

TO: Homeless Advisory Board Representatives

I am forwarding some important information that affects our community and its homeless response.

1. **The topic for September presentations to City Councils is changing.** We needed to have more clarity in the strategic plan before presenting it to the wider audience for support. In addition, our Community Action Agency (CSC) has a timely need to present the **Linn-Benton-Lincoln Continuum of Care** so Pegge will be taking the timeslots. My office is assisting with the coordination and submitting the presentation and handouts in order to be available in the municipality packets.
2. **CALL TO ACTION HB5019 Funding is in Jeopardy.** Some confusing and unusual information was sent late this week from the State regarding the distribution of funds from the HB5019 Community Plan process. As you know, there were two pieces of this legislation – non-competitive rapid rehousing funds based on the creation of a comprehensive Community Plan and competitive shelter funds based on separate applications. Our formula funding was already announced and our Community Plan was approved. Lead agencies then received an email with this information ***“Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) has completed the initial evaluation of shelter addendum submissions. We received 29 proposals, totaling over \$37 million in shelter funding requests. With this abundant request for shelter funds, OHCS will reduce formula funding for rapid rehousing to compensate for this additional need for shelter.”*** See attached for an group email from OHCS stating the shift in funding. This is a serious concern and I have submitted the following comments in response: *“ I do want to state my concern over the redistribution of the rapid rehousing funds after being told they were non-competitive. We had community participation in determining the needs based on the distributions already announced. Our community was one of the lowest funded and we have a severe lack of housing and sheltering options. The rapid rehousing funds are as critically important to our success as the shelter beds in being able to get unhoused individuals into long term, successful solutions despite the competition for housing from tourists. I am strongly advocating against Lincoln County’s formula distributions being modified. This is an equity moment. We are based on a point in time count that (due to capacity issues) was not able to actually happen – our homeless/underhoused needs are significantly higher than stated and in order to get to that capacity we need support.”* Additional lead agencies have also voiced their concerns. **I encourage everyone in this group to send their thoughts (feel free to use the words above) to (please CC me):**
 - a. EO2302.questions@HCS.oregon.gov,
 - b. hcs_dl_special_initiatives@hcs.oregon.gov
 - c. Jody.L.ERICKSON@hcs.oregon.gov
 - d. phoebe.colman@hcs.oregon.gov
3. Speaking of funding...a recent news report declared a **funding emergency** for one of our regional partners in sheltering, **Helping Hands** . [Click here for the broadcast](#) , which stated that if additional funding is not received soon the organization could potentially need to cease operations in mid-September. We are looking into what this means for the **Lincoln City HOPE Center at the LeRoy Benham** and will keep you posted.
4. **County Sheltering Update.** A purchase order has been accepted on a building in Newport and the Housing Authority is in due diligence moving towards a September 30 closing. This will not allow time for the shelter to be open for operation at the beginning of the winter season, so local congregations have stepped forward to volunteer their space under the operations of the County Health and Human Services Department. Currently **First Presbyterian Church** and **St. Stephen Episcopal Church** have stepped forward for facility use, and the **Atonement Lutheran Church** and **Sacred Heart Catholic Church** are assisting with auxiliary services. The County has

also solidified its budget for staffing the operations including a **Winter Shelter Coordinator** . The County understands the importance of have sheltering options in both Newport and Lincoln City, and is working to identify sites and partners in Lincoln City as well.

5. A few weeks ago the **Urban League of Portland** hosted a **“Community Conversation” in Lincoln City on “Housing Access and Mental Health” and explored the realities of homelessness on the coast** . Its President and CEO, Nkenge Harmon Johnson spoke with Lincoln County Commissioner Claire Hall, Northwest Coastal Housing Executive Director Sheila Stiley, and OHCS Executive Director Andrea Bell. It was a great conversation and can be now be seen on [You Tube](#) . The evening also honored community champions doing dynamic work reflective of our values including the **Olalla Center** , the partners behind **Coastal Phoenix Rising Project** , and **Samaritan House** . ***Congratulations Alex Lluminquina, Sheila Stiley, and Lola Jones for their work leading these organizations!!***

Thank you all for working together to make sure everyone in our community has a place to call home!

All questions are welcome -

Karen

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