trying to explore ways where it might be possible for the folks who are living in the homes to become to develop ownership if it's particularly if it's not in somebody's backyard, but on another space. Because that's the only way you're going to you know you develop the then the generational wealth that will allow you to keep your family from falling into the same situation. So that's our that's our model right now. I think we have again, I think we have the shop up in Seattle people are always welcome to come up and see the process happening. It's one of our previous staff members created jigs so that basically an idiot like me can come in with a group of other idiots and we can be sit there and be told shown how to build the panels and where to where to put the square to put the gun, the nail gun and then it gets built and it's all flat and then it can be moved out to the site where it's being put in. So it's a quick process. There's a place for everybody in it and yeah, it's it's a home that I think any of us would want to live in long term. So that's kind of the big the brief spiel. We'd love to talk with folks about either here depending on your time but also throw my email in the



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chat, Kevin at facing homelessness.org about ways we might partner with each other to provide some some permanent housing for people. Oh, I knew Teres would ever hand up.

Theresa Power-Drutis

So actually, my first question was going to be When are you moving to Pierce County but to kind of answer that. So

Kevin Glackin-Coley

my mother Teresa, you know that well, you

Theresa Power-Drutis

Yes, I met your program. We're not losing both of you. So my other question is, do do the owners get to keep these buildings after your five year?

Kevin Glackin-Coley

So it's an interesting question. So we've had the first nine homes that were built would be much harder to disassemble. And so we just had from block home three to a couple who were in their 80s and had just really gotten to the point where they couldn't maintain this after the fight actually was four years was up. And so we sold it to them for the value that it would have taken us to take out and goes back into building another home. With the newer models. Our goal is ideally to move it to another site. You know if we if they had to enter the ground lease or if they're selling the house and they don't want to continue it or for them to to buy it from us so that we can then put a house in another place.

Theresa Power-Drutis

I love that second plan because that does keep creating housing. Yeah. Which is

Kevin Glackin-Coley

so turns out that the the older couple who they're originally from Holland, and one of their sons is going to move from Holland and live in the house but now it turns out they're doing extended foster care for for older kids. And so there's still it's still providing housing for people who wouldn't have had housing otherwise, but with a different model. Yeah, so it either either can be moved to another location or it can be purchased by them and then we fund it into another I mean, the goal is not to create ADA use that people then use as Airbnb is in their backyard but yeah,

Theresa Power-Drutis

yeah

yeah



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Heather Wiley

so just the, the family that this property is going to be put onto they get to like, meet and greet the individual.

Kevin Glackin-Coley

Yeah, yeah. So so the residents are referred to us by some of our partner agencies. So it's Mary's Place and the Chief Seattle club and others in Seattle. So person has to be has to have a case manager with that agency and kind of being have been with them for at least six months, just to do a matching, you know, between the resident and the host and then also we will facilitate conversations in the neighborhood for the for the neighbors who might want to know, why are you building this house in your backyard and who's coming and so, again, that's part of the the value of the program and we're trying to you know, like many of you, we're trying to do theory change and so how do you measure the impact and our board will always say our target audience is not the folks experiencing homelessness, it's a community. That's where the change is going to happen. But how do we measure that but but block by block we now have somebody who had been homeless living in somebody's backyard, maybe getting to know some of the neighbors or at least being seen as just a you know, they're a neighbor, and that might begin to change people's sense when they drive past someone on the off ramp or they see somebody sleeping in a doorway and so because I don't, we're not going to be you know, we're not gonna be able to shelter our way out of this program. We need to change kind of societal expectations and and our concept of who neighbors are and how we treat them. One of the nice things I like about this is it literally transformed NIMBY into yimby. You know, it's yes, you're

Heather Wiley

right. And also, one more question, do they do they pay rent or is it

Kevin Glackin-Coley

Oh, no, they don't at this point, and we've looked at whether or not we would do it. On a sliding scale. And in some ways, it's probably it's not that we could charge enough rent that it would make it worthwhile on our end. And so what we're looking at and I'm actually meeting with someone from the Catholic Worker later today to talk about how we do this is rather than making it mandatory, we're going to try to do some financial literacy and kind of connect folks with other people through maybe through the Seattle credit union to set up their own bank account and for them to determine what they want to do so that they have to have an income. And you know, at one point, they want to be able to go visit family or they want to be able to move into their own place. What do they need to do for that? But we don't charge rent because most folks coming to us. They couldn't pay enough rent to make it some ways to make it worth our while to collect it. Right, what resources they have, we want them to be able to kind of get moving for the next step. The other thing is that the homeowners we tie the homes into the utilities of the of the hosts. We actually have solar panels on our on our on all our homes so that



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they're actually a net positive in terms of energy use. We the homeowners, if the homeowners can they pay the additional utility costs comes out you know for water and sewage and and stuff like that. And if they can't we cover that for the host because we don't want that to be a barrier for someone to be able to do this. And so as you know we have we have red again, we have residents in magnet we have homes in Magnolia. We also have homes down in Georgetown. In the central district. So we want anybody who has space to be able to do this without feeling like they have to burden their own resources. I mean, they're already sharing their backyard with us.

Heather Wiley

Yeah. Have you run into any issues with like a toys and guidelines like that? What was the first part was? What did you like? Hoa is to help like your housing. And

Kevin Glackin-Coley

maybe that's just because of the neighborhoods we've been in. We do have a good relationship with the city of Seattle in terms of the the permitting process. You know, the homes have to you know, we have to have enough safe space for a setback from property lines and you know, it can't be on certain kinds of slopes and all those kinds of things. But, so a lot of times, you know, for every six or seven people who say they'd like to do this about one sifts through and the end of actually being able to do it either for their own reasons or because of other issues. We also for the most part, tried to do it with resident hosts. It gets more complicated if they're renting their home, actually, the daughter of our founder does it but they know they're their resident. And we're in conversations with a couple of churches in Seattle about whether we might be able to build a block home or too on some of their properties. They're not it's a little bit different than a than a non where the host is that living at their home because usually church churches are empty at night and so there's no issue with other residents. And it might provide some additional safety for the campus. If there's somebody there. So we're exploring those options as well. And whether they would then manage it on their own or it'd be kind of underneath our block party. That's also under discussion. So

Heather Wiley

Right. Thank you, Kevin. I love the project. Standing out of King County.

Kevin Glackin-Coley

Well, and if we do it again, it would be more like in partnership, we could you know, you'd be like coming out to us like you go to Ikea you get a really big flatbed and you come out

Heather Wiley

well, you'd have to take it to Thurston County.

Kevin Glackin-Coley



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I like Thurston County. I go to old school pizzas anytime I'm in town, so

Heather Wiley

absolutely. Thanksgiving. Yeah.

Rob Huff

Thanks, Kevin. So I have seen there are a number of questions in the chat. I see. Valerie just asked one about to homeowners need to have background checks. Yep. Good question.

Kevin Glackin-Coley

homeowners do have background checks. We actually had one of potential hosts that we had to turn down because they had a DV charge. And our residents have to do a background check to so there are certain you know, mostly it's crimes against crimes against persons that would be a stumbling block. We don't do UAS, people can can you know, it's their home. But again, it's the issue as long as it's not problematic for the neighborhood, the the host those kinds of things. I say my favorite stories is one host the resident is in our first home. I went to visit when I first started in August. And he made sure he'd gone to the store and had blueberries and ice cream waiting for when we came to visit because he you know, if you come to his house, he he's going to host you and then there were other residents who you know, that's you know, they don't want to meet another staff member from facing homelessness. So I don't go you know, but you know, there are folks who's like yeah, this is my home come on in. And my promise to him is next summer I bring raspberries and and the ice cream. So

Rob Huff

Oh, I know others might have questions and there may be others that are in the chat that we haven't covered yet. But we do need to move on with the agenda. I just wanted to say, Kevin, it's great to have you back today. And and I love this idea. So hopefully we can find a way to mobilize and take advantage of the model here.

Kevin Glackin-Coley

I'd love to. I'd love to just kick around ideas because that's how we'll learn. What's the next step we can do too. So whether it's finding way to partner this or for somebody else to develop something similar, but it's you know, if you ever want to come up to Seattle and see the shop or see one of the homes just let me know. I'd love to love to show it off and get to prove that you all have bodies that go beyond your necks.

Rob Huff

Fantastic. All right. Thanks, Kevin.

Kevin Glackin-Coley



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Thanks, everyone. Good day. Good to see you and hear your voices. I'm going to just stick around in the background here.

