

# CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Sitting/Acting as (if applicable)

## Policy Session Worksheet

**Presentation Date:** February 7, 2024    **Approx. Start Time:** 10:00 am    **Approx. Length:** 30 minutes

**Presentation Title:** Homeless Services Advisory Structure

**Department:** Health, Housing & Human Services

**Presenters:** Rodney Cook, Director, and Vahid Brown, Housing & Community Development Deputy Director

### WHAT ACTION ARE YOU REQUESTING FROM THE BOARD?

Staff are seeking Board approval of a new homeless services advisory structure and permission to pursue member recruitment, convening, and facilitation support for the advisory structure's Community Advisory Group through a contract with the Homeless Solutions Coalition of Clackamas County.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Clackamas County's homeless services system has grown significantly over the past three years with funding from the passage of the Supportive Housing Services (SHS) Measure in 2020 and the addition of new state and federal resources. Dating back to the SHS Measure's passing, Clackamas County has planned to create a more robust and inclusive advisory structure to inform the programs and services that are funded across its much larger and growing system. Prior to 2020, Clackamas County received and administered approximately \$8.0 million annually in local, state, and federal funding for homelessness programs, more than half of which was in the form of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care (CoC) grants.

HUD requires that all CoCs have a local governing board, which in Clackamas County has been the CoC Steering Committee. Historically, the CoC Steering Committee has served as the county's only homelessness advisory body, with membership comprised mostly of representatives from non-profit homeless services providers and staff from multiple Health, Housing & Human Services (H3S) divisions. While providing able oversight of the county's CoC programs, the CoC Steering Committee is a highly technical group that primarily addresses issues related to compliance and implementation of HUD policy as it relates to CoC-funded programs.

With a homeless services system now funded by more than \$50.0 million in ongoing local, state, and federal resources, the county has a unique opportunity to formulate and maintain a well-informed and responsive countywide plan to ensure that homelessness in our community is rare, brief, and non-recurring. To support the development of this strategic approach to ending homelessness, staff are recommending the creation of a new and broader homeless services advisory structure to help guide this critical body of work.

### PROPOSED ADVISORY STRUCTURE

The proposed advisory structure seeks to balance the need for high level, executive recommendations and decision making with the need to ensure that the development of plans, strategies, and funding allocations are informed by broad community input with representation from important stakeholder communities. This is consistent both with Clackamas County's SHS Local Implementation Plan, which commits to the formation of an inclusive decision-making body, as well as with the HUD CoC requirement that the membership of local boards ensure a community-wide commitment to ending and preventing homelessness and represents relevant organizations within the geographic area working to fulfil that commitment.

In order to strike this balance in meeting the county's needs for the inclusive engagement of diverse stakeholders in support of the development of a countywide homelessness response strategy, staff are proposing an advisory structure with two primary bodies:

- 1) An Executive Committee (added as part of the county's Advisory Boards and Commissions (ABC) program); and
- 2) A Community Advisory Group.

The first, as an executive decision-making body, is envisioned as relatively small, around seven members, with membership comprised of well-respected leaders in their fields. The Executive Committee membership should include the voices of stakeholder communities whose input and support are critical to the success of the county's homelessness efforts – for example, non-profit providers, the physical and behavioral healthcare system, local jurisdictions, law enforcement, and communities most impacted by homelessness. The second, the Community Advisory Group, would have a larger membership representing the breadth of local communities and organizations concerned with homelessness and housing issues.

#### Executive Committee – County Advisory Boards and Commissions

Staff are seeking Board approval to begin working with Public and Government Affairs (PGA) on launching an executive committee on homelessness that would join the county's existing Advisory Boards and Commissions (ABC) program. As with other ABCs, the membership of the proposed executive committee would be appointed by the Board. This body would advise the Board on the county's homelessness response strategies with input from staff, the Community Advisory Group, and other stakeholders. The executive committee would be comprised of high-level leadership from broadly defined stakeholder communities that would be recruited for in accordance with Board direction and in partnership with PGA. Pending Board approval of this proposed structure, H3S would begin working with PGA to draft charter language and define the membership of this ABC for future Board consideration and approval prior to launching a recruitment of members.

