



## REGIONAL HOUSING COUNCIL

### **ATTENDEES:**

Lacey: Nic Dunning, Ryan Siu, Ryan Andrews, and Jennifer Adams

Tumwater: Meghan Sullivan, Joan Cathey, Sharon Lumbantobing, and Erika Smith-Erikson

Olympia: Robert Vanderpool, Paul Berendt, Kim Kondrat, Jacinda Steltjes, and Christa Lenssen

Thurston County: Emily Clouse, Leonard Hernandez, AJ Mai, Jen Freiheit, Tom Webster, Alex Persse, Jackie Velasco, KayVin Hill, Elisa Sparkman, and Leah Tangeman

Yelm: Griselda Arias, Andrew Kollar and Gary Cooper

Homeless Services Advisory Board: Dana Evans

Thurston Affordable Housing Advisory Board: Meg Martin

Lived Experience Housing Steering Committee: Heidi Barrientes

Wednesday, February 25, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Meeting began at 4:01 p.m.

**Agenda Item 1:** Nic motioned to approve the February 25 agenda, Emily seconded, unanimously approved.

**Agenda Item 2:** Emily motioned to approve the January 28 minutes, seconded Nic, unanimously approved.

**Agenda Item 3: Public Comment** – Quinn Zigertman made a statement encouraging the Regional Housing Council to deny Low Income Housing Institute’s unit mix change request for Franz Anderson and concerning interactions with City of Tumwater concerning an unsheltered encampment in Tumwater.

### **Agenda Item 4: Communications Update**

Elisa shared the Thurston Regional Housing Council (RHC) 2026 Communications Update. Ongoing efforts include managing the RHC website, providing communications updates at RHC meetings, coordinating news releases and announcements, producing informational materials, managing social media, handling media requests with the County, and publishing the quarterly Thurston Regional Housing Newsletter that launched last year. Key projects for 2026 include the RHC Orientation Packet, the 2025 RHC Annual Report expected at the end of March, possible RHC website expansion with the RHC Technical Team (Tech Team), and development of a RHC Communications Manual and Communications Plan to guide the role and processes. Social media is posted through Thurston County Public Health & Social Services but remains RHC branded and

is shared with jurisdiction communicators for wider distribution. To support the RHC mission of educating the public, a short-term subcommittee will be formed to define how the RHC approaches public education, including processes for selecting topics and clarifying roles. The subcommittee is expected to meet 1-3 times in the first half of the year. Volunteers are asked to sign up by March 16, 2026. While advisory board members will have additional time to express interest in joining, elected officials are asked to sign up by the 16<sup>th</sup> due to the complexity of scheduling. Members expressed appreciation for Elisa's work and support for forming the subcommittee.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Lived Experience Housing Steering Committee Update**

Heidi Barrientes provided an update on the Lived Experience Housing Steering Committee (LEHSC). The LEHSC advises the RHC using perspectives from people with lived experience of housing instability or homelessness. The LEHSC recently interviewed new members as some founding members transition off and continues to meet monthly while also attending community meetings to represent lived-experience perspectives. LEHSC members have provided input on best practices and the local Five-Year Homeless Housing Plan. During discussion, members asked how lived-experience perspectives are incorporated into funding and planning. Heidi and Jackie explained that LEHSC helps inform funding priorities at the start of funding cycles and that some members also serve on the Homeless Services Advisory Board (HSAB) to share input between groups. Members also suggested providing an overview of advisory committees for newer RHC members in the future.

#### **Agenda Item 6: Regional Housing Council Workplan Draft**

Tom presented the 2026 RHC Workplan first draft and noted it will come back next month for approval. The Workplan draft is broken down into two basic components: 2026 projects and ongoing activities. The draft was developed with input from the Tech Team and advisory boards and highlights key priorities for the year, including new RHC member orientation, contingency planning around uncertain funding, public education efforts, reviewing the Opportunity Fund policy, 2026 RFP funding recommendations, developing a 2027 legislative agenda, and exploring ways to attract more affordable housing developers. Ongoing work includes encampment resolution efforts, participation in the Black Home Initiative, tracking the Five-Year Homeless Housing Plan, coordination with advisory boards and the LEHSC, communications work, and monitoring legislation and state and federal funding. Members shared feedback on clarifying language, organizing items chronologically, and adding more detail about priorities, roles, and steps needed to complete the work. Staff will revise the draft and share an updated version with jurisdictions before the next meeting.

### **Agenda Item 7: Encampment Resolution Program Funding Discussion (Continued)**

Tom continued the discussion from January on Encampment Resolution Program (ERP) funding for City of Olympia's Quince Street Village and Unity Commons projects. A staff report was provided in the agenda packet that outlined proposed solutions. Members asked for clarification on the focus for the discussion based on the proposed items in the staff report. Tom clarified that the immediate request is to focus on the short-term funding request for Quince Street Village, while the long-term request is to focus on contingency planning for continued funding for these projects. Members also asked whether using excess revenue for Quince Street would limit flexibility for other needs and whether the advisory boards had reviewed the proposal. Tom explained that the recommendation came from the Tech Team and had not yet gone to the HSAB but could be shared with them if that is helpful. Several members said their jurisdictions are still reviewing the issue internally and need more information before deciding, including a clear, spreadsheet-style overview of all funding sources, project timelines, and potential impacts on overall system flexibility. Tom confirmed that staff will provide this detailed funding information. No formal action was taken at this meeting.

### **Agenda Item 8: Good of the Order**

Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI)'s Franz Anderson Permanent Supportive Housing Update – Discussions are continuing among the participating jurisdictions regarding the proposed change to the project's unit mix. Jacinda indicated that a response from the jurisdictions will be needed within the next month in order for the project to move forward. Representatives from Lacey and Tumwater shared information about the discussions that have taken place within their respective City Councils. Additional details and updates will be brought forward for further discussion at the March meeting.

Olympia: No update

Thurston County:

Meg- Interfaith Works – Open to Community-Based Training about end-of-life care and homelessness. Sergio's  
Monday March 23 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Heidi – Working on developing a County Ordinance regarding mold and moisture. Reach out with any interest.

Tumwater: No update.

Yelm: No update.

Lacey: Lacey had an RHC orientation and discussed the potential benefit of in person RHC meetings.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 5:52 p.m.

**Next Meeting:** March 25, 2026, 4:00 p.m. via Zoom