Rob Huff

Perfect. So I am going to shuffle our agenda a little bit which probably surprises no one Why don't we shift on to the government updates. I know that Alison from the city of Tacoma is here today. So Alison, would you like to share anything for an update from the city?

Allyson Griffith

Good morning, Robin. Good morning, everybody. Nice to see you. As Kevin says, at least from the neck up. I'm Allison Griffith. I serve as the Assistant Director for Neighborhood and Community Services for the City of Tacoma and I know that we have been somewhat lacking in our attendance. Just due to our staffing shortages. So I'm pleased to let you know a couple things about that day and then I have a couple of other updates. So I did just want to close the loop with you all in terms of I 705 and Eighth Street and the removal we performed there. We did have 33% of individuals in that location actually shelter so many sick folks went inside as a result of our heel team efforts out there. Um, I haven't seen I've been scrolling through so if I'm feeling sure under I apologize I didn't seem very on the call today. But I did want to let you all know that lighthouse actually placed six individuals into housing yesterday. So that's a huge positive outcome for lighthouse. So just want to say a big thank you to Sherry and to Vallejo, and Susan, if she's on the call. So thank you for that. We really appreciate those efforts. And then I'll also be putting in the chat we actually are getting ready to advertise for a manager for homeless engagement and alternatives liaisons or heel team so if you know somebody who has good reach and scared experience supervising teams that he what we're looking for in that position, so I'm going to put that link in the chat. And Valerie's letting me know it is open on our website she just saw. So thanks, Valerie for keeping an eye out. And then next week, Linda will be here to introduce our new homelessness. And homelessness strategies and solutions manager to you all so she will be coming next week. So we're getting staffed up guys and we will be here on a regular basis once once they are on board. So appreciate your patience with us. Well, we've been short staffed so thanks for the Zoom I'm happy to answer questions or all this

Rob Huff

does anybody have any questions for Alison? Not seeing any hands go up. Oh, here we go. Theresa.

Theresa Power-Drutis

Just a quick one on the people that you were able to provide shelter for? did you how did you accommodate their belongings? Did you do something different or? I mean, what about the storage issue that we keep hearing about?

Allyson Griffith



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So we do provide storage for anybody who needs it and that is at our stability site in conjunction CCS does a great job helping us with that. But also Karen has been great other search and rescue folks in terms of helping us transport individuals so we've been working with them Teresa the coordinate when we do a removal to get their folks down there with the bands if folks need help moving belongings and then we also did provide hubs for anybody who wanted them for storage over at the stability site. So

Theresa Power-Drutis

that's great. That's what I keep hearing people say they don't want to Well, in addition to not wanting to go into congregate shelters because of COVID The thing about storing their survival gear so if you have a way of doing that I can let people know that it might help to make people more receptive.

Allyson Griffith

Yeah, we do have so Teresa anytime we're doing a removal we do have an opportunity for folks to restore those items and and they're usually black, yellow tubs you know from Home Depot. So we're happy to make those available and if if you need help connecting with those, if we're doing another removal, let me know.

Rob Huff

Thank you, Alison. And if other folks have questions for Alison, you can drop them in the chat and let's shift gears over to hear from Jeff Rogers at Pierce County Human Services.

Jeff Rodgers

i We have no updates for today. What Yes, I know I strive to find things I asked people in the team for updates give me something to share with the coalition and everyone's come up silent.

Rob Huff

Okay. Well, we're glad you're here nonetheless. And how about Valerie from Pierce County Reynolds systems

Valeri Knight

are needing me see if my camera will work. I don't look great. Don't judge me. So rental assistance is going great. Just last week, we spent \$3.1 million. It was a very busy week. So so far to date since March 2021. We've spent 99 point 4 million which is about 71% of our allocation. We have We are waiting for a \$12 million contract for IRAP 2.0 which is the state funding and we put in a request with Treasury but they have still not responded. So you know we are serving about 700 800 households per month on average. We're getting ready to finalize some projections for when this portion of the project will be ending and then we'll move into the more lacs more permanent program with different eligibility requirements. The portal is still closed I am told that the contract is approved with the council and that they are they have approved it and as to the exact for signature so as soon as he signs we will get the



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green light and our portal vendor will hit the button and we'll go live so as soon as we know that happens, we will let you know our opening date. We'll put it on our website. We'll do a big social media push and let folks know we have about 9000 people who have registered for updates for when it opens. So I don't know if we'll get 9000 new applicants or not. But we'll let y'all know so you can share that information as well.