#### Community Advisory Group

Staff are seeking Board approval to begin launching a Community Advisory Group on homelessness that would be comprised of a broad group of community stakeholders and provide recommendations to staff and the executive committee on decision points about program improvements, resource allocations, and goal setting. Members of this group would include homeless service providers, mental health and addictions providers, physical healthcare providers, law enforcement, the business community, school districts, rural and urban partner jurisdictions, the faith community, philanthropy, housing providers and developers, and others. To maintain compliance with HUD CoC requirements, a subgroup of this Community Advisory Group will be the CoC Steering Committee. Staff are also recommending a lived experience council as a second subgroup. Staff are recommending a pilot program to contract with a community based organization to help recruit, convene and facilitate the Community Advisory Group. Pending Board approval of this proposed structure, H3S would begin working with a community based organization to draft charter language and define the membership of this group for future Board consideration and approval prior to launching a recruitment of members.

#### RECRUITMENT, CONVENING & FACILITATION SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP

The development of a large and inclusive advisory structure will require substantial commitments of time and personnel across several lines of work, including charter development, recruiting, convening, facilitation, and the development of meeting materials. Staff are proposing to pilot a contract with a community based organization for these services in order to allow H3S staff to remain focused on the work of administering and implementing housing services programs. Staff also see value in a Community Advisory Group having a level of independence from the department that can engage in constructive dialog with county staff about the best way to meet community needs.

Staff are proposing to launch this pilot through a contract with The Homeless Solutions Coalition of Clackamas County (HSCCC). The HSCCC is a unique, local, county-wide, non-profit organization with the specific mission

to convene multi-disciplinary partners for solutions-oriented conversations around homelessness. The HSCCC would utilize the broad relationships and trust that they have already built with the county's nonprofit housing providers, local governments, law enforcement agencies, healthcare providers, education systems, local businesses, local faith-based organizations, and people experiencing homelessness in a coordinated effort with H3S to recruit and convene the membership of the advisory group. Contracting with the HSCCC under a pilot program would allow the county to assess the effectiveness of contracting with an outside agency for ongoing engagement to fully inform the delivery of homeless services.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (current year and ongoing):**

Is this item in your current budget?  YES  NO

What is the cost? \$400,000                      What is the funding source? Supportive Housing Services funds

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

- How does this item align with your Department's Strategic Business Plan goals?
  - This item aligns with the following Department strategic priorities:
    - Assist individuals and families in need to be healthy and safe
    - Increase self-sufficiency
    - Increase community safety and health
    - Continually improve the efficiency and effectiveness of services
  
- How does this item align with the County's Performance Clackamas goals?
  - This item aligns with the following County strategic priorities:
    - Ensure safe, healthy and secure communities
    - Grow a vibrant economy
    - Build a strong infrastructure
    - Build public trust through good government

**LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:**

Compliance with local, state, and federal funding generally requires the administration of programs and services to be informed by inclusive decision making bodies/processes.

**PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:**

The proposed advisory structure is intended to ensure broad community input and government participation in the stewardship of the county's community response to homelessness.

**OPTIONS:**

1. Direct staff to move forward with the advisory structure as proposed and advance the relevant agreements and contracts to the Board for approval.
2. Direct staff to modify the advisory structure and/or plan for convening and facilitation support and return at a future date for further approval.
3. Reject the homeless services advisory structure and direct staff to pause all related activities.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff respectfully recommend Option 1, Direct staff to move forward with the advisory structure as proposed and advance the relevant agreements and contracts to the Board for approval.

