

Ageing Well Whatcom Steering Committee

Friday, February 7, 2020

Whatcom Family YMCA, 1256 N State St.

MINUTES

Attending:

Amy Hockenberry, Whatcom County Health Department
Becky Kirkland, PeaceHealth Center for Senior Health
Chris Orr, Whatcom Council on Aging
Dr. Chao-ying Wu, Chuckanut Health Foundation Board/Family Care Network
Heather Flaherty, Chuckanut Health Foundation
Heidi Bugbee, Generations Early Learning & Family Center
Janet Malley, Whatcom Transportation Authority
Marie Eaton, Palliative Care Institute, WWU
Mary Anderson, Whatcom Transportation Authority
Melinda Herrera, Rosewood Villa
Ryan Blackwell, Northwest Regional Council
Sarah Lane, YMCA
Tammy Bennet, YMCA
Tessa Whitlock, Chuckanut Health Foundation
Tonja Myers, Christian Health Care Center

Regrets:

Carol Nicolay, Health Ministries Network
Dr. Dave Lynch, Chuckanut Health Foundation Board/Family Care Network (retired)
Wendy Lawrence, Opportunity Council

Welcome, Introductions, Reflection

Lara welcomed the group, and invited Committee members to share their thoughts on the AWW mission and guiding principles, which were developed almost two years ago.

Reflections:

- Several people said the guiding principles still felt true, still resonate, and still describe the work.
- #2 – it’s reminder to add other voices and broaden the discussion beyond this room. This includes thinking about ALL of Whatcom County, not just Bellingham.
- #3 – “evidence-based action” sparked conversation about qualitative assessment and the value of “how things feel” or situations where “you can’t measure it, but it’s real.” Programs with enough evaluation to qualify as evidence-based can be costly. Adding “evidence informed” and “promising practices” would broaden the range of approaches beyond “evidence-based.”
- #4 – “welcoming all” feels passive, as if we expect people to come to us. How can we actively reach out to others?
- #5 especially resonated with some people, with its specific focus on the whole community.

Mission: We promote living well through all our years into the end of life.

Guiding Principles *[numbered here for referencing in the meeting minutes].*

1. We work with and for those aging in our community.
2. We work through collective action, guided by individual and community voices.
3. We take evidence-based action.
4. We are committed to equity and inclusion, welcoming all.
5. We believe that healthy design for an aging community is healthy design for the whole community.

In the mission, the word “promote” seems passive. A more active word such as “execute” or “advance” would be stronger. Also, promotion is often associated with marketing.

Marie shared information about upcoming events [Departure Lounge: Are you ready for the journey](#) (improv theater related to end-of-life, bound to be humorous) on April 4, and the Palliative Care Institute’s annual conference, this year titled [Care Across Cultures](#) on April 17. [Lara’s plug: check out the Palliative Care Institute’s [events page](#) for many local classes and events related to serious illness and end-of-life.]

Review and Approve Minutes

Minutes from the December 6, 2019 AWW meeting were approved as written.

Steering Committee Workplan for 2020

The group reviewed the revised AWW framework [*attachment 2 in meeting packet*] and draft 2020 workplan [*attachment 3*]. The workplan has two broad goals, one focused on implementing blueprint strategies and one on building steering committee and coalition infrastructure.

Committee members provided updates and the group discussed the following sections of the workplan:

Blueprint Implementation

CHF funding

Heather reported that the CHF grants committee has not met yet this year, but she and Ryan discussed funding and think a combination of strategic and responsive funding approaches would be appropriate for AWW.

The amount directed toward AWW hasn’t been determined; CHF’s total grants budget is about \$450,000 and there are other areas to fund in addition to AWW. Heather plans to propose to the grants committee that main AWW projects be approved without a formal application process, since AWW is an established strategic priority for CHF.

For smaller projects, there would be a special grant round for AWW, separate from the foundation’s usual October and April grant-making. Proposals aligned with the blueprint would be accepted, evaluated, and funded or not (responsive approach). These would be small grants, using a simple process such as the one used for the Whatcom Community Foundation’s Project Neighborly.

Review and approval would be a joint process between AWW and the CHF grants committee, perhaps with a subcommittee so it doesn’t get too cumbersome. Evaluation criteria would be set to align with the blueprint, and could incorporate [Results Based Accountability](#) (there was a recent community training on this, and Heather would like to share the approach with the steering committee).

Another possibility is to require that applicants to meet with a steering committee member about their proposed project. This would help the applicants talk through their idea, and Steering Committee members could assess the project a bit more in depth and provide input into the funding decision.

➔ **ACTION: Heather will present and facilitate discussion on Results Based Accountability at the March meeting.**

AARP Livable Cities designation [Lara’s note: The official name is **AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.**]

Mary, Ying and Heather met this morning and discussed considering other designations in addition to AARP Livable Cities. A designation would be a “stamp” and indicate affiliation with an organization or network, and could get the attention of elected officials.