Rob Huff

Great Thank you Valerie. You're welcome. Congratulations on going good work. Let's hear from Jenny at the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department.

Jennie Schoeppe

Hi, everybody. Good morning. Pleasure to be with you. As always on. Let's see some updates from us. You've probably all heard that. Excuse me that masking guidance is being relaxed. Um, CDC came out with something this morning and you obviously saw or heard about the governor rescinding the indoor mask mandate as of the end of March Dr. Chen at the health department has also made a statement about this. I believe that the state doh will probably still have a strong recommendation that masks are worn in congregate settings but we don't know for sure on I would love to hear from folks. And I'll be asking in the specific shelter managers meetings as well. But I'd love to hear from you if you're working in a shelter or other housing space especially congregate. I'd like to hear from you about how you feel about the lifting of the mask mandate. Mask fatigue among you, your staff, your guests. What you might like to see from the state are my doh colleagues are asking folks like me who are in communication with the homeless shelter providers. To find out what people think about this. And you know, is it worth keeping strong recommendations on the books for for congregate settings on they're open to your feedback so if you have thoughts feelings, comments, concerns about this, please please email me so I can share those thoughts with my colleagues at the State as they think through what kind of recommendations they're going to ultimately make if they're going to carve out exceptions to the rescinding of the mask mandate for indoor settings, um, and you probably have my email but I'll drop it in the chat. Um, we are seeing COVID cases deaths and hospitalizations all down which is fantastic news. We've also seen outbreaks falling across the county. On one thing we are still seeing that is alarming as low vaccination rates among certain populations like those who are on Medicaid. We also see a big difference between the number of folks who have their initial vaccine series and folks who are fully fully vaccinated including boosts being boosted and the booster really, really helps with immunity. So it's important to really keep encouraging folks to get vaccinated and boosted because as I've said before in this meeting, and as you all probably know, the unvaccinated are really just being impacted greatly in terms of deaths, hospitalizations, and deaths. So I will drop our vaccine or link to our vaccine clinic information in the chat, found out this morning that our contract with ambulance that's been doing a lot of our that's been doing all our shelter based vaccine work has been extended through them to April which is really exciting. So I'm going to encourage them to keep working with the shelter's to do ongoing vaccine COVID vaccine clinics. I'm also encouraging them to connect with our outreach teams for direct from Canada vaccine work. So the CLR is in TRM. So I'm looking at you and I'm emailing



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folks to try and see if we can get that going again. I'm always a lot of changes going on with testing. Our testing team is working really, really hard. But keep looking at our website for updates. One of the big changes or updates that we're excited about is an opportunity to bring mobile on site mobile testing to organizations through one of our contractors. So that's in the works, and we'll probably be begin in March. And we're looking at different sites based on community need. And I'll share some links in the chat in terms of getting a hold of testing kits and also how you as an organization can request testing. Let's see. I will unfortunately I won't be at the meeting next week. I've had a death in the family and I will be going home to Alaska for a week to spend time with my family. So I will miss you all but I'm working on coverage to get someone from the health department here to give a little report out from me. Um, what questions do you have for the health department or for myself?

Rob Huff

Like there was a couple dropped in Okay. Probably respond to and

Jennie Schoeppe

oh, let's see biggest factor. Vax rates. Whoa, lots of questions. Let's see. Oh, thank you for your all your condolences. I really appreciate it. Um Do you see questions specifically for me, Rob? I'm just looking at the chat now.

Rob Huff

Let's see. So just there was a comment about the VAX raise. Yeah. Maybe there's not

Jennie Schoeppe

Yeah, it's you know, as folks at you know, it's tough because as we see cases drop see hospitalizations drop and those things um, you know, we're seeing a slowdown at vaccine events as well. And, but there are still like I mentioned, a lot of pockets of folks who are not vaccinated. Unfortunately, I wish I could give a more. I'm working internally to get a better data on our folks experiencing homelessness and see if we can get a better sense of vaccine rates among at least our shelter population, because that's something we traditionally haven't really been looking at. Um, I think there's been less less illness less you know, the outbreaks are decreasing. So those are all good signs, but we certainly need still to get folks vaccinated, especially the most vulnerable among us. I think it's good news that ambulance will be continuing to work at. They're working at 10 Different shelter and day center sites with us and doing ongoing vaccine outreach. And so I'm hopeful but yet something we still need to keep diligent about. Thanks, everyone, for your condolences. Thank you for your support of me. And I'm just I'm thrilled every week to be able to be with you. And thanks for all the work you're doing.

