



Investing Today for a Thriving Tomorrow

**EASTSIDE HUMAN SERVICES FORUM**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, August 6, 2020 – 8:30am to 10:30am**  
**Conference Call**

<p><b>BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT</b> Lauren Thomas, Hopelink – Board Chair Al Smith, Perkins Coie - Vice Chair Amy Falcone, Kirkland City Council - Sec/Treasurer Tony Copes, Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council Barbara de Michele, Issaquah City Council Jessica Forsythe, Redmond City Council Monique Gablehouse, EvergreenHealth Dr. Harlan Gallinger, Issaquah School Board Stephanie Hamrick, Overlake Medical Center Paul Lwali, Friends of Youth Lynne Robinson, Bellevue City Council Cassandra Sage, LW School Board Helene Wentink, Alliance of Eastside Agencies</p> <p><b>BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT</b> Eric Evans, Shelter Holdings LLC</p>	<p><b>ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF PRESENT</b> Leslie Miller, Work Group Chair Monica Negrila, Work Group Vice Chair Brooke Buckingham, Governance Task Force Liz Mills, Legislative Consultant</p> <p><b>VISITORS PRESENT</b> Rita Badh, City of Sammamish Dee Dee Catalano, City of Bellevue Joyce Nichols, City of Bellevue Liz Keever, 501 Commons Consultant</p>
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**CALL TO ORDER – Chair Lauren Thomas called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. A quorum of the Board was present.** Lauren informed the Board that Claudia Balducci has resigned due to a lack of time to participate. The Executive Team is looking at replacing or restructuring that King County position.

**Review of March Minutes**

**Motion 1:** *"I move the Board accept the meeting minutes from the May 21, 2020 Meeting as presented."*

Discussion – None.

Motion was made by Al Smith and seconded by Tony Copes. The minutes were approved as presented unanimously.

**2020 Financial Report and Invoicing**

Secretary/Treasurer Amy Falcone presented the most recent financial report. She reported that EHSF members with Board affiliations have been invoiced and suggested the rest of the membership be invoiced with a note to contact Leslie Miller if they are experiencing any challenge in paying the dues.

The Board signified unanimous approval of this suggestion.

**Organizational Review Update and Next Steps**

Vice Chair Al Smith referenced the written report from 501 Commons included in the Board packet. He mentioned that the report highlighted the disconnect between the Board and Work Group and the lack of clarity in how to restructure and in our mission.

Work Group Vice Chair Monica Negrila introduced Liz KEEVER. She reviewed the process that she and her colleague Jack Thompson followed and provided an overview of the report and recommendations. She and Jack interviewed 18 stakeholders as well as conducted online research to understand the environmental landscape. Their findings are that now is the time for a significant transformation and now is the time to restructure.

Stakeholders value the Forum as a voice for the Eastside and as a convener, but the organization's purpose is not clear. All stakeholders agreed that the present structure does not enable an effective and productive organization. Most all those interviewed focused on a disconnect between the Board and the Work Group. None of the stakeholders had specific solutions on restructuring.

Several stakeholders also commented that the Forum consists of many good people, doing good work but challenges exist that have limited its effectiveness. One key comment was that there needs to be more metrics, data and accountability for a data-driven approach. Another common thread was that the Forum needs to focus more on inclusion and improve participation from communities of color. The report emphasizes that when the function of the Forum is redefined, the form of the Forum can be redesigned.

At this point, Liz invited questions and led a brief discussion. She next reviewed Phase 1 recommendations which included:

*Share findings with everyone interviewed and the Work Group accompanied with next steps*

*Evaluate your appetite for transformation*

Liz KEEVER recommends that the Board determine if they have the will and capability to undertake a comprehensive transformation of the Forum that will include challenging assumptions and difficult work.

Liz referenced the appendix which is an environmental landscape review that shows how membership overlaps with AEA and how our mission compares to others entities (i.e. AEA, KCAHS, SHSC).

*Conduct a needs assessment with other organizations*

Liz suggests that the Forum convene with other groups concerned with human services on the Eastside to determine where the most value can be added. From there, the Forum can move forward.

There was discussion on the Forum's past work on an opioid dashboard that collected data across sectors. Several members thought this work was exemplary. There was also a discussion on how much AEA and EHSF overlap and whether there is a need for both organizations. Members discussed the importance of a community needs assessment to help determine the current state and decide on where we can bring the greatest value.

If the Board decides to move forward, these are the Phase 2 recommendations:

*Refresh the organizational Purpose and Structure*

Conduct a review of the current purpose statements and other governing documents to encompass first function - that is, mission and vision statements (what are we trying to accomplish) and second form - that is, bylaws and organizational structure (how do we accomplish that purpose). Again, focus on function and then form.

*Hire an Executive Director*

The Forum needs a professional who will help elevate the work of the organization.

Board members discussed if they wanted to go forward with the recommendations given the scope of work involved.

Liz pointed out a few other options to consider:

- Merge with AEA
- Leverage our unique perspective with Board composition and dashboard concept (information portal)
- Dissolve as an organization

There was further discussion with Board and staff members. After comments from everyone, the result was that it was decided to move forward with the work. The next steps will be formulated by the Organizational Review Committee and the Executive Committee. Liz Keever will share the findings with the Work Group on Tuesday, August 11<sup>th</sup> and Board members will be invited to join. Lauren thanked the group for their thoughtful comments and consideration.

### **Eastside Right to Breathe Committee**

Board member Paul Lwali shared information on a newly formed Eastside group of Black leaders that is convening to ensure the safety and respect for Black people. He acknowledged that conversations about race can be hard and that everyone is on their own journey. He reviewed the current members of the Right to Breathe, their core principles, domains and policy areas. Examples of some outcomes would be policy changes in oversight, engagement and propose ordinances to ensure the safety of Black people and deescalate encounters with Police and some retailers. They have been coordinating with some of the Eastside cities and have met with the Cities of Redmond, Bellevue and Kirkland. Right to Breathe is not supporting defunding the police, but are interested in reallocating some resources. Lauren asked how this group can be supportive. Paul asked for general support, education of the community on Right to Breathe's purpose and especially support of proposed ordinances. Barbara requested the slide deck so she could share it with the City of Issaquah and it will be shared with the full Board. Paul stressed the importance of our inter-relatedness to counteract oppression and bring about social change.

### **Legislative Committee Update**

Consultant Liz Mills referred to the update in the Board packet and thanked Board members for their timely response on our letter. The final tally was 13 approved the letter as written and 1 opted out which meant that it was sent on EHSF letterhead without Board names to the Governor, 147 legislators plus a few key staff. Liz pointed out that budget writers are drafting documents now so it was a good time to send our letter. Liz also briefed the Board on our collaborative event with AEA on Wednesday, August 26<sup>th</sup> and an Eastside needs survey. Board members were encouraged take the survey that will be emailed to them and to share it widely. Members were also asked to attend the event and encourage others to participate. The invitation will be emailed soon.

### **Board Member Information Sharing**

Tony suggested that members read "3 Seattle-Area Teens Write about What the Black Lives Protests Mean to Them, first published on July 28, 2020 and Updated on August 1, 2020. It includes the perspective of a Bellevue high school student.

Barbara reported that the Issaquah Council is working on a Police Accountability, Equity and Human Services Work Plan. The Council is also considering an eviction prevention ordinance. Mayor Pauly sent the Governor and Legislature a letter using much of the same language as in the original WAAG letter.

Jessica reported that the City of Redmond is working toward a BLM resolution and convening community conversations to hear what is important for the community. Work in being finalized on some funding related to rent assistance and mental health.

Lauren shared that the Hopelink's financial assistance program has seen very high levels of service. From March through June, they doubled the amount of service that had been done in the previous calendar year. She predicted that their energy and food programs will also see very high increases.

Lauren reviewed upcoming events and activities

- August 11<sup>th</sup> Work Group Meeting
- August 26<sup>th</sup> Joint Meeting with AEA
- EHSF Survey
- Two remaining Board meetings, September 17<sup>th</sup> and November 19<sup>th</sup>

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Board Chair Lauren Thomas adjourned the meeting at 10:30 am.**