



Notice of Special Board Meeting
Whatcom County Housing Authority Board of Commissioners
Thursday, June 23, 2022

Location: Conference Call
In conformance with Governor's Proclamation 20-28

Time: 1:00

AGENDA

- A. ROLL CALL/QUORUM
- B. PUBLIC COMMENT AND RESIDENT INPUT
In conformance with the Governor's Proclamation, public comment will only be accepted in writing.
- C. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS
 - 1. Everson Meadows – Motion (Donnelly, 10 minutes)
- D. CONSENT ITEMS
 - 1. Motion: Approve Cash Disbursements/Vouchers for the month of May 2022
 - 2. Motion: Approve Minutes for the month of May 2022 Regular Board meeting
- E. ADJOURNMENT

The Bellingham Whatcom County Housing Authority Board of Commissioners will meet electronically on Thursday, June 23, 2022. Board Members and the public will only be able to attend this meeting via zoom at this time.

*Those who wish to provide **public comment** may send direct e-mail to publiccomment@bellinghamhousing.org in advance of the meeting.*

Meeting Information

Webinar ID: 868 2734 6793

[Click Here to Join on Computer, Tablet, or Smart Phone](#)

(data rates may apply)

To Join via Phone:

(phone service provider rates may apply)

(253) 215-8782 (Tacoma); (206) 337-9723 (Seattle)

(669) 900-6833 (Portland); (971) 247-1195 (Phoenix); (346) 248-7799 (San Jose)



**BELLINGHAM
WHATCOM COUNTY
HOUSING AUTHORITIES**

**Relocation Plan for
Everson Meadows**

June 13, 2022

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Introduction

In 1989, the Whatcom County Housing Authority (WCHA) secured a United State Department of Agriculture, Rural Development (USDA-RD) 514 loan and 516 grant to build in Everson, WA. Everson Meadows is a 24-unit property, comprised of 2- and 3-bedroom units designated for households with agricultural income. Eligible applicants generally pay monthly rent of no more than 30% AMI, however USDA-RD, reduced the property rental assistance over the years, creating some units that had no rental assistance. Residents in unassisted units paid the established contract Note Rent for the property.

The USDA-RD program severely constrained rent increases and capital reserve payments, creating extremely limited resources to maintain the property, resulting in significant deferred maintenance. Everson Meadows paid off the loan on May 18, 2022, exiting the USDA-RD portfolio. As part of the program exit, the property no longer receives rental assistance.

WCHA completed a capital needs assessment in April 2021, identifying immediate and significant rehab needs, totaling approximately \$5M. WCHA was successful in obtaining a \$200,000 award from the Skagit Home Consortium but was unsuccessful in obtaining Washington State Housing Trust Funds. While WCHA could apply again for State Housing Trust Funds this fall, if the application were successful, funds would not be available until 2023. There is a considerable risk that the roofs and other exterior envelope components will fail in winter weather.

Everson Meadows is slab on grade construction in a Special Flood Hazard Area as defined by FEMA. Elevating the structures above the flood level is not feasible. Although investing more than \$200,000/unit would address the property's physical needs, it would continue to be at significant risk of flood damage. With limited funding options, flood risk that cannot be reasonably mitigated, and urgent property repairs needed, we recommend relocating households currently residing in the property, and preparing the property for sale.

The Whatcom County Housing Authority will comply with applicable rules for agency procedures as set forth in 7 CFR part 3560.

Proceeds from the sale of this property will be used to acquire or develop new, more financially sustainable and climate resilient housing opportunities for low-income residents within Whatcom County.

Timeline

Due to the current condition of the roof and concerns for potential winter flooding, WCHA intends to begin resident relocation in June 2022 and fully vacate Everson Meadows no later than October 31st, 2022.

Resident Relocation

Each household displaced by the proposed disposition activity will be provided information on how to transfer their USDA-RD rental assistance to another USDA-RD property. Additionally, they will be offered comparable replacement housing that meets housing quality standards (HQS), as applicable, and is located in an area that is generally not less desirable than the current location. The housing will be offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, handicap, age, familial status, or gender, in

compliance with applicable Federal and state laws. For persons with disabilities displaced from a unit with reasonable accommodations, comparable housing will include similar accommodations.

Determining resident preferences for relocation options

Before specific moving plans are put into place, residents will be interviewed to establish their specific preferences concerning their relocation.

In these interviews, staff will counsel residents about their relocation benefits. Residents will be asked to identify their specific preferences for relocation housing and to describe characteristics of housing they prefer. They are encouraged to consider factors such as proximity to jobs, schools, medical facilities, and other areas integral to their daily lives within Whatcom County.

The information documented from each household helps staff to offer relocation housing that best fits identified needs.

Determining priorities for choosing housing options

When relocation staff search for relocation housing on behalf of residents, they will consider the size of the apartment they need, any accommodation requests, and the preference for the type and location of housing. Staff will work to match each household’s preference, as much as possible, to the relocation housing options available.