Rob Huff

Thank you, Jenny. And for our last government update I saw even on the call earlier. Do you have anything from the Department of Emergency Management for us today, Ivan.



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Ivan Tudela

Good morning, everyone. No, no updates from the last time we spoke. I know we're continuing the emergency shelter calls this afternoon. Weather seems to be stabilizing for the most part this week. Thank goodness, but any other major updates? I'll be sure to relate to my contacts at the coalition.

Rob Huff

Thank you, Ivan. Yeah, thankfully we've got it looks like we've got one more cold night. And then we shift to rain and wind. So it's still going to be miserable for folks out there. All right. So let's see. We've got a few things still left on our agenda today. Briefly, I wanted to see if Garrett could join me in doing a little bit of an update about the Pierce County art Council's audit committee heard an update on a assessment of the homelessness system that was done by an outside consultant. It's quite a long document and had a lot of interesting things to share in a two and a half hour meeting, something like that. That featured some comments from Garrett along the way. I do have some screenshots of slides that I thought might be interesting to share but it might actually be better just for folks to go look at the presentation, rather than me sharing the screenshot since we're running short on time. Do you have any highlights that you would want to share Garrett?

Gerrit Nyland

So this is a process that started last summer and was supposed to be completed within a couple of months so that it can be used as we built out the comprehensive plan to end homelessness. And it was a request of the county council, like Rob said through the through their audit subcommittee, and so we're going to take what's come out of it as we're working on implementation of the comprehensive plan and take the take the recommendations and work them into that as much as we can. I think the it's a fascinating read, mostly because of the amount of research that they've done. So if you want to know why they've recommended something, they've got it all footnoted and documented where you can read more and so that's that's what's gonna slow me down going through and the final reports not out yet. I don't believe I still have an early draft. And so we really just have what what Rob indicated from that presentation. I think the the biggest takeaway is that they believe it's all about housing, right to Kevin's presentation that it's all about housing and building more housing and talking about how little housing we're building, talking about how how research doesn't show a lot of the tools we're trying to use are are highly effective in ending homelessness compared to making it possible for people to afford housing, right. So building housing stock using housing vouchers, right, so some of our most expensive tools are the ones that they're really recommending. So like there's a lot of details some of it I am not really sure I'd buy into yet I got to spend more time with like, they're very suspicious of rapid rehousing because there's not a lot of current research that shows it's an awful lot better than not doing that. And that's oftentimes as as Mr. dike said during the presentation that I anyway, Andrew, that some of the things they're not recommending because there isn't research to support it doesn't mean that it's not an appropriate intervention. It just means that the current research isn't adequate enough for them to get behind. That was a lot but I mean, that's kind of my takeaway. Again, it is it's a 77 page document by



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the time it hopefully gets released to the public. It'll, you know, probably be longer, but I'm much more interested in what other people's thoughts are because my nose has been in it a bit too much. So, Rob.

Rob Huff

Yeah, and I see your hand up, Sally. So the other thing I would add, there were just some tidbits in there that reinforced a lot of the things that we typically hear said about homelessness, obviously, that the tight housing market and the economic situation along the west coast is, is what's contributing to the rise in homelessness. There was one data point that was dropped about a 1% rise in rent in Pierce County, leads to a 1% increase in homelessness. So that was interesting. I think there was another data point that was similar that carrot might have at the tip of his tongue,

Gerrit Nyland

every 100 Or every \$100 increase in rent. This is nationwide statistics every \$100 increase in rent, month to month, results in a 9% increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness. Right. So, right and that that really works, you know, against a lot of the narrative we hear in the community of like personal failure has to do with homelessness, right? Like, that's a pretty raw truth statistic. That's showing that linkage and yeah, I mean, not saying that anyone in this group, but a lot of times we hear you know, well, it really isn't it's about mental health and, and it's not to say that those aren't factors that you know, that impact people's ability to get rehoused, right like this report doesn't dismiss any of the, like, personal characteristics that that can contribute to difficulty getting rehoused and all of that but that the core like the the predominant factor is the cost of housing.