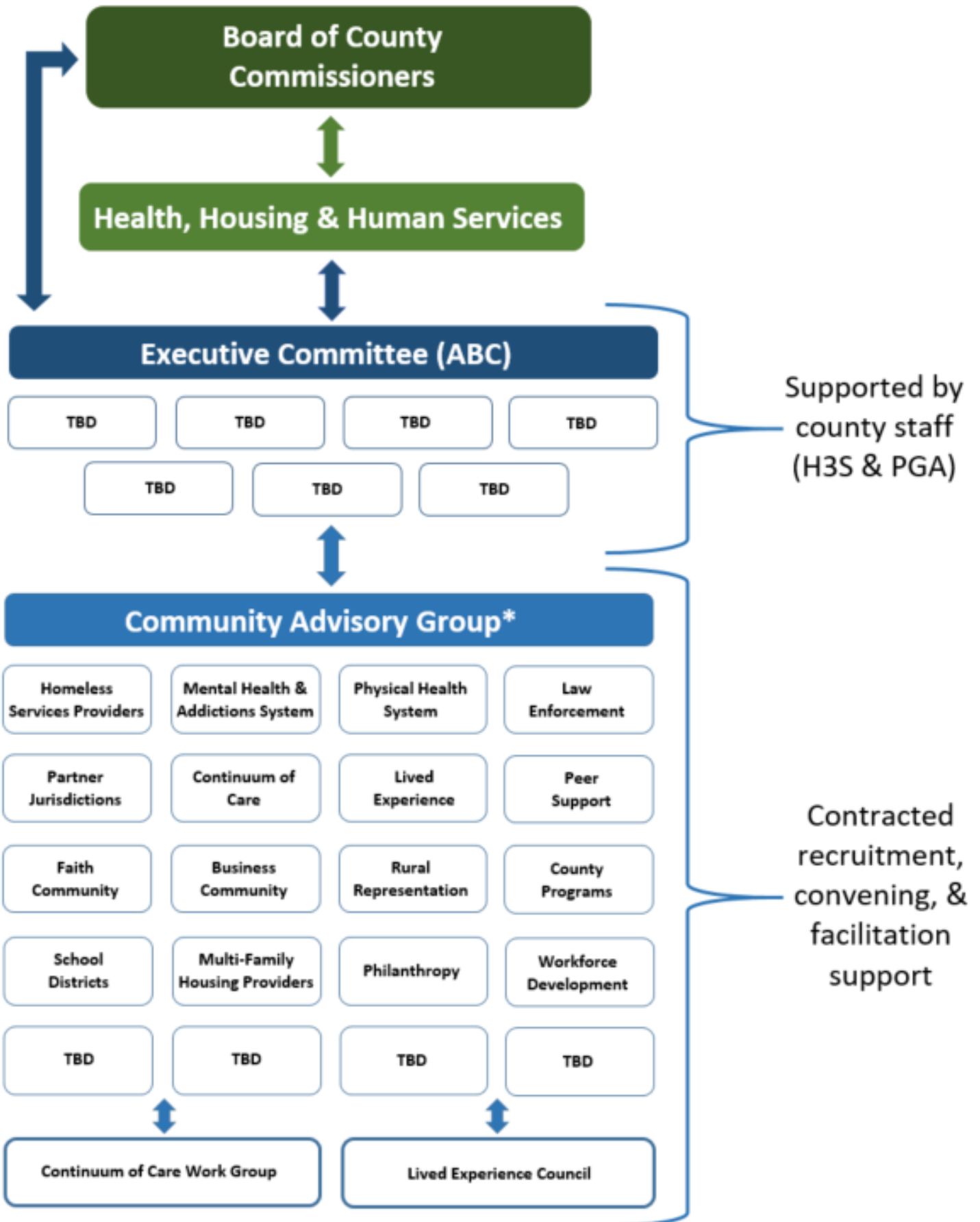
**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1 – Visual representation of the proposed advisory structure

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Division Director/Head Approval \_\_\_\_\_  
Department Director/Head Approval Rodney A. Cook  
County Administrator Approval \_\_\_\_\_

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ @ 503- \_\_\_\_\_



\*Fulfills HUD CoC governance requirements