

# Aging Well Whatcom Initiative

Friday, March 1, 2019

9:00-11:00 AM

At the Center for Philanthropy

## MINUTES

### Attending:

Amy Hockenberry, Whatcom County Health Department  
Becky Kirkland, PeaceHealth Center for Senior Health  
Carol Nicolay, Health Ministries Network  
Elaine Cress, Whatcom Council on Aging  
Heather Flaherty, Chuckanut Health Foundation  
Mary Anderson, Whatcom Transportation Authority  
Mary Carlson, community member  
Ryan Blackwell, Northwest Regional Council  
Sarah Lane, YMCA  
Tonja Myers, Christian Health Care Center  
Wendy Lawrence, Opportunity Council  
Heidi Bugbee, Generations Early Learning & Family Center  
Colleen Harper, Bellingham At Home  
Dr. Chao-ying Wu, Chuckanut Health Foundation Board/Family Care Network

### Regrets:

Kristin Granstrand, Mercy Housing Northwest  
Melinda Herrera, Rosewood Villa  
Pauline Smith, Skagit Adult Day Program  
Jenny Weinstein, Opportunity Council  
Marie Eaton, Palliative Care Institute, WWU  
Dr. Dave Lynch, Chuckanut Health Foundation Board/Family Care Network (retired)  
Janet Malley, Whatcom Transportation Authority

## Welcome and Introductions

Lara welcomed the group; members introduced themselves and reflected on what supports or connections THEY would like to have when they are older.

Ying suggested table tents with names on them to help with remembering names, and others agreed this would be useful.

**ACTION** → Lara will make these and bring them to the next meeting.

## Review and Approve Minutes

Minutes from February 1, 2019 were approved as written.

## Updates

- Amy shared information about the Health Department's Healthy Whatcom Initiative. The Health Department conducts a community health improvement process every five years. In this iteration, a Healthy Whatcom group (community partners and stakeholders) is helping to design and guide the

process. Ryan observed that the group doesn't include a representative of the older adult population, and there was agreement that it would be desirable to add this.

The Health Department's [community health assessment](#), carried out in 2018, includes many health indicators. Now the Healthy Whatcom group is prioritizing areas using a set of defined criteria in preparation for a data carousel on April 26<sup>th</sup>. The data carousel will involve many additional partners and community members and will further narrow down the priority areas.

Amy noted that Healthy Whatcom and Aging Well have been somewhat parallel processes, and there may be ways to align the two. Several people from the Health Department will be meeting with Lara and Heather to discuss this next week.

Mary C. said that from a non-profit perspective, it's helpful to have one set of priorities rather than several different sets that don't necessarily connect to each other.

- Ryan reported that the [Long Term Care Trust Act](#), now HB 1087, passed out of the House, so for those who support this bill, now is a good time to advocate for it. The organization [Washingtonians for a Responsible Future](#) is leading statewide advocacy efforts.
- Heather announced that Nathan Kottkamp, the founder of National Healthcare Decisions Day, will be coming to Whatcom County in April. The CHF will host an informal reception with him on April 16. Aging Well and Northwest Life Passages Coalition members will be invited, and the reception would be a good opportunity for each Coalition to share what they are doing and exchange information and ideas.

## Blueprint Development – Committee Updates

### Transportation, Access, Mobility and Design

Mary A reported that the committee met on Feb 28 and now includes the owner of Right At Home (in home care), the City of Bellingham's ADA Coordinator, and a representative from NWRC Medicaid Transportation along with Mary. The group completed a draft of the template, which they will review and discuss again. Mary noted that developing policy strategies felt challenging for the group.

### Cultural Shift

Colleen shared that the committee met, had a productive discussion and filled in an outline on the template. In addition to Colleen, Marie and Ying, two people from Bellingham at Home are now on the committee (one of them hosts a Gifts of Aging interest group). A challenge for this committee was translating the abstract discussion into more concrete elements for the Blueprint. The committee will meet again on March 22.

### Intergenerational Community

Tonja said the committee met on Feb 26. This committee has added Susan Given-Seymour, Andrea from the Center for Spiritual Living, Kristi Slette from Whatcom Family and Community Network, and two people from the Whatcom County library system (not all of them were at the first meeting). The discussion was "big and messy" and developing policy strategies was the most challenging part. A draft template has been completed and the committee has meetings scheduled for March 8 and March 29.