Rob Huff

Yeah. Sally, you have your hand up and then Kathy.

Sally Perkins

Yeah, the thing about that report that troubled me was toward the end, they have a whole section on the indirect costs of homelessness, which they take as being costs created for a county government and other systems. And I was really dismayed by that because county government helps create some of the impacts that caused people to be homeless. In the first place. When you look at the arrest statistics, or you look at who gets put in jail or whatever, all of those things, harm people's ability to get housing in the future. And so I tried to alert Ryan to the fact that he needed to push back on that and he started to but it's really critically important that we point out that sometimes the systems create their own costs by doing things that disadvantage some of the least powerful people in our community. So I'm kind of hoping that system impact gets to be part of the response to that report. Thank you.

Rob Huff

Thank you, Sally. And Kathy,



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Cathy Pick

unmute myself, thank you. This feedback is really important for our work at the tenants organizing committee and I was wondering, I'm sorry, I'm having technical issues and I wasn't able to type into the chat. If Garrett has a source for that. statistic, about \$100 increase in rent leads to a 9% increase in homelessness. You can type it into the chat and I can read it but I just that really helps to inform our work because we're in the prevention business, right? We don't want people to be displaced. This last week. I'm sure many of you might have heard about folks at apartment complex over on McKinley. 20 people who got the notice for them to vacate was proper timing. But their boilers been turned off and they were also receiving rental increase notices. And it just seems like the new owners are participating in some unethical behavior. Oh, I see that Garrett. Okay, the just the GAO Thank you. And I'm just very concerned because some of these folks are seniors and disabled, the population that we've really been talking about today, and some of them are going to need case management in the future. So if anyone has ideas about that, just go ahead and drop them in the chat. That would be outstanding. Thank you very much.

Rob Huff

Thank you, Cassie. And I think that the only other observation I would make from that report is there were a couple of slides that were interesting about the size of the homelessness system and shelter system in Pierce County compared to other communities across the country that we have an undersized system for when compared to other communities it that appears actually to be a West Coast problem as well, but I don't know if you would agree with that Garrett, but it looks like look like up and down on the West Coast. And probably because homelessness has been growing so much along the west coast, along with the booming economy. But that was of interest as well. So yeah, no questions on this.

Gerrit Nyland

And that it I think this reports interesting because of some of those context things right, where, you know, they would look for local data, US national data and sort of put how we approach things in that context. And a lot of times it's a little flawed. Like, you know, they're using pit counts. From across the country with our PIT count. But then if you just sort of say, Okay, well, maybe it's 25% wrong, I don't know but it's still I think super interesting just in and maybe how we need to shift how we think about some of these aspects of homelessness to your point Sally, as well, right that, you know, the highlighting different ways to look at things and consider them outside of what we're doing. I mean, that's why we go to conferences, that's why we read articles and all that but it's fun to have somebody have gone to conferences and read articles and looked at Pierce County and put it into their perspective.

Rob Huff

Yeah. And Kathy, your is your hand still up from before? Okay, great. So if folks have additional comments on this report, I'm sure Garrett can share it with us when it's finalized. I know there was



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some back and forth about some concerns about how some of at least one slide portrayed the dollars that are the sources of funds for funding the current system. So that was gonna be changed before it was finalized. But

Gerrit Nyland

can I do one more thing, Rob? Yeah, go ahead. They also did a little bit of some qualitative research so they had three focus groups. Shout out to Alan Brown that helps had some of that up and, and Fatima Lawrence and a bunch of our providers. And so there is some, I think, some new information that's worth reading as well. So it's not just this analytics, but it's also some analytics of kind of trends. They found in interviews with folks and they were looking at PII and this is an interesting one, we're looking at people in the community that have positive experiences with the homeless system. What are the elements that made it positive? And I mean, obviously, clicking barriers as well, but I was an interesting way to ask the question like what's been working what, what are some people that have been successful, what work and let's make sure that those parts are you know, embedded within all of our programs.

Rob Huff

So as I understand it, this, the audit committee accepted the report with the change that they want made on the one slide. And this is going to go forward to the end of the Human Services Committee. From this point. So for their review, is that correct?

