



AGENDA COVER MEMO

Memorandum Date: April 17, 2025

Order Date: May 6, 2025

TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: Health & Human Services

PRESENTEDBY: Eve Gray

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: ORDER/ IN THE MATTER OF
APPOINTING FOUR MEMBERS TO THE POVERTY AND
HOMELESSNESS BOARD.

I. MOTION

In the matter of appointing four members to the Poverty and Homelessness Board.

II. AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

The Poverty and Homelessness Board (PHB) focuses on developing regional plans and strategies on poverty and homelessness. The Board consists of twenty-one members. The Board Of County Commissioners (BCC) is being asked to appoint four members to the PHB.

BACKGROUND/IMPLICATIONS OF ACTION

A. Board Action and Other History

The BCC established the PHB via BO 14-06-24-04. PHB provides advice to the BCC and the intergovernmental Human Services Division with the goal of reducing and preventing poverty and homelessness in Lane County. It assists the development of the delivery of housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are impoverished or homeless, improving their stability. It assists to maximize the allocation of local, state, and federal funds made available for this purpose. It serves as the administrative board for the Lane County Community Action Agency and as the oversight board for the Lane County Continuum of Care. The PHB prioritizes the Human Services Division projects for funding through local, state, and federal grants that target homeless and impoverished populations. PHB also fulfills the board requirements outlined in ORS 458.505 for the designation of a Community

Action Agency for state and federal anti-poverty programs.

Current Board composition includes: a third of the members are public officials currently serving or their designees; a third of the members are representatives of low- income persons in Lane County selected democratically; a third of the members represent business, law enforcement, the private philanthropic sector, faith-based organizations, education, healthcare, or other major groups of interest in the community.

Position #05 Rural Elected. The position advertised through vacancy notices posted on multiple websites and sent to several email lists from 12/2/2024-1/31/2025. Three applications were received. The application was reviewed by a PHB task group, and a final recommendation was forwarded to be voted on and approved at the PHB Executive Committee meeting on March 20, 2025.

Position #8 Lived Expertise of Homelessness/Poverty Member. The position advertised through vacancy notices posted on multiple websites and sent to several email lists from 12/2/2024-01/31/2025. Six applications were received. The application was reviewed by a PHB task group, and a final recommendation was forwarded to be voted on and approved at the PHB Executive Committee meeting on March 20, 2025.

Position #14 & 16 Sector Representatives. The position advertised through vacancy notices posted on multiple websites and sent to several email lists from 12/2/2024-1/31/2025. two applications were received. The application was reviewed by a PHB task group, and a final recommendation was forwarded to be voted on and approved at the PHB Executive Committee meeting on March 20, 2025.

The Poverty and Homelessness Board recommends the individuals listed below for appointment:

Member	Position #	Term Expiration*
Genevieve Schaack Upper Willamette Soil & Conservation District	#5 Rural elected	01/31/2026
Shari Walton Community Sharing	#8 Lived Expertise	12/31/2027
Johnna Wheeler Eugene Mission	#14 Sector Rep	12/31/2027
Kim Lax Hope and Safety Alliance	#16 Sector Rep	12/31/2027

*based on the maximum term expiration, all advisory committee members serve at the will of the BCC.

B. Policy Issues

The candidates for appointment meet the qualifications to serve on this body. The current twenty-one members provide balance between public, private and community members.

C. Board Goals

This action supports the goal Safe and Healthy County: Support the implementation of Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) goals, including partnering with the Poverty and Homelessness Board and key stakeholders to develop supportive housing and emergency shelter solutions.

D. Financial and/or Resource Considerations

None

E. Health Implications

The PHB plays a critical role in creating innovative partnerships and programs that use best practices to reduce poverty and homelessness in Lane County. Poverty and homelessness are strongly associated with poor health outcomes and lowered life expectancy.

F. Analysis

The appointment of these candidates will preserve the board composition required by the Poverty and Homelessness Governance Charter.

G. Alternatives/Options

1. Appoint all the nominated candidates.
2. Appoint some of the nominated candidates and direct the PHB to continue recruiting for the declined positions.
3. Decline all the nominations and instruct the PHB to continue recruitment.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Both Lane County H&HS and the PHB recommend Option 1: Appoint all the nominated candidates.

IV. TIMING/IMPLEMENTATION

If Board approval is received on Tuesday May 6th, 2025, the member will begin to serve Wednesday May 7th, 2025.

V. FOLLOW-UP

N/A

VI. ATTACHMENTS

Board Order

Poverty and Homelessness Board Roster (proposed appointment in italics)

PHB Membership Applications

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON

ORDER NO: 25-05-06-XX

IN THE MATTER OF
APPOINTING FOUR MEMBERS TO THE
POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS BOARD.

WHEREAS, the Poverty and Homelessness Board provides advice to the Board of County Commissioners and the intergovernmental Human Services Commission with the goal of reducing and preventing poverty and homelessness in Lane County; and

WHEREAS, the Poverty and Homelessness board must maintain its membership of twenty-one members, including sixteen voting members and five non-voting members; and

WHEREAS, 4 candidates were appointed due to positions being vacated; and

WHEREAS, The 4 candidates met the required standards for membership; and

WHEREAS, the Poverty and Homelessness Board has referred these nominations and requested action by the Board of County Commissioners for consideration for appointment; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County **ORDERS** as follows:

1. The following individual are appointed to serve on the Poverty and Homelessness Board, as listed below:

Member	Appoint to Position#	Term Expiration
Genevieve Schaack Upper Willamette Soil & Conservation District	#5 Rural Elected	01/31/2026
Shari Walton Community Member	#8 Lived Expertise	12/31/2027
Johnna Wheeler Eugene Mission	#14 Sector Rep	12/31/2027
Kim Lax Hope and Safety Alliance	#16 Sector Rep	12/31/2027

ADOPTED this _____ day of May 2025.

David Loveall, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners

BOARD POSITIONS			
Poverty and Homelessness Board			
1.	Poverty and Homelessness Board, Chair	01/31/26	Shawn Murphy Laurel Hill Center
	Voting Board Positions	1-Year Term Expires	Board Members and Agency Affiliation
2.	Elected Official or Designee* Lane County	01/31/26	Pat Farr Commissioner, Lane County
3.	Elected Official or Designee* City of Springfield	01/31/26	Sean VanGordon Mayor, City of Springfield
4.	Elected Official or Designee* City of Eugene	01/31/26	Kaarin Knudsen Mayor, City of Eugene
5.	Elected Official or Designee* Rural Lane County	01/31/26	Genevieve Schaack Upper Willamette Soil & Conservation District
6.	At Large Elected Official	01/31/26	Cliff Harrold Lane County Sheriff
	Lived Experience Voting Board Positions	3-Year Term Expires	Board Members and Agency Affