

Aging Well Whatcom Steering Committee
December 6, 2019
Bellingham Senior Activity Center, 315 Halleck St.

MINUTES

Attending:

Carol Nicolay, Health Ministries Network
Chris Orr, Whatcom Council on Aging
Dr. Chao-ying Wu, Chuckanut Health Foundation Board/Family Care Network
Dr. Dave Lynch, Chuckanut Health Foundation Board/Family Care Network (retired)
Heather Flaherty, Chuckanut Health Foundation
Janet Malley, Whatcom Transportation Authority
Mary Anderson, Whatcom Transportation Authority
Melinda Herrera, Rosewood Villa
Ryan Blackwell, Northwest Regional Council
Sarah Lane, YMCA
Tessa Whitlock, Chuckanut Health Foundation
Tonja Myers, Christian Health Care Center

Regrets:

Amy Hockenberry, Whatcom County Health Department
Becky Kirkland, PeaceHealth Center for Senior Health
Heidi Bugbee, Generations Early Learning & Family Center
Marie Eaton, Palliative Care Institute, WWU
Wendy Lawrence, Opportunity Council

Welcome, Introductions, Reflection and Updates

Lara welcomed the group, including Phil Wolf of the Bellingham Senior Activity Center Advisory Council who sat in for parts of the meeting. Committee members shared reflections related to family, simplicity, generosity and gratitude.

Membership updates and discussion:

- Mary Carlson and Elaine Cress have both decided to step off the Steering Committee. The group expressed gratitude and appreciation for their service, which Lara has extended on behalf of the group.
 - Mary Anderson suggested inviting the volunteer coordinator from the Bellingham School District to sit on the Steering Committee. Tonja recalled the intention to try to get someone from one of the other school districts to increase county representation.
 - Could there be a representative from both? We want to be inclusive; however, there are other sectors that we'd like to have represented on the Steering Committee, specifically business, and tribal.
 - Heather noted that Vinson Latimore is interested in being a member, which would bring a business perspective.
- ➔ **DECISION:** An ad hoc committee, with Heather, Tonja, Mary and Melinda, will discuss membership issues further and bring recommendation to the full committee.

AWW Presentations updates and discussion:

The process for assigning presenters has been slightly revised, with Heather reviewing the requests to “triage” and consider if CHF or other specific partners would be best for a given request. Strategically matching the presenters to the audience would help leverage existing relationships, and/or be helpful in building new ones.

Lara will be reviewing the Powerpoint presentations created by Carol (shorter version) and Marie (longer version) to align the content and formatting.

Recent presentations:

- Marie did a combination presentation-workshop on Lummi Island with about 70 people.
- Heather was invited to present to the United Way Board, and she shared the planning and blueprint development process.
- Mary and Lara presented to the NW chapter of the Planning Association, with about 25 planners from the North Sound region.

Heather and Marie will be doing the presentation to PeaceHealth in January.

Review and Approve Minutes

Minutes from the November 1, 2019 AWW meeting were approved with the following correction: Ryan Blackwell was not in attendance.

Proposal for Moving AWW Forward

A draft conceptual framework for AWW [*attachment 2 in meeting packet*] was reviewed. This proposes four “big projects” that address the top strategies based on green dots from Summit. The big projects would be coordinated by other organizations, the de-centralized approach the Steering Committee discussed at the last meeting, based on the recognition that CHF and AWW Steering Committee can’t (and shouldn’t) be solely responsible for blueprint implementation. In addition, “small projects” related to any aspect of the blueprint could be used to engage and activate community members and groups, and include people who indicated interest in areas other than the top strategies. Small projects could be supported by mini-grants.

The group discussed each of the four proposed big projects.

Explore/pursue AARP Livable Cities Designation – comments and discussion:

- AARP designation would “ensure that representatives of older adult groups are given a voice in policy discussions” (#1 green dot strategy based on Summit green dot votes).
- Would it though? Underlying assumption may not be true. A more grassroots, locally-generally effort might be more effective at achieving this.
- The process to get the designation may onerous, and not the best use of time and energy.
- AARP staff who attended the Summit said the AWW blueprint process was essentially the first phase of pursuing designation for the Livable Communities Network.
- What would the designation really mean?
- Designation could be beneficial; like a degree, it’s an affirmation or “stamp of approval.”
- Elected officials at the Summit seemed very interested in the Livable Communities Network designation when they learned about it from AARP staff at the Summit, so it could be a tool to get elected officials involved. It could also lead to governmental offices committing to using an aging well lens in policy and program decisions.
- If this is pursued, it should be seeking designation for Whatcom County, not just Bellingham.
- Going through the AARP process could prolong the “now what” phase we are currently in.
- There could be a “both-and” approach of seeking AARP designation and using grassroots tactics.

➔ **DECISION:** This should not be an AWW project until there is more information to assess the cost/benefit and decide on direction. An ad hoc committee will investigate these questions and bring information and recommendation to the full committee.