## Housing

Wendy reported that the committee met on Feb 19. Samya from the City of Bellingham, Tony from the Bellingham/Whatcom Housing Authority and Teri from the Homeless Service Center are new committee members. The group spent a fair amount of time on the background of Aging Well, what the Blueprint is, etc. with Aging Well members Mary C, Jenny and Elaine providing this context. The group got as far as gaps and barriers in the template; Jenny and Wendy are compiling their notes to create a first draft of the template. The committee will meet again on March 19.

## Health and Wellness

Amy shared that she, Pauline, Becky and Sarah met on Feb 28. They felt it was important to start with defining health and wellness in order to effectively complete the template. Many different issues were placed into this category (Ying pulled up a photo from the December prioritizing session and stated, “it’s not a category at all!”). Amy asked about narrowing down “health and wellness” to something more focused; the group agreed that this made sense and supported the committee in doing this. It has also been challenging to bring in additional committee members. A few suggestions were offered, and Amy, Sarah and Lara agreed to talk after the meeting.

## Information and Navigation Services

Ryan stated that this committee met on Feb 28. In addition to Ryan, Carol and Melinda, Australia from WAHA, and Amy Charlot. Kaaran Anderson from the Elder Law Offices of Meyers, Neubeck & Hulford hopes to participate in the future. The group did a “walk through” with the template and will continue to develop it.

Lara thanked leads and members of all the committees for taking on the extra work of creating the Blueprint. She observed that some committees are seeing the need for additional assessment or exploration in their focus area and acknowledged that committees are working with *relatively little information*, which can be a challenge and limitation. Additional assessment or exploration is a reasonable short-term strategy to build into the Blueprint.

Lara also requested that committee leads send her the full names and email addresses of new Committee members so she can compile into a committee listing.

## Blueprint Chapter 2

Heather reflected that so far Aging Well has been sponsored and convened by the Chuckanut Health Foundation. Since the completion of the Blueprint is approaching, she asked the group to consider the role they would like to see CHF play going forward. Continue to convene a coalition, either through CHF or by funding another organization to convene? What are hopes or wishes for Aging Well’s relationship with the CHF? What commitments would the group like to have from CHF?

### Comments and discussion:

- Fear that Aging Well work and the Blueprint will get filed away and this work will die.
- Would like CHF to help keep the initiative “prodded” and alive.
- CHF assistance with hosting and updating information.
- Communications, with Aging Well branding?
- The relationships that have developed are valuable; it would be beneficial to have agencies continue to meet and build on those relationships.
- Create a 10-year convening plan, with annual updates to serve as touchpoints.

- Check in on progress toward goals – 2 yrs, 5 yrs – to build in accountability.
- See how other organizations’ objectives are in line with Blueprint.
- Will there be an “ask” for other organizations to take on aspects of implementation?
- We can look at the finished Blueprint and see what organizations would be logical to take on work that matches their missions and scope. The partners listed for each focus area are likely possibilities.
- We can also see where there are gaps, and where innovation is needed – CHF could provide seed money for this.

Ying suggested creating a “fantasy” picture of how Whatcom County would ideally be in 10 years. For example, it could be the story of an older adult moving to the area in 2029. What would their experience be? Lara suggested this narrative could be coupled with the Blueprint, using the story to illustrate the changes the Blueprint recommends.

Lara outlined how she sees the Blueprint development process over the next several months:

- There will not be a full group meeting on April 5. Blueprint Committees may want to use this calendared time to meet.
- Lara will compile the Committees’ completed templates into a draft Blueprint. She suggested that the Blueprint Subgroup meet in late April to review the draft Blueprint and identify needed revisions.
- The full group will meet on May 3 to discuss the draft blueprint.
- Hold the larger Blueprint “roll-out” on June 7 with all committee members and other stakeholders.

Mary A. suggested having an additional meeting in mid-late May to plan the Blueprint "roll out" event.

**ACTION →** Lara will schedule meetings for late April and mid-late May.

## Aging Well Communications

Due to lack to time, Lara asked members to indicate their preferences on paper regarding the draft problem statement and communication goal, and to indicate who they think are the three most important audiences.

**ACTION →** Lara will synthesize everyone’s preferences and comments into statements.

The draft plan for briefing elected officials was not reviewed; Lara request that any feedback be sent to her.

## Wrap Up and Next Steps

- Next meeting: Friday, May 5, 2019 at the NW Regional Council.
- Blueprint Committee meetings as scheduled by the committees.