Discussion and comments:

- We need to know to what degree such a designation would be important to policy makers.
- Would seeking such a designation/membership address the related blueprint strategies? It's important to stay grounded in the blueprint.

➔ **ACTION:** AARP subgroup will contact Tacoma, pool the information from Seattle, Puyallup, and Tacoma, and talk with Whatcom County elected leaders Sidhu, Fleetwood, Bird, and Frazey.

Information/resource repository

Ryan and Chris shared that they're working to understand "what wheels are out there" before inventing anything new. There is an already-formed effort called Resource Roundtable (aka Power House of Knowledge) that is exploring options for building a community wide system. Chris will be attending their next meeting on February 21.

Ryan met with NW Regional Council staff to discuss the resources and systems being used there, and what the limitations/needs are. The NWRC has a lot of information in hardcopy, and has been populating the statewide database/website Community Living Connections (CLC). However, this information tends to be safety net resources, and the user-end of CLC is poor and would need to be improved.

He also talked with 211, the statewide call line run by Volunteers of America. North of Snohomish 211 isn't very effective because communities have not populated the database with their local programs and services. However, the platform already exists, and Health Bridge (used by the Accountable Communities of Health) uses the same one, so its potential should be explored.

Discussion and comments:

- Marie suggested having an "add" and "ask" option on the website; WhatcomCares has this feature and it helps populate the website and get input from users.
- This project is important because it's tangible and shows that AWW is "really doing something."
- How to assist with the navigation part? Videos might be one option.

Intergenerational community

Tonja reported that she met with three members of the Intergenerational community blueprint committee and Lara. They are planning a meeting on Feb 28, 1-3PM at the Health Education Center, inviting Summit participants who "green dotted" Intergenerational strategies, as well as others who may be interested. The intent is to form a workgroup and have an intergeneration workplan ready to share at the summit on Oct 2. We hope that someone with the ability to coordinate/lead the project might emerge at the February meeting.

Discussion and comments:

- Suggestions for people to include: Melinda Husky (VP Student Affairs at WWU), Cindy Reuther (director of new intergenerational high school), Astrid Newell at the Health Department who is involved with early childhood initiatives.
- Amy reported that a Children and Family Action Plan was presented to and approved by County Council earlier this week. AWW intergenerational strategies may align with or could be leverage by the activities in this plan.

➔ **ACTION:** Amy will send out the Children and Family Action Plan to all.

Steering Committee and Coalition Infrastructure

Outreach and awareness

Tessa and Heather shared a draft plan for activities planned for 2020. Outreach activities will include connecting Steering Committee members with AWW Summit attendees who requested presentations, and ongoing scheduling of requests for AWW presentations. Summit attendees interested in strategies other than AWW's 2020 priorities will also be directly contacted, inviting them to meet and explore actions they can take.

The CHF Community Engagement Committee will take the lead on planning and executing the public awareness campaign, in conjunction with AWW steering Committee members. Activities include:

- 1-2 targeted actions in 2020
 - Business-friendly campaign, with “Age-friendly” designation for businesses (window sticker)
- AWW summary will be included in CHF “roadshow” presentations
- CHF will send out quarterly newsletters to AWW membership and post on AWW website
- Interviews and blog posts from AWW Steering Committee members
- Updates on AWW activity and invitations for involvement
- “Request a presentation” and “I want to participate” forms on AWW website

Discussion and comments:

- Let’s be sure to actively pursue giving AWW presentations to funders.
- Becky and Melinda volunteered to contribute to blog posts, and Ying is willing to do “assigned tasks.”

Steering Committee membership

Heather shared draft guidelines for steering committee membership. They include a general philosophy that reflects AWW principles, terms of service, committee size, representation, candidate criteria, nomination process, and mechanisms for joining.

For representation, permanent seats would be held for seven key organizations. Representation would also be sought from specific sectors and community voices; recommendations were cross-walked with input from summit participants regarding who else should be included in AWW work.

People interested in serving on the steering committee would be asked to attend a meeting as a visitor. In addition, interested people would meet with 1-2 current members; based on that meeting, the current steering committee member(s) could recommend the new member to the full group. Approval would be decided by majority vote.

Suggestions to membership guidelines:

- Add the number of meetings members are expected to attend each year.
- Call it a “working committee” to indicate there is sometimes subcommittee work or other tasks between meetings.

Heather modeled this process by recommending Vinson Latimore as a new steering committee member. Vinson is on the YMCA Board and reached out to Heather after an AWW presentation last October. He attended the November AWW steering committee meeting. He represents diversity and the health care sector (he owns at least one assisted living or skilled nursing facility, outside of Whatcom County); equally important, he has stayed engaged – even during this awkward time when the steering committee didn’t have a defined membership process.

➔ **DECISION:** Steering Committee members approved Vinson’s membership by majority vote.

➔ **ACTION:** Lara will combine the membership document with the draft steering Committee charter and send out to all for review.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

The next AWW Steering Committee meeting will be Friday, March 6, 2020 at the Christian Health Care Center in Lynden.