



# Implementation Board System Planning Subcommittee Meeting Minutes 3/9/23 – 3:08pm called to order

## Land Acknowledgement –

### Members Present

- Benjamin Maritz- Present
- Christopher Ross- Present
- Paula Carvalho- Present
- John Chelminak- Present
- Simha Reddy- Present
- Okesha Brandon- Present
- Juanita Spotted Elk- Present

### Notes

#### General Updates – Alexis Mercedes Rinck

- Alexis provided an overview of the Recommended Revisions Memo and the schedule for revision review
- Member Maritz asked if the structural changes mentioned in the memo will be incorporated into the matrix of revisions.
  - Alexis mentioned similar feedback was given by governing committee staff, and is planning to add structural changes to the matrix.
- Member Chelminak requested a timeline for when the revised plan will be available.
  - Alexis states that the staff is already working on revisions actively, and plans to have the revised plan ready by the end of the month.
- Member Reddy asks if there are sections that are reasonably complete and if KCRHA staff can share those items as they are complete.

- Alexis states that the structural changes may take longer to incorporate and can complicate roll out. But she will look into how to roll out in pieces.
- Alexis provided an overview of the changes to be discussed today: Severe Weather, Wage Equity, Trainings
- Severe Weather Shelter and Response, discussion
  - Member Reddy asked a clarifying question around the rationale of having seasonal shelters versus temporary severe weather shelters and the resource constraints they may have on year-round shelter.
    - Alexis responds by stating the constraint comes down to space availability. But a challenge that temporary severe weather shelters have, is the threshold that is needed to be open, oftentimes folks will be turned away if the weather threshold was not met.
  - Member Brandon asks what don't we have to better the shelters, what are shelters doing wrong that people do not want to be there? In addition providers are put in a predicament between following protocol, and making changes needed to shelters.
    - Member Chelminak asks what are some tangible things that shelters might do wrong, that push people back out even when the weather is severe?
      - Member Brandon states it was because the way people would be packed in and not supported. People are not focused on treatment, but on time they can be in and out of severe weather shelters. Member Brandon suggests providing more by being creative with funding for shelters, to encourage people to come to the shelter and get the help and resources they need, not just go in, sleep, and go out. She also calls on the shelters to explain the rationale of decisions on why they can not admit someone.
  - Member Maritz calls for the Authority to create shelters where people want to be in. He calls for a mandate in the plan to be offered for high quality shelter options, to make sure there are enough shelters, to make sure the shelters have shelter standards to abide by.
  - Member Reddy asks a clarifying question around the definition and functionality of seasonal weather shelter
    - Alexis clarified that season shelter would have a set start and end date for the winter season, and similarly would consider a seasonal shelter system for heat and smoke during the summer months.
  - Member Reddy asks what is the severe weather outreach and communication strategy?
    - Alexis mentions the current state of the broad communication strategy where RHAs outreach team has materials to give people when their is hazardous weather conditions. The Authority works with King County's Office of Emergency management to call jurisdiction to set up warming centers, and they create a blog post to get shared throughout all their networks. The Authority works with the King County Library system to make sure that library staff are aware of the resources. There is also a

geographic flyer that has been put together and is distributed for the areas around Seattle.

- Member Spotted Elk shares a story on how a shelter did not provide the best information regarding where people could go during severe weather events.
- Alexis explains and asks if there are any comments on the five-year plan's diversion policy.
  - Member Maritz asks what changes are being proposed and clarifies what diversion is?
    - Alexis details the plan has the goal of funding to scale diversion resources with the goal of diversity six percent or about 1,400 households. So the proposed changes are one technical revision to clarify the difference between diversion and prevention and two policy changes: to better support the coordination of diversion agencies, and to expand eligibility for diversion resources.
    - Alexis describes diversion as a short-term intervention focused on immediate and safe housing arrangements, while also utilizing conflict resolution and mediation skills to reconnect people to their system of support.
    - Member Carvalho discusses how when we think of diversion we think about diverting people out of the homelessness system. But they've already touched the system. She mentions how diversion really can be used for prevention and mentions how the point of 35 helps make it more focused.
      - Member Maritz shows support for using diversion funding for prevention efforts.
    - Member Spotted Elk asks about diversion funds that can be used and if it is managed through the state.
      - Alexis mentions how the funding comes from a few partners, most operated through Africa Town International, and it is a funding resource specifically so it has a degree of flexibility associated in regards to financial assistance.
    - Member Reddy states he is in a state of confusion when the Authority is trying to expand diversion to people at risk. Why doesn't the Authority just call it prevention?
      - Member Carvalho calls for the Authority to be clear on the definition of diversion. Member Carvalho states that it is currently being used to divert people from the homelessness system quickly.
      - Member Reddy adds when making these definitions of eligibility why aren't we allowing for flexibility to choose prevention?
      - Member Maritz asked Member Carvalho if she can explain what the diversion funds are and where can they use them for diversion?
        - Member Carvalho explains how Commerce, OHI, and other programs have funds for diversion. They aim to use it truly for prevention so if someone is in imminent risk, they go see a case manager. Some examples are if someone got an