Gerrit Nyland

I don't think so. I think that it's made its full journey and county. So what county council decides to do with it? I don't know it's as far as I'm concerned. It's a marching orders for us to incorporate the, you know, the recommendations, you know, or consider them at least into our implementation of the comprehensive plan. But I could be wrong on that. But that's kind of my take is it's and was in the audit committee, but maybe it goes to full council. I don't know. It's too bad. I'm ignorant. On this, Rob. I'll know this stuff someday.

Rob Huff

We're all doing our best. So let's shift gears over to the next item on the agenda. And that was a quick advocacy update. And I do want to make it quick so that we can do a breakout conversation next. So what I will say is that there's a couple of things the Tacoma City Council this week. this coming week has a relatively short regular meeting. Just a couple of items on the agenda. So I don't end and there's nothing directly related to homelessness on the study session agenda this next week, either. I'm sure that a number of us paid attention and logged into the community vitality and safety committee meeting last night. There was also no conversation during that meeting. They were focusing on appointments to committees during the meeting, and did not talk about the any updates on the proposed camping ban. However, they're still on track for March 10 to hold a couple of panel discussions during that meeting



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regarding the camping ban, so more will be coming on that and the timeline for that committee is to get a recommendation. Back to the full Tacoma City Council before the end of March. So there will be more to come on that. And then this week, the this next week, the the Pierce County Council's Human Services Committee on March 1 at 9:30am We'll have more conversation about approving the comprehensive plan to end homelessness and sending it to the full Council for consideration. So I'm going to paste in the chat the links to both the the committee page and the and the document that's the current version of the resolution so that folks can use that if they want to attend the meeting. On the first and then very briefly. Even things in Olympia are moving very quickly. Obviously the the session wraps up that while there's another cut out cut off coming on the 28th and the session itself wraps up on March 10. The big activities this week where that the House and Senate budgets came out on Monday. Everybody was supposed to make comments on them the following day. I saw some advocacy groups saying how are we supposed to get through the 1000 pages of budget documents and make informed comments? The next day? So a lot of challenges around the timing that happens during a short session in particular. What I will say is that the House Budget did include \$78 million to support housing and homelessness frontline service workers, so that that is included in the House Budget, not in the Senate budget. The House budget also included 500 million for the Housing Trust Fund for rapid acquisition and supportive housing. It will remain to be seen how the sausage gets made with combining these two budgets. And there still may be opportunities to advocate around that. What I will say is I will send once I receive an update that usually comes to this afternoon from the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance. I'll bump that to the full coalition list that will list some additional opportunities for folks to advocate with the lawmakers in Olympia for for the things that Housing Alliance would like to see move forward. And as a reminder, we did adopt their legislative agenda at the end of December as a coalition so we're continuing to support that going forward. One of the emails that I did get as an update while we've been in today's meeting, let me know that tomorrow morning at 9am. There will be a hearing on the extreme weather event bill. I think this is the bill that that Ed you testified on earlier in the session. So I will bump this email over to you head if you have an interest in continuing to advocate for that. This would be funding for for helping those who are homeless during extreme weather events. So it's very timely with what we've gone through this week. What we went through in December in early January as well and with the hot weather last year, so

Ed Jacobs

as it passed out of committee, it this

Rob Huff

is this is actually a hearing in the Ways and Means Committee. And then there's also then scheduled for the 28th at 10am to be heard in executive session and Senate Ways and Means so it's still alive. So I'll bump that over to you. And that's it for for the updates for advocacy right now. We are about 10 minutes behind on the agenda but I still would like to spend a few minutes in a breakout conversation since we have so many folks with us still. We wanted to hold the breakout conversation around what what are your thoughts about why low barrier and manage camping sites and other immediate shelter



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solutions are not being developed right now? We'd love to hear your thoughts about why this is not why we're not seeing the kinds of continuum of shelter options that would be more acceptable to more people who have been living through the cold outdoors over this last week. And what are your ideas to help overcome some of those barriers? So two parts to the conversation? What do you think is keeping us from our community from moving forward with these types of housing or shelter options? And what are some ideas to overcome those barriers? So let's spend 10 minutes in the breakouts. And if someone in a group could take notes for your group and paste them in the chat afterward, that would be fantastic and away we go.

