

Inclement weather response: What works well or needs fixing?

Group Discussion Summary • Tacoma Pierce County Coalition to End Homelessness • 3.24.23

Perhaps the World Ends Here

The world begins at a kitchen table. No matter what, we must eat to live.

The gifts of earth are brought and prepared, set on the table. So it has been since creation, and it will go on.

We chase chickens or dogs away from it. Babies teethe at the corners. They scrape their knees under it.

It is here that children are given instructions on what it means to be human. We make men at it, we make women.

At this table we gossip, recall enemies and the ghosts of lovers.

Our dreams drink coffee with us as they put their arms around our children. They laugh with us at our poor falling-down selves and as we put ourselves back together once again at the table.

This table has been a house in the rain, an umbrella in the sun.

Wars have begun and ended at this table. It is a place to hide in the shadow of terror. A place to celebrate the terrible victory.

We have given birth on this table, and have prepared our parents for burial here.

At this table we sing with joy, with sorrow.

— by Joy Harjo

WOOT: To Pierce County Councilmember Ryan Mello and the “Spine Builders,” who so diligently worked to pass of *Ordinance No. 2022-81s levying an Additional Sales and Use Tax of One-Tenth of One Percent for Housing and Related Services.*

https://online.co.pierce.wa.us/cfapps/council/iview/proposal.cfm?proposal_num=2022-81s

What about inclement weather response worked well?

- We are blessed with people in the Coalition who are energized, skilled, and committed to having a strong and effective inclement weather response.
- Communication was good with the County leading.
- Temps were not as bad as expected, things may not have been as successful if things had gone longer.
- Coalition activated due to inclement weather.
- Blankets, cots, hand warmers and such seem suitably available.
- Getting jurisdiction reports from DEM early, getting current information.

What about inclement weather response needs fixing?

- City was strangely silent.

- Stop the last-minute crisis thinking. Nearly all of this can be anticipated, planned, and stored in advance.
- Volunteers took on brunt of field work. Independent outreach should take a larger role.
- Need a way to support the most grassroots community members helping. We spent \$120 on hand warmers and \$60 on protein bars in February alone.
- Need to do more with outreach, it's hard for a community member to find the resources needed when we encounter unhoused people. Especially needed in Lakewood.
- "When inclement weather shelters open, the supplies, like food, need to be fresh and usable. I went out to ask grocery stores to donate because the food at one inclement weather shelter was old and unappetizing. I got turned down by the grocery stores, so I need help learning how to ask more skillfully."
- FOB vets site struggled without heat into November; anticipate cooling to be a similar challenge.
- Try to figure out a inexpensive portable heat source for campers in winter.
- People being pushed out of other communities are arriving not knowing anything about where to find resources; need a basic map that points to essentials so people don't have to rely on 211.
- Localities and agencies need more microlevel support so disproportionate burden isn't falling upon them.
- Tacoma's sweep policy set a terrible "regional" example. Lakewood has jumped on that non-solution approach. Needs to be more help that "freaking makes a difference" instead of "freaking criminalizing them."
- "Can't be mad at folks for not accepting a burger when every person before you was offered a burger they just spat in."
- People are harder to find due to the sweeps. "Let's stop using sweeps which continue to add costs to the city and trauma to the most vulnerable communities. Try something new. How many other options have even been discussed by decision makers?"
- When people are in one place - the odds of them finding appropriate services goes up. Every sweep is a step backward. We can deal with the problems instead of treating everyone in a camp as guilty of anything that happens. People need to "heal in place."
- We need an ongoing year-round TF to stay on top of the needs for inclement weather and be stocked up ahead of time. And a "quick response" function that we can activate when we get an **unanticipated** weather or smoke event.
- Shelter sites should be able to exceed capacity in inclement weather.
- Heated/cooling busses need to be part of inclement response.
- Lack of information for long term effects from inclement weather.
- Need for unified regional approach.
- We are still looking for that Pierce County dashboard.
- There is both support and a sense of urgency for a "By Name list," and there are concerns that could be resolved by use of nicknames.

- Need more support from Feds and State.
- Need for central information channel.
- There are different activation levels within the county.

Notes and Resources List

Recent Press

Lakewood adopts two ordinances banning public camping, drug use.

<https://kimatv.com/news/local/seattle-homeless-crisis-washington-city-council-fentanyl-treatment-municipal-illegal-misdemeanor-lakewood-city-council-passes-two-ordinances-banning-public-camping-drug-use>

City of Lakewood passes ordinances criminalizing public drug use, overnight camping
<https://www.thenewstribune.com/news/local/article273409920.html>

Fundraisers and Events

FOB Hope is having a fundraiser on April 1st at the Puyallup Elks Lodge. Dinner, stand-up comedy show, silent auction. Cost is \$15 for dinner and show. Time-5pm-9pm. If you need more information or want to donate to the silent auction, or reserve a table for your group, you can contact me at tammyc@fobhope.org Hope to see you there.

Laurie Davenport's homeless art work entitled *The Unseen* is on display at Marlene's Deli. Go look. Held over through April.

FUSION is holding a luncheon fundraiser on May 9th in Federal Way. Our keynote speaker is UW Professor Gregg Colburn, who will present key findings from his book, *Homelessness is a Housing Problem*. His co-author, Clayton Page Aldern, according to his bio, provided data analysis and program evaluation for homelessness programs in Pierce County. If you are interested in attending, please email me at Melinda.lowe@fusionfederalway.org If you are unable to attend, the link to the book synopsis is here -- <https://homelessnesshousingproblem.com>.

Resources and Needs

Alfredo Quiroga Resource list doc:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/19li_NU3sM9Cfzw9Slszq06ZARqCEw4e0gJaMS64QBFA/edit?usp=sharing

NEED: Good outdoor shoes. Please donate to the Resource Center at St Vincent de Paul. ASAP

Jay Worley is open to suggestion and ideas for cultural work: seededhopes@gmail.com

Food Bank list updated 3/13/2020. If you have a newer list that includes small food banks, please post it in the chat. chrome-extension://efaidnbnmnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/<https://www.bethelsd.org/cms/lib/WA01918819/Centricity/Domain/4523/Food%20Bank%20List-%20digital.pdf>

Miracle Messages is here to help anyone in Lakewood and other communities to locate their loved ones and to get them transit to their loved ones throughout the US.

www.miraclemessages.org

Housing Alliance Advocacy Links

WLIHA Advocacy pages - Take Action Now! <https://www.wliha.org/take-action>

Advocacy resources: 2023 Public Policy Priorities <https://www.wliha.org/advocacy/2023-public-policy-priorities>

Join the weekly advocate calls on Fridays, 2-3pm on Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUsdumvrDMtHtSqWteCBB4VIDeAolIRnuCI>

<https://leg.wa.gov>

<https://twv.org>

Pierce County Comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness can be found here:

<https://www.piercecountywa.gov/7309/Comprehensive-Plan-to-End-Homelessness>

New Hope Resource Center in Puyallup also has Safe Parking locations throughout several cities in Pierce County. Our intake line is 253-346-6482. You can also reach us by email at jeffmkoontz@gmail.com or m.sanchez.newhope@gmail.com.

Foot care kits are available for outreach - just email me if you want some (thank you Sally, Sam, Health department folk, and all others who helped put these together).

tpdrutis@nctacoma.org

COVID testing kiosk locations: 21818 38th Ave. E. in Spanaway (OPEN NOW), 135 163rd St. in Spanaway & 4301 Browns Point Blvd (opening 3/20).

Sexual and reproductive telehealth program, Washington State Department of Health:

https://doh.wa.gov/newsroom/telehealth-sexual-and-reproductive-health-care-services-now-available-washington?fbclid=IwAR3ws_o6h7-mKa13rJFMKQ1P31_NkElVjm3hdmsFhNOwSmXbnmPrg8W7USE

ORDER COVID TEST KITS while you still can, they are good to have on hand: State program ends 5/11 and eligibility changes on 3/13. Order here:

<https://sayyescovidhometest.org/>. Order from the Feds here:

<https://www.covid.gov/tests>

Tacoma Rental Housing Code website, with a link to the survey. If you are neither a tenant nor a landlord, please feel free to fill out the survey as an advocate for either of these groups. <https://www.cityoftacoma.org/rentalhousingcode> Outreach events for community feedback on Tacoma housing code changes. In person event for housing providers, real estate professionals, renters, and housing advocates. Thursday March 23rd from 5:30-7pm at TPU; Virtual Event for Housing Providers, Wednesday, March 29th, Two sessions: 12-1:30pm, 5:30-7pm; Virtual Event for Renters & Housing Advocates, Thursday, March 30th, 5:30-7pm. Access Event Information and zoom links:

www.cityoftacoma.org/rentalhousingcode

Free Food and Resources, Saturday 10~12 everyone welcome no requirements or ID needed you can pick up for others 4819 S 12 st Tacoma Greater Heights Church across from Delong Elementary School

At Food is Free we do a weekly food rescue on Tuesday mornings at 11 am at The Hope Point Church, 6511 S C St., Tacoma 98408. If you need fresh produce for outreach please come see us. It goes in a couple of hours so please come before we open at 11.

Please sign up to the inclement weather listserv at
<https://www.pchomeless.org/Home/Listserv>

Winter '22 Emergency Outreach Tracking Googledoc
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10Ec_bw5KKsFQidzRN7XkM6yea6vHzD0Yf0m5lfjgdpU/edit?usp=sharing

We have inclement weather cards (printed on business card sized stock) that Laurie Davenport created. Let me know if you want any. tpdrutis@nctacoma.org