- Mary, Sarah, and Ying volunteered to be on the committee.
- It was suggested that County Council members Carol Frazey and Tyler Bird also be invited to join the committee.

- Dave will be in Sarasota FL, which is part of the AARP Livable Cities Network; he will do some on-the-ground research about their experience.

Design and create information/resource repository – comments and discussion:

- This is both important and seems fairly “do-able.”
- It is building infrastructure that supports much of what we want to accomplish.
- It’s high-profile and could jumpstart other activities
- It’s important that the information and system be designed for everyone to use, not just the underserved.
- Avoid making it a “social service,” where people who use it are “clients.”
- Accessible and easy to navigate is key.
- Insurance payers could be good partners in developing this.

➔ **DECISION:** This should be a 2020 AWW project. Whatcom Council on Aging and NW Regional Council are willing to co-lead it.

Convene intergenerational groups for support and opportunity and advocacy – comments and discussion:

- This is “mushy” compared to the concreteness of the information repository.
- A more tangible project would be to identify or create a how-to toolkit to assist organizations and businesses with integrating intergenerational practices and activities.
- The committee that developed the intergenerational community section of the blueprint would be excited to work on this.

➔ **DECISION:** This should be a 2020 AWW project, but needs to be better defined. The first step should be to re-convene the intergenerational committee and invite others from the Summit who indicated interest. This group would be tasked with reviewing the goals and associated strategies, and determining the best approach to implementation.

Design and implement awareness campaign – comments and discussion:

- This did not get a lot of green dot votes, but has always been a priority for the CHF and AWW. CHF has already committed financial resources to it.
- A commitment to action or change should be an aspect of the campaign – something more active than just awareness.

➔ **DECISION:** This will be an AWW project, coordinated by a subgroup of the Steering Committee.

➔ **ACTION:** Lara will revise the framework based on these decisions.

➔ **ACTION:** Lara will draft a 2020 workplan with goals, actions, people responsible, and timelines.

Other discussion on AWW Framework:

• **Strategies not addressed by the 2020 Projects:**

- There are 5 strategies that had 8+ green dots that DON’T correspond to any of the Projects. Do we just set those aside for now?
- There should be some follow up. It’s important to acknowledge the interests of these people, and they may have energy to do something on their own.
- Carol pointed out that Health Ministries Network is already working to *Develop workforce for home-based healthcare services and in-home caregivers*, and could perhaps increase activity in this area.
- Melinda emphasized the importance of *Advocating for increased Medicaid rates*, and would be willing to coordinate discussion.

- Janet noted that WTA is already working to *Increase outreach and education about existing transportation options*. She suggested that a community workgroup to *Explore innovative transportation models* may be timely, given possible decreases in funding for public transportation.
- Lara and Ryan pointed to the importance of pushing the work out to organizations and groups beyond the steering committee.

➔ **DECISION:** Email the people who indicated these strategies as top picks and invite and encourage them to connect with each other if they wish to explore action in these areas.

- **Funding**

- Ideally funding from other organizations would also flow into the AWW “container.”
- It will be helpful to have specific information on what the CHF’s financial commitment is, in order scale the work to match the available resources and/or secure other funding or in-kind resources.
- CHF’s process for funding AWW projects will likely be separate from the Foundation’s regular grant-making process. The big projects may be funded via an allocation, rather than a proposal/request. Small projects will need a simple grant-making process defined.

➔ **ACTION:** Heather will work on determining funding amounts and processes with the CHF Board and Grants Committee.

AWW Membership Commitment

Heather reviewed key points from a discussion regarding criteria for joining the AWW Coalition. The intent was to keep Coalition membership open and inclusive by keeping the criteria simple. Individuals, businesses, and organizations wishing to become Coalition members would be asked to agree to:

- Advance the goals and purposes as appropriate for their organization
- Support and advocate for the goals of the blueprint, which could include
 - Agree to have your organization listed as supporting the Coalition
 - Support Coalition priorities and projects when possible
 - Commit to code of conduct and respect and come with best intent
 - Endorse the blueprint conceptually as a community vision and consider in organizational planning when appropriate and possible (NOT a commitment to taking on every piece of the blueprint).

Members would be invited, but not required, to add the AWW logo and/or upload the blueprint to their organization’s website, and have AWW make a presentation to their team, business, or board. Organizational members’ logos could also be placed on the AWW website, as well as a list of individual members.

Age-friendly status (indicated by window stickers or other marker) would be a higher-level commitment, the criteria for which still need to be defined.

Steering Committee members supported these recommendations.

AWW Steering Committee Charter

This item was not discussed due to lack of time.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

- For 2020, AWW Steering Committee meetings will continue on the first Friday of the month, 9-11 AM.
- Members would like to continue with rotating meeting locations.
- There will be no January meeting, to allow time for the ad hoc committees to meet.
- The next AWW Steering Committee meeting will be Friday, February 7, 2020 at the YMCA.