<Breakout Rooms>

Rob Huff

Welcome back, everyone. I know that time was way too short, and this may be a topic that we want to rejoin. But I also recognize today's meeting is getting away from us. We're down to 1050 already. So those who took notes during your breakout conversation, please drop those in the chat and maybe that can help inform the next time we talk about this topic or something similar. We do want to, you know, the the There's dual purpose for these conversations one so that we can all just get an opportunity to talk to each other in smaller rooms, but also to kind of share ideas and guide future meetings. So thank you for hanging in there. So among the things we still have left in today's meeting, I don't think Jan did you have anything critical you wanted to say about safe sites for all committee?

Janet Runbeck

Well, welcome one and all I want to see everybody on Monday at noon zoom. We talked about safe parking network. And now we're talking about different approaches to to issues with the unsheltered.

Rob Huff

Yeah, and you can find that link on the PC homeless.org website for that meeting and all of the other community meetings as well. Rosemary, was there anything we wanted to do and coalition committee updates today?

Rosemary Powers

I don't think anything particular I just, I can just do it now. I I'm putting in the chat. Oh dear. Why don't there an opportunity for more information. That announcement that came up the steering committee does a event happening on March 2 530, which will be an opportunity to listen to people from King County describe what they're doing to try to have housing solutions. So some of the conversation today would fit well. With if anyone wants to attend this and bring your voice to understanding what have happened in appears in King County may be of use to us as we try to move forward with issues in Pierce County. So that's a you'll have there's opportunity for breakout as well as listening to people from Kane county speak and encourage you all to consider that as a way to get more information.



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Rob Huff

Thank you rosemary, and that is also listed on the PC homeless.org website. That event as well as a link to the flyer for the event. Is there on the website, thanks to Garrett putting that up earlier this week. So

Rosemary Powers

yeah, they see that the link that I put in didn't work so I took it from the flyer I'm not sure if I copied it wrong or

Rob Huff

Okay. Well, the link to the event is actually on the PC homeless page. as well. So folks can just go to PC homeless Oregon and access the registration there. I believe there's a head nod from Garrett to confirm it. So that's a great segue into any kind of just general announcements that people would like to share with the larger group. Does anybody else have any announcements they would like to share with the 50 or so of us who are still in the room. And

Ed Jacobs

yes, we will have a memorial for those people that have died in the last three months. On the 20th of March, homeless folks that have died in the last three months and more information next week as to time place all of that information.

Rob Huff

Okay, yeah. What's the time and place are all set well, that will also be listed on the PC homeless website. And you're anticipating this will be an in person event as well.

Ed Jacobs

Yes, okay. Great, and, and we will probably live stream it as well.

Rob Huff

Okay. Very good. Anyone else with just some general announcements for the group? Rob?

Rosemary Powers

That message from Megan in the chat about the voter registration maybe should highlight that? Yeah,

Rob Huff

I did see that. And she provided her email address. So thank you for that. Megan.

Gerrit Nyland



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There was a nice little shout out from the county executive about the court Resource Center and Hardman and his blog posts today and so I put a link into that. And I got Okay.

Rob Huff

All right, and any other general announcements? All right, not seeing any right now. I also like to carve out a little time if people would like to offer any thoughts about today's meeting, reflect on what worked well. What we need to improve or shift and you can do that either verbally right now or in the chat. I see Patricia has her hand up.

Patricia

Sort of what came up in our group and something that I wanted to just speak of as being like a lived experience ambassador, is that people protect what's considered like I call it their best friend, whether it be addiction, whether it be depression, whether it be their mental health, and they'll protect that even besides the elements in which come upon them, and how can we move them out of it's not good, better and different, but how can we move from that best friend and that internal speech into something that protects them from like the elements and in in a more healthy environment and even to move towards treatment? So thank you for letting me share. Hopefully, that's helpful.

Rob Huff

And I'm seeing some thumbs up from folks as well. who appreciate that any others with thoughts about today's meeting that they would like to share? Okay, so I don't know how he did it, but we've got three minutes left in the hour, and I really do like to leave up leave the opportunity to end early so thank you, everyone, for being here today. For those who hung in for the full two hours. And if you have an interest in helping us inform the next few Friday meetings we'll have a planning group meeting right after this. Well, after a five minute break to the rest of you, I hope everybody has a good safe weekend. We'll see you all again next week.