

Meeting Notes

Agenda:

- 12:00pm** Open Networking
- 12:20pm** Presentation: Whatcom Resource Information Collaborative
- 1:00pm** Network Updates & Announcements

Attendance:

- Alana P. - Opportunity Council
- Alissa C. - Nurse-Family Partnership
- Allyson H. - Opportunity Council
- Amanda D. - Opportunity Council
- Amy C. - NWRC
- Andrew H. - WTA
- Ann E. - St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- April H. - Hope House
- Ashley G. - WC Health & Human Services
- Ashley M. - Whatcom Literacy Council
- Celeste G. - Sea Mar
- Cheri W. - Hope House
- Chris D. - WC Health & Human Services
- Cindy S. - NW Workforce Council
- Denise K. - United Way
- Devin C. - Interfaith Coalition
- Edith T. - Opportunity Council
- Erika S. - Humanitas Ministry
- Esther C. - Opportunity Council
- Gabe F. - Bellingham Technical College
- Gabriela C. - North Sound ACH
- Hannah K. - Interfaith Coalition
- Hannah R. - Lifeline Connections
- Heidi K. - Opportunity Council
- Hunter H. - Puget Sound Energy
- Janet M. - WTA
- Jenni J. - Bellingham Public Library
- Jennifer K. - Signature Health Care at Home
- Jonathan M. - World Relief
- Julie S. - Cascade Connections
- Juni A. - Whatcom Family & Community Net.
- Kristi S. - Whatcom Family & Community Net.
- Liz N. - PeaceHealth
- Maria (Maru) M. - Sea Mar
- Mariah D. - NWRC
- Matt M. - Opportunity Council
- Nicole S. - Signature Health Care at Home
- Pug E. - St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- Rachel M. - Lifeline Connections
- Rob V. - St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- Samya L. - City of Bellingham
- Sandy W. - NWRC
- Sarah L. - Signature Health Care at Home
- Shannon E. - Whatcom Community Found.
- Stephanie B. - Humanitas Ministry
- Tammy D. - Humanitas Ministry
- Tess W-J. - Whatcom Community College
- Theresa H. - YWCA
- Tim C. - Whatcom Dispute Resolution Ctr.
- Vanessa A. - PeaceHealth
- Xan D. - YWCA

Featured Presentation:

Whatcom Resource Information Collaborative

- [Presentation](#)
- [WhatcomResources.org](#)
- [Press Kit](#)
- [Video](#)
- [Orientation & Meeting Schedules](#)
- Contact: Kristi.Slette@WFCN.org

Network Updates & Announcements:

World Relief – Jonathan Martens

- World Relief is a refugee resettlement program new to Whatcom County.
- Helped settle about 100 refugees in Whatcom County last year, hoping to resettle 175 this year.
- Provides legal services, language programs, cultural orientation, family literacy, case management, and more.
- Materials: [World Relief Flyer](#)
- Contact: jmartens@wr.org

Travel Training, WTA – Andrew Herndon

- Travel Training program helps anyone in the community who wants to get comfortable with independent travel through WTA.
- A Travel Trainer can help people overcome barriers, and will work with participants until they are ready to ride Fixed Route service independently.
- Reach out for help: (360) 305-9094
- Contact: andrewhe@ridewta.com

Bellingham Public Library – Jenni Johnson

- Libraries are community hubs and resource centers connecting to local services like health care, transportation, taxes, immigration, legal services, and more.
- Skillshare: organizations including Goodwill, Law Advocates, Opportunity Council, Whatcom Literacy Council, and others bring their services to the library.
 - Invitation to bring your own organization to Skillshare to reach people here.
- Other services include online resources, supervised visits for families in meeting rooms, WiFi hotspots, free internet access, closed circuit TV magnification device, video phone for Signing community, individual study rooms, public computers (1.5 hour/day limit), information center, social services bulletin board, free book drop at Base Camp, meeting rooms available for public use (1 use up to 4 hrs /mo.), free educational programs for all ages, museum passes, and more.

- Consider whether there's an opportunity for your organization to participate in Skillshare, provide brochures for information center, or brainstorm other ways to connect community.
- Contact: jjohnson@cob.org, (360) 778-7217

Northwest Regional Council – Mariah Davis

- There is a major caregiver shortage – about 30% of case managed clients are without a caregiver but looking for one.
- NWRC doesn't hire or do contracting, but provides information and support for people who want to be caregivers for clients on Medicaid.
 - Provides support for getting hired by the State, navigating the confusing process, helping with what to expect, what comes next, etc.
 - Provides education on the differences working for an agency vs. State, and which option may be the best fit.
- If you work with people who are looking for work or are interested in caregiving, reach out to Mariah or provide her contact information.
- Mariah can meet with people in person at NWRC, or at your agency. Can also come to your staff meetings to spread information.
- Contact: mariah.davis@dshs.wa.gov

Puget Sound Energy – Hunter Hassig

- Outreach manager for PSE Whatcom and Whidbey, works to spread information about PSE programs and services.
- Focused on energy usage: energy efficiency, renewable energy, electric vehicles, etc., and works with businesses, community organizations, and small businesses.
- PSE has debuted an electric vehicle fleet program, wants to help nonprofits electrify their fleet vehicles.
 - If you have fleet vehicles and are willing to purchase an electric vehicle, PSE will provide incentives: up to \$10,000/port, 4 ports/business.
 - Incentives for vehicles up to \$7500.
 - If program is of interest to your organization, reach out to Hunter.
- Also provides energy auditing: can do an energy walk through and scan for your organization, then provide a list of opportunities to upgrade to reduce bills and meet sustainability goals.
 - Saved Boys and Girls Club \$6,000/yr by upgrading lighting throughout facilities in Whatcom.
- Contact: hunter.hassig@pse.com, (360) 483-6665

