

# CLACKAMAS COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

## Policy Session Worksheet

**Presentation Date:** 6/27/17    **Approx. Start Time:** 2:30 PM    **Approx. Length:** 1 hour

**Presentation Title:** Houseless Veterans' Shelter Program

**Department:** Health, Housing, and Human Services (H3S)

**Presenters:** Rich Swift, Health Housing and Human Services Director

**Other Invitees:** Jill Smith, Health Housing and Human Services Deputy Director, Kevin Ko, Housing and Community Development Manager, Chuck Robbins, Housing and Community Development Director

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

Staff is presenting to the Board the results of the Veteran Shelter Grant Application process, and requesting:

1. Approval to move forward with negotiations with the successful applicant to develop a temporary, transitional shelter for houseless Veterans within Clackamas County, and
2. Should a feasible plan be developed, approval to authorize the H3S Director to enter into a contractual agreement with Catholic Charities for the development and ongoing operations of the project.

### **BACKGROUND:**

During the FY 2016/17 budgeting process, the Board of County Commissioners set aside \$300,000 of County General Funds to assist with the development of a shelter community for houseless Veterans. The community was envisioned to be a public/private partnership between the County and homeless service providers. A request for Letters of Interest (LOI) was released by the H3S Department in October 2016 to entities interested in developing supportive shelter projects for houseless Veterans. Six entities responded with LOIs describing their concepts for a Veteran shelter in Clackamas County. These LOIs were evaluated by staff from H3S and County Administration, and three entities were selected to move forward in the process. Concurrent with this, the County identified a potential site for the development located at the southern terminus of SE 115<sup>th</sup> Avenue, south of Highway 212. A full grant application which included a description of the site was issued to the three entities in May 2017. Fort Kennedy and Catholic Charities each submitted applications in response to the full grant application which were received by H3S on June 12<sup>th</sup>. Both applications were evaluated by H3S and County Administration staff, and although the evaluating team noted that each application had its strengths and weaknesses, it was unanimously agreed upon that the grant application submitted by Catholic Charities was the most complete and feasible.

## **PROJECT OVERVIEW:**

The application submitted by Catholic Charities proposes using the \$300,000 of county general funds for the following activities:

To prepare the site and construct the community kitchen showers and restrooms, a community room, a fully equipped work shed and up to 30 sleeping pods. The community amenities and 15 sleeping pods will be completed and ready for occupancy before December 2017. The remaining 15 sleeping pods will be built on-site over the next 5 months as the first residents of the village will have a hand in building them, gaining basic carpentry and other usable skills. The sleeping pods will be fully weather resistant, fully insulated and vented appropriately for all-season weather.

The strength of Catholic Charities lies in its organizational capacity and its proven ability to successfully develop affordable housing for some of the region's most vulnerable citizens. Catholic Charities will use the knowledge and experience gained from the recent completion of the Kenton Women's Village in Multnomah County to aid with the design and development of the Veteran shelter in Clackamas County. Another of Catholic Charities' strengths is its ability and willingness to collaborate with other organizations for the benefit of its clientele. Catholic Charities anticipates that forming strong partnerships with Clackamas County, the PSU Center for Public Interest Design, and the City Repair Project and Communitecture will be critical to the long-term success of the Veterans shelter.

Catholic Charities is already reaching out and forming beneficial partnerships within the community. The Pickathon Music Festival is a widely attended annual event held in Clackamas County. A notable feature of the Pickathon is the temporary stage built from structural trusses that is used for the duration of the 4-day event. The organizers of the Pickathon, in collaboration with the PSU School of Architecture and Catholic Charities, is planning to deconstruct the stage at the end of the event and up-cycle the trusses to build the first 10-15 sleeping pods for the Veteran shelter. These pods will be built at the Pickathon site and then moved to the shelter location for installation. This creative leveraging of community resources may result in the first units being completed by the end of August, and could save upwards of \$40,000 in development costs.

While the Catholic Charities application was strong, overall it leaves funding gaps related to services and ongoing operations that need to be addressed. The Catholic Charities application identified a substantial annual deficit in the operating budget due to ongoing costs for management and services. This gap may be partially and temporarily filled by H3S with funding for 1.0 FTE case manager, but an ongoing funding plan for operations is essential to move forward. Additionally, Catholic Charities has indicated in its proposal that it will need county support to clear and prepare the site, and to provide utility connections and other infrastructure needs. This is an area Clackamas County may choose to engage in to reduce development costs for Catholic Charities, freeing up funding for shelter operations. Catholic Charities has indicated that it will likely contract out for case management services for the village residents.

Finally H3S intends for admission into the Veterans shelter to be as low of a barrier as possible and will engage in conversations with Catholic Charities to ensure their policies align with that intention. H3S staff will need to negotiate terms linked to ongoing cost of operations, possible cost savings linked to potential County funded activities and aligned admission criteria.

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

**Is this item in your current budget?**            YES            [X] NO

**What is the cost?** \$300,000 of General Funds have been allocated to this activity. The H3S department has also budgeted funds for 1.0 FTE case manager for the first year of operations, estimated to be \$80,000. The county owns the proposed development site, and may assist as necessary with bringing utility services to the site, as well as resolving zoning and land use issues.

**What is the funding source?**            General Funds, H3S funds

**STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:**

- **How does this item align with the County’s Performance Clackamas goals?** This item aligns with the county’s Performance Clackamas goal to “*Ensure Safe, Healthy and Secure Communities*” because it will further a performance measure to reduce by 50 percent the number of unsheltered veterans in Clackamas County by 2019.

**LEGAL/POLICY REQUIREMENTS:** As Transitional Housing facilities are currently not allowed per the Clackamas County Zoning and Development Ordinance (ZDO), the majority of the legal/policy requirements consist of those associated with amendments to the ZDO. County staff are actively engaged in the community process required to make these zoning changes.

**PUBLIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION:** The Letter of Interest was advertised on October 10, 2016 and closed on December 8, 2016.

**OPTIONS:**

1. Direct staff to begin negotiations with Catholic Charities for the development of a Veteran Shelter. If a mutually beneficial development and operational agreement is reached, present the agreement to the Board for approval. In addition, direct H3S staff to analyze operational funding gaps and work with County Administration on ways to resolve gaps and present options to BCC at a later session.
2. Direct staff to begin negotiations with Catholic Charities for the development of a Veteran Shelter. If a mutually beneficial development and operational agreement is reached, authorize the H3S Director to execute a contract with the agency for same.
3. Direct staff to pursue an alternative option for the use of the General Fund allotment for the development of a Veteran Shelter.
4. Direct staff not to proceed at this time.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff respectfully recommends to the Board Option 1.

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Division Director/Head Approval \_\_\_\_\_

Department Director/Head Approval \_\_\_\_\_

County Administrator Approval \_\_\_\_\_

For information on this issue or copies of attachments, please contact Rich Swift @ 503-650-5694