Eligibility for relocation and assistance

Residents displaced will be eligible for certain relocation benefits. Eligibility for specific benefits will be dependent on program eligibility as defined by HUD Housing Choice Voucher and Low-Income Public Housing program requirements. Relocation benefits may include:

- Replacement Housing – Each household that meets the applicable income eligibility and household composition requirements will be offered an inappropriately housed, Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) if available, or be offered a transfer to a public housing property. Households that are over or under housed will be provided an appropriately sized voucher or will be transferred to an appropriately sized unit. Households that are no longer income eligible will not receive replacement housing assistance.
- Payment for Moving Expenses. Households will be eligible for a fixed moving payment based on the URA Fixed Residential Moving Cost Schedule. The Moving Expense and Relocation Allowance available under 49 CFR 24.302, is based on the number of rooms of furniture, and was set at the following rates (effective August 26, 2021):

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1 Room \$800 | 2 Rooms \$1,100 | 3 Rooms \$1,400 |
| 4 Rooms \$1,700 | 5 Rooms \$2,000 | 6 Rooms \$2,300 |

- Incidental Costs - Incidental costs of a move will be covered by relocation benefits and may include any required utility deposits and telephone and/or cable installation at the new home (if the resident previously had telephone and/or cable service).

Residents will be offered housing options in the following categories:

- Housing units in the private market with assistance from Housing Choice Vouchers.
- Housing units that are elsewhere within the Bellingham/Whatcom County Housing Authorities portfolios (such as other public housing).

Notifications

WCHA will provide Residents notice as follows:

- November 9, 2021 – Written notification to each resident of the property loan payment and discontinuance of rental assistance May 18, 2022. This is not a notice to move but indicates the potential for future relocation and provides USDA required relocation opportunities.
- March 23, 2022 - Written notification to each resident of the property loan payment and discontinuance of rental assistance May 18, 2022. This is not a notice to move but indicates the potential for future relocation and provides USDA required relocation opportunities.
- March 23, 2022 – Staff contacted each household and completed a resident assessment survey of needs with each willing household.
- May 5, 2022 - Written notification to each resident of the property loan payment and discontinuance of rental assistance May 18, 2022. This is not a notice to move but indicates the potential for future rent increases and relocation.
- June 24, 2022 – Written notification to each resident of relocation. Each notice will clearly state that residents will be relocated and will provide individualized relocation plans based on the completed resident needs assessment. This notification will also include an invitation to a resident open house.
- July TBD, 2022 – Staff will hold a resident open house onsite to allow residents to ask questions regarding the relocation, their options and assistance accessing resources.
- July 29, 2022 - 90-day notice of relocation provided to each resident.
- August 30, 2022 – 60-day notice of relocation provided to each resident.
- September 29, 2022 – 30-day notice of relocation provided to each resident.
- Individual meetings and communication will also occur to ensure the resident is successful in relocation.

Relocation services to be provided

WCHA will designate a resident liaison for the purposes of assisting the resident with the entire relocation process including communicating directly with residents regarding the status and timing of their relocation, applicable relocation assistance and coordinate any necessary access to the unit. WCHA staff will coordinate notices and relocation.

WCHA will conduct “mover-briefings” in which each resident will receive assistance in developing a resident needs assessment as needed.

Resident relocation assistance and expenses will be monitored and tracked for each Resident.

Appeals process related to relocation issues

Residents subject to relocation may request a review of any WCHA determination concerning eligibility for relocation benefits, the amount of relocation payment, or the applicability of the comparable relocation unit provided.

When relocation assistance is offered, staff will inform the resident of the relocation appeal procedures. A resident will have 14 days after receipt of a written offer of relocation benefits to file an appeal. The appeal should be in writing and delivered to WCHA's Administrative Office at 208 Unity Street, Bellingham, WA; Attention: Relocation Coordinator, within 14 days. If the resident needs help preparing the appeal, WCHA will assist. WCHA will consider the appeal regardless of form.

Upon receipt of the written appeal, a relocation assistance dispute resolution meeting between the resident, the relocation coordinator and the appeals manager will be scheduled within 14 days. Residents may be represented at the meeting by a person of their choice and may bring other persons they think necessary to present their appeal at their own expense. Interpreters will be provided upon request. A written decision will be issued by the appeals manager within 14 days.

Resident refusal

Once WCHA has offered replacement housing to the resident that meets the applicable needs of the resident as outlined in this Relocation Plan, WCHA will schedule a moving date with the resident. If a problem arises with relocating a resident in a timely manner, i.e., if a resident refuses to move or refuses to meet with WCHA regarding a move or a resident cannot be found, WCHA will initiate appropriate action to address the problem, which may include initiation of eviction proceedings. An eviction "for the project" should not extinguish a resident's right to relocation assistance as specified above.

Funding for relocation

WCHA intends to use property operating and reserve funds for resident relocation.

Record keeping and reporting

WCHA will maintain a record of resident notices, meeting minutes, relocation assistance requests and relocation expenses.



