

Chair Jose Garcia called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Present was Committee member Mark Gomolski. Nazario Rivera and Abby Reyes-Munoz were excused. Council Representatives Maria Duron and Roy Barron were present, as well as City Recorder Lilly Alarcon-Strong. Youth Advisors Fernando Morales Garay and Jayson Gutierrez were also present. The pledge of allegiance was given.

Minutes

Minutes were unable to be approved as no quorum was present.

Stepping Stones Alliance- Homeless Shelter

Stepping Stones Alliance Members Cathy Lloyd and Chris Barnum presented information regarding recent legislation that mandates each municipality to provide a place for homeless people to sleep, if these accommodations are not met, municipalities would need to allow people to camp on any public property.

Information was shared regarding Stepping Stones Alliance operational vision (attached) to help those who are homeless not only provide a place to sleep, as legislation dictates, but to also provide support services to better their lives such as: participation in setting goals and having a mentor to help them with those goals, counseling and recovery services, specialized training and employment services, etc, to eventually help them obtain permanent housing outside of the shelter. With this being said, there are people who do not want to set goals or change their living situation, but that does not mean they don't deserve a safe place to sleep. Currently, in the surrounding area, there is only the Hermiston Warming Station, however, this is only open about 100 nights per year and people must vacate in the morning. Stepping Stones would be open 365 days/nights per year and provide a place where people are also able to leave their personal items during the day and know they will be safe/not stolen when they return. Dinner and Breakfast would be provided as well.

Stepping Stones is working on a website with all of this information and will publicize it when it is complete. Stepping Stones is a non-profit that has been and will continue to accept in-kind and financial donations, it has also been awarded money from the American Rescue Plan Grant, and hopes to receive City/County financial support as well. Stepping Stones is working to find a location and is hoping to open the facility by late fall, but the timeline is dependent on many factors.

Stepping Stones will have a paid night staff security member working from 10pm to 8am, but what they will really need to keep this shelter open is volunteers. Stepping Stones is asking that this Committee help spread the word to the Community and ask that they consider supporting this project by getting people to volunteer; volunteer to help build the structures, feed people, but most importantly two volunteers will be needed daily from 6-8pm and 8-10pm.

Committee members thanked Stepping Stones for all the work they have done to build and strengthen this vision to help others stating it is obvious to see the excitement and passion the Board has about this project. The Committee expressed excitement regarding the one-stop-shop opportunities the shelter will have to help improve their lives, if they so choose it and asked that Stepping Stones also consider, if they haven't already, how they help homeless teens that come to the shelter by themselves.

Cathy stated they are working on how to address homeless teen issues as they know there are a lot, as well as other circumstances of homelessness. It is important to remember that no one dreams of being homeless or a drug addict when they think of their future, and no one deserves to be discarded either. We are all people.

Closing Comments**Public Comments**

County Commissioner Candidate Bob Barton introduced himself to the Committee; spoke about his personal, professional, and volunteer background; his love of the community and county as a whole and his vision for the County as Commissioner.

Bob answered questions and addressed specific topics regarding: County budget, education, roads, WATER, fiberoptic, mental health, homelessness, and getting more diverse populations involved in their community; and, made it clear that although he lives in Hermiston, he will not just be looking at west-end issues, he will be representing the entire county.

Representatives from the City

Maria and Roy spoke regarding:

- National Police Week Proclamation
- City will not be renewing its contract with VenueWorks. EOTEC employees will be hired by the City.
- EOTEC Advisory Committee has open positions. Encouraged the Latino community or a HAC Committee member to apply to be on this Committee especially since the Latino community spends the most amount of money at EOTEC.
- Budget Committee Meeting

Committee Comments

None given.

Next Meeting

The Committee stated there will not be meetings in June or July and will resume meeting on Monday, August 15th at 7pm in the Library's meeting room.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:25pm.

Our Vision

Stepping Stones Alliance looks forward to the launch of the **Stepping Stones Center!**

This vision includes facilities, support services and resources
that offer *stepping stones* along an *accessible pathway*
toward stable housing and self-reliance for those in need.

This operational vision will become reality in Phases:

<p style="text-align: center;">Phase 1 – The Sleep Center</p> <p>Spring of 2022 following a winter season partnership with Hermiston Warming Station, the year-round overnight emergency shelter will launch.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Phase 2 – The Navigation Center</p> <p>Incremental launch will begin as early in 2022 as expanded facilities become available and already committed service delivery partners can be scheduled.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Phase 3 – The Housing Center</p> <p>Summer 2022 is targeted for opening the first group of small housing units to those demonstrating readiness. Additional units will be added as participant numbers increase.</p>
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The Pathway to Self-Reliance

<p style="text-align: center; color: #0070C0;">Enter here:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Sleep Center</p> <p>Night to night shelter for those in need</p>	<p style="text-align: center; color: #0070C0;">Then engage here:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Navigation Center</p> <p>Needed services and access to resources available to active participants through Center staff, community partners and volunteers</p>	<p style="text-align: center; color: #0070C0;">Stability while progressing:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The Housing Center</p> <p>Transitional housing units for participants engaged in personal action plan utilizing Navigation Center resources</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exterior securely fenced and lighted Scheduled transportation to and from site Options for individuals and families Fully staffed during hours of operation Basic food and hygiene supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant goal and action plan support Counseling and recovery program access Technology resources for action plan work Common area for groups and community Scheduled transportation to and from site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small 8 x 8 units for one or two adults Working or volunteering for housing unit credit Utilizing onsite resources for future housing plan Shower unit available per schedule Outside covered common area



Stepping of Stones

HERMISTON

An Alliance of Hope and Prosperity

Connecting to Community

Developing Self-Reliance

Supporting Human Needs

Stepping of Stones

HERMISTON

Example Project

- ❖ The Walla Walla Alliance for the Homeless (Sleep Center)
- ❖ Approximately 2/3 of an acre
- ❖ 39 huts
- ❖ Shower/laundry building and a commons building



Conestoga Huts

- ❖ Available for one resident, one couple or parent and child
- ❖ Residency requirements: compliance with site regulations and progress towards self-reliance
- ❖ Cost estimate (materials only): \$2,000
- ❖ Construction: easily obtainable materials, rapid setup, and simple/inexpensive repairs
- ❖ Financed through donations and grants



The Navigation Center will develop partnerships with organizations to provide the following services:

- ❖ Medical support
- ❖ Dental support
- ❖ VA support
- ❖ DHS support
- ❖ Community Counseling Solutions
- ❖ COPES
- ❖ Educational advisor support
- ❖ CAPECO support



Stepping Stones of HERMISTON

The background of the slide features a series of smooth, grey stepping stones arranged in a path across a body of water. The water is depicted with soft, painterly splashes in shades of blue, teal, and yellow. Overlaid on this scene is a faint, light-colored map of the state of Oregon, with the location of Hermiston marked in the southeastern part of the state.

In summary:

The intent of Stepping Stones is to provide a safe, clean, and secure environment where those in need of temporary housing might sleep. This site is truly meant to be a stepping stone and not a permanent destination. The goal is to provide an immediate short-term place for the night for some as well as longer term arrangements for others willing to work, volunteer and/or improve themselves so they might gain the means by which they can obtain permanent housing of their own. Opportunities to receive work credit/scholarships for nightly housing will become available.

Stepping Stones is being modeled after successful programs in Walla Walla, Bybee Lakes Center for Hope (Portland), Watered Gardens (Joplin, Missouri) and The Other Side Academy (Salt Lake City, Utah).

Currently funding has been provided for Start Up funding. A search is on for the best location and for the best housing options. Contacts are being made with providers for the Navigation Center.