Bellingham Technical College – Gabe Fauber

- Student Financial Resources department helps primarily low-income students afford school, provides students with information about how to access funding sources that aren't student loans to get through BTC.
- BTC trains students for high demand positions: trades, healthcare, fisheries, etc.
- When it comes to funding, programs that are considered high demand typically have funding available.
 - Anything to do with health or the trades is considered high demand in Whatcom.
- Post-COVID, it's been more difficult to get people back into school. Trying to spread the word and make it easier for people to get involved for the first time, or reengage with BTC after time away.
 - BTC has removed waiting lists, now programs are first come first serve.
 - Removed standardized test to determine starting point, replaced with guided self placement.
 - Allows students to determine their own starting place.
 - Removes barriers for people who were discouraged by a placement test.
- Anyone who has questions or is looking to get back to school can contact Gabe.
- BTC is hiring: if you're good with numbers, have strong Excel skills, and like working on grants, email Gabe. [View job posting here.](#)
- Contact: gfauber@btc.edu

Paratransit, WTA – Janet Malley

- You may have heard that WTA has changed the way Paratransit operates. There has been a small change, but there has been no loss of service.
- Paratransit significantly expanded service area: now operating in Birch Bay/Blaine.
 - Customers still need to meet Paratransit eligibility to use service.
- Contact: janetam@ridewta.com

Lifeline Connections – Rachel Munroe

- Lifeline Connections is an all encompassing, wrap around, flexible mental health provider.
- Variety of levels of care: clients can come at whatever level they are at and stay as long as possible.
- Offers exit programs, outpatient, youth and adult substance use programs, housing programs, support in jail and coming out of jail.
- PACT team (Program of Assertive Community Treatment) works with highest need clients, meets them where they are literally and figuratively.
 - Case management, peer support, mental health, psychiatric support and more.
- Contact: rachel.munroe@p-h-s.com

Signature Health Care at Home – Nicole Small

- Signature provides home health, skilled nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech therapy, medical social work, and homebound services.
- Services are meant to be short-term, intermittent.
- Accepts patients coming out of hospitals and nursing facilities, but patients don't have to have been in a facility. Can receive referrals from primary care providers.
- Many services can be provided in home: nurses help with medical needs; physical therapists work on mobility, transfers, getting in and out of the house and car; occupational therapists help people improve tasks of daily living; speech therapists work with cognition, memory organization strategies, language skills after stroke/TBI, working on swallowing; medical social workers connect people to services, work to provide holistic support for patients.
- While many patients are older adults, seeing people of all ages for all reasons.
- Home health is not a long-term support, considered short-term intermittent under insurance guidelines, so can come in and out of people's lives.
- Home services can be provided at a variety of sites: assisted living, adult family home, YWCA – wherever people are living, services can help people meet their needs.
- Materials: [Brochure](#), [In-Services Flyer](#), [Home Health: When to Order Flyer](#)
- Contact: nicole.small@sighch.com

EcSA, Opportunity Council – Amanda Dyvig

- Economic Security for All (EcSA) program, formerly Project X-it, is now open to families looking for financial literacy and renters education supports.
- Partnering with NW Work Force to provide career training, school services, and financial incentives to participants.
- Contact: amanda_dyvig@oppco.org

Cascade Connections – Julie Stockton

- Cascade Connections provides home care, in-home care, housing for people with disabilities, training center for home care providers, and vocational services.
- Vocational office contracts with DDA and DVR
 - Can provide services for pay, but it's expensive so most people go through DDA or DVR.
- Anyone can take the training, training for all.
- Contact: JStockton@ccsite.org

YWCA – Xan Dindinger-Hill

- Invitation to attend a Garden Tea event on June 25 to celebrate YWCA's new apartment building. Email Xan for an invite.
- Contact: xan.dindingerhill@ywcabellingham.org

Community Resource Center, Opportunity Council – Matt Main

- CRC is the first point of contact at OC for accessing services: front lobby at 1111, and reception line if you call the agency.
- Team of 5 Information & Referral Specialists and 1 Site Coordinator.
- As people come in, staff ask questions, assess needs, and connect people to things they need, refer to community programs.
- Major responsibility is housing intakes for Coordinated Entry system (how Whatcom County refers to homeless housing programs, central point for referrals based on eligibility and vulnerability).
 - CRC does majority of intakes in Whatcom as central hub.
 - In 2022 CRC completed over 1,000 intakes.
 - If you have clients who are in Whatcom County experiencing homelessness or fleeing domestic violence, refer to CRC.
- Tangible items provided: WTA 6-ride passes, Narcan, laundry vouchers (super limited, but available Friday mornings at 8am), diapers and wipes, menstrual hygiene supplies.
- Any questions about OC services, call CRC at (360) 734-5121 option 3, or contact Matt.
- Agency update: rental assistance as it has existed the last few years was all provided through COVID-relief funding, no longer available. A new eviction prevention program will take its place, information coming soon at oppco.org/help-with-rent.
- Contact: matthew_main@oppco.org, (360) 734-5121 ext. 1287

Whatcom Asset Building Coalition – Edith Tate

- WABC is a coalition of people involved with helping community members become more financially self sufficient/providing financial literacy services.
- Upcoming program: 4 part series on Demystifying Investments.
 - First session June 28
 - Free to attend on Zoom
 - A financial advisor will dive into investing lingo, general investing, retirement investing, health and education investing.
 - Visit whatcomabc.org/events to register
- Contact: edith_tate@oppco.org

Next Meeting:

Thursday, July 20, 12 - 2pm @ Bellingham Public Library