BELLINGHAM/WHATCOM COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITIES

Administrative Offices: 208 Unity Street, Lower Level, Bellingham, WA
Mailing Address: PO Box 9701, Bellingham, WA 98227-9701
Tel: (360) 676-6887 Fax: (360) 527-4646 Tty: (360) 527-4655

SUMMARY OF VOUCHERS AND CASH DISBURSEMENTS FOR BELLINGHAM/WHATCOM COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY

Vouchers audited and certified by the auditing officer as required by RCW 42.24.080, and those expense reimbursement claims certified by RCW 42.24.090, have been recorded on a listing which has been made available to the board.

As of this date **6/21/2022** the board, by (unanimous, majority) vote, does approve for payment those vouchers and the cash disbursements for the month **May 2022** described as follows:

| Funds | Voucher Numbers | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Payroll 5/15/22 | <u>200001</u> to <u>200052</u> | <u>\$133,695.84</u> |
| Payroll 5/31/22 | <u>140001</u> to <u>140051</u> | <u>\$134,786.48</u> |
| BHA – Public Housing: | <u>1787</u> to <u>1788</u> | <u>\$ 8,345.00</u> |
| Direct Deposit Checks | <u>934</u> to <u>943</u> | <u>\$ 340.00</u> |
| Central Office/Maint. Fund | <u>28126</u> to <u>28232</u> | <u>\$ 223,396.37</u> |
| Section 8 Shelter Plus Care: | <u>55610</u> to <u>55612</u> | <u>\$ 135.00</u> |
| Direct Deposit Checks | <u>3684</u> to <u>3708</u> | <u>\$ 108,029.00</u> |
| Section 8 Vouchers | <u>122681</u> to <u>122766</u> | <u>\$ 62,902.71</u> |
| Direct Deposit Checks | <u>80111</u> to <u>80431</u> | <u>\$1,419,414.47</u> |
| BHA/Local Fund | <u>10155</u> to <u>10155</u> | <u>\$ 6,536.45</u> |
| WCHA – Public Housing | <u>7521</u> to <u>7524</u> | <u>\$ 390.00</u> |
| Direct Deposit Checks | <u>726</u> to <u>732</u> | <u>\$ 670.00</u> |
| *Misc. ACH & Wire Transfers | <u>JV 20936</u> to <u>JV 20980</u> | <u>\$ 6,840.06</u> |

Chair

*Reference attachments are hereto. Supporting documents available upon request.

WHATCOM COUNTY HOUSING AUTHORITY
Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting
May 17, 2022

The Board of Commissioners of Whatcom County Housing Authority (“WCHA”) held a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 17, 2022 via Conference Call in conformance with Governor Inslee’s Proclamation. The meeting was called to order at 1:03p.m. by Chair Finet, followed by roll call. Chair Finet declared a quorum present and the meeting opened for business.

A. ROLL CALL/QUORUM

Present: Commissioner Dave Finet
Commissioner Stephen Gockley
Commissioner Susan Gribbin
Commissioner William Szabo

Absent & Excused:

BWCHA Staff Presenters: Lindsay Burmeister, Executive Services/HR Manager
Tony Casale, Director of Asset Development
Kate Donnelly, Chief Operating Officer
Brien Thane, Executive Director

Guest Presenters: None

B. PUBLIC COMMENT AND RESIDENT INPUT

None.

C. ACTION

1. Document the need to continue remote meetings of the Board of Commissioners under Proclamation 20-50, and the board directs the Executive Director to investigate alternative meeting locations in the meantime.

Approve Resolution 793

Commissioner Szabo moved to approve the motion

Commissioner Gribbin seconded the motion and Chair Finet called the vote.

AYES: Commissioner Dave Finet
Commissioner Stephen Gockley
Commissioner Susan Gribbin
Commissioner William Szabo

NAYES: None

2. Executive Director Thane requested the addition of Everson Meadows to the agenda, which Chair Finet granted. Thane explained that the cost of addressing the physical needs of Everson Meadows continues to increase and would likely trigger compliance with current building codes and flood plain requirements. That would not be cost feasible. Not taking steps to mitigate future flood damages is not advisable. At Thane's request, Commissioner Gribbin moved to direct the Executive Director to develop a plan to relocate all residents of Everson Meadows, wind down operations, and secure or demolish the buildings. Staff is to report back at the regular June meeting on progress on the plan. Commissioner Gockley seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

D. CONSENT

Commissioner Szabo moved to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

Motion: Approve Cash Disbursement/Vouchers for the Month of April 2022.

Motion: Approve minutes for the April 2022 Regular Board meeting.

Commissioner Gockley seconded the motion and Chair Finet called the vote.

AYES: Commissioner Dave Finet
Commissioner Stephen Gockley
Commissioner Susan Gribbin
Commissioner William Szabo

NAYES: None

E. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 1:17PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Brien Thane, Secretary/Treasurer

ATTEST:

Dave Finet
Chair, Board of Commission