eviction notice, or you are doubled up and people can not stay there any more. Member Carvalho explains further how she has seen some diversion requests such as: I am going to be homeless. Can you buy me a van so I can live in my van, or I have family in Montana could you pay for that. It is meant to divert people out of the homelessness system quickly. Further explaining this is not a permanent housing solution, this is something that people can use in the meantime of finding a permanent housing option.

- Member Reddy and Member Maritz call on the Authority to write an explanation for their plan for diversion funds so they can better understand.
- Member Spotted Elk shares her personal experience attempting to receive diversion funding with a provider that she had the choice of if she chose to take diversion funding no other resource would be available to her.
- Member Chelminak asks for clarification between fleeing and diversion.
  - Alexis answers by stating this is a very complex challenge, that the DV system is a collaborative relationship but we don't have ownership or oversight. The Coalition of Gender Based Violence is a main partner, but there is a need for confidentiality so the data and resources are fragmented. Some of the proposed revisions in this plan are to work through how we have better formation with that system, because it is so fragmented for safety reasons. She also details how when the Authority was working with providers around emergency housing vouchers, that the Authority did work with a number of specific programs that do serve folks who are survivors. Alexis asks if there is any feedback and comments on training programs.
- Alexis asks if there is any feedback and comments on the section of standardization of person-centered healing based services, and have those trainings designed by those of experiences. She also includes a section on wage equality.
  - Member Maritz mentions a report from the City of Seattle that calls for a broader HR strategy to make sure wage equity is standardized, to prevent turnover with providers, and more specified training to employees to make the workforces as effective as possible.
    - Member Reddy asks Member Maritz to clarify
      - Member Maritz goes on to explain that the Civil service wage scale would prevent people from having to work for less, the addition of a recruitment arm to get more people on staff, and substantial training and resources such as an outreach manual. All of these would increase the effectiveness of of our program.
    - Member Carvalho mentions that when CEO Marc was hiring their team, one of the big conversations was what the minimum pay would be. Member

Carvalho restates that this question makes complete sense and the work is hard. She wonders if the plan can require those talks in the rebidding process, if minimal standards of wages will be contemplated.

- Alexis mentions how it has been feedback that has been given to make sure people can live in this region. But would have to be done in a way that does shake up the system since there are smaller organizations and we want to be supportive of them.
  - Member Ross asked Alexis to elaborate and go a layer deeper on how not all service contracts cover the entire staff. Asking is part of the challenge that it can only apply to people that are directly billable to the contract and there are other individuals inside the agency that can't necessarily get wage adjustments per the contract.
    - Alexis responds that in full transparency that question has reached the bounds of my knowledge. But will work towards getting more information.
- Member Ross mentioned that he has been on both sides of the table with being a receiver of the service contract dollar and in a nonprofit agency now. Member Ross shares that paying out the dollars and trying to have fair equitable wages is a very complicated problem. As a board member and King County tax-paying citizen he expressed concerns that we have a huge employment base that is impacted by this question and that we would not want to try to use this as an opportunity to fix economic disparity that exists. Member Ross states that he feels like we have to make an attempt on fixing the issue but feels it's really complicated and frankly beyond the skill of a lot of people. But this is a massive economic impact study, thought process and he would like to get somebody that can really help get some clarity around this. He calls on the RHA or King County's Department of Economic Development to get involved as this is such an important issue.
  - Member Spotted Elk discusses how it is highly complicated speaking as someone with lived experience. Mentioning how there is not a lot of assistance in navigating this bigger federal system and compared to some smaller systems is a wide range. Mentioning how this navigation can get tougher when someone in the system has to move again and again, while trying to hold employment. Member Spotted Elk highlights how important it is to do harm reduction and trauma care; along with the addition of cultural based training standards to prevent a lot of turnover in provider staff.
- Alexis does a run through of the technical revisions that are planned saying revisions 36-38 are particularly relevant to the conversation that we just had to add needed language,

acknowledging that also services especially as were looking at a number of system level changes. 37 is explicitly to add survivors of gender based violence and domestic violence. Group 41-43 adds technical revision to having some further clarification to standards of care and service models, such as trauma informed care or harm reduction, shared decision-making, and person-centered care. It also adds the adjustment to help providers transition from congregate to non-congregate models. As well as add descriptive language around how procurement processes are going to be developed. Forty three adds narrative on the role/purview of KCRHA is to set programmatic standards for different program types. Revision 44 is the last substantive policy change regarding an initiative to explore procuring a confidential emergency housing option for transgender non-conforming individuals.

- Member Chelminiak asks if there are any comments from board members on any of these strategies?
  - Member Maritz states dissent on voting for the revisions. Stating that he believes one of the main issues is that there was never a presentation for the plan at the starting point. So it is hard to engage on this changes, stating when he read the plan he was looking more at the high level direction of the plan, and some of the structural issues. Member Maritz stated he does not have a grasp on these issues to have an opinion on them. It is also hard to get to this level of implementation detail without feeling comfortable with the overall strategy in structure behind the plan. Maybe other folks are better able to debate these particular points. But Member Maritz is certainly not sure he can vote on them.
    - Member Ross agrees adding there has been a lot of communication but I think there is a continuity that has been a little hard for me to follow. He is struggling to feel like he is making substantive or informed input. While he takes this role seriously he does not feel like he got enough core knowledge to understand how these changes are really impacting. Member Maritz poses the question if the subcommittee is operating at the right level, getting in to the granularity of understanding these language changes in substance. Whereas some of these revisions are policy-based, some are procedural based. So not knowing what altitude the board committee should be operating in he can not speak to the specificity of some of the things shared. Ending it by saying he is in the same camp as Member Maritz.
    - Member Spotted Elk spoke in agreement.
    - Member Carvalho agrees and offers looking towards other options and groups of people involved to make alterations. Stating that she does not know if this group is the right group to be voting on substantive things. Suggesting a Town Hall or Focus Group to better the decision making process. Member Carvalho also

expresses how it is difficult to vote as a board when the board does not have the foundational piece to what the board is voting on.

- Member Reddy mentions that the board adds a varying amount of expertise. Stating that he might not be the best person to talk about wage equity increase and the overall impact on our community. But I am the person to talk about how medical respite plays a role. Each of us brings a different area of expertise. Member Reddy believes that it is incredibly helpful in the places that we have our own particular knowledge base.
- Member Carvalho agrees and mentions how these revisions get so granular. She prefers there is a suite of things on things that are more substantial. That Technical revisions are something that RHA staff can do, while the subcommittee could focus more on policy decisions.
  - Member Ross agrees with Member Carvalho. Adding that we are a smart body of individuals but I do not think we are the right body to make those granular copy edits and copy changes. Adding that he is only speaking for himself and people like Member Cheminiak might be more comfortable in the process.
  - Member Chelminiak agrees, adding that he might be more comfortable in the process. Especially with unique boards and we have great talent on this board. He gives an example of the congregate and non congregate care discussion, as a great example of how this board can come together to meet people's operational issues. Member Chelminiak adds that some of the revisions might get so far in to the weeds and that he would rather the board stay at a governance level.
- Member Maritz suggests that the subcommittee looks over the technical revisions creating a list of 5 or 6 that we might want to look further into.
- Member Reddy showed support for the feedback memo stating how he enjoys getting into the details and hearing from governing committee staff.

- Member Carvalho asks the percentage of changes that are technical. As well as suggest between meetings the board flags any questions they might have and just accept the suite of revisions that the board does not have any questions for.
  - Abby Anderson stated 56 of 78 are technical revisions.
  - Member Maritz and Member Chelminiak agree with Member Carvalho's suggestion.
  - Member Reddy agrees with Member Carvalho's suggestion just requesting that the board can also highlight technical revisions they might want to specifically talk about that might not have an issue.
- Member Ross asks Alexis to give the final word on the next step.
  - Alexis thanks the board for the clear feedback, mentioning medicaid is slated next week, Alexis suggests keeping that meeting slated. As a staff they need to work on making those structural changes and providing that to the boards. Requests to give members to give questions over to staff to answer questions for the next meeting.
    - Member Ross asks for an updated document on the current status of revisions.
      - Alexis will provide tomorrow with the matrix of changes included [3/10/2023]
  - Member Spotted Elk wanted to thank Alexis and her team for all the work that they have been doing. That she is honored to be heard, as well as emphasize that removing barriers are life saving.
- Meeting adjourned 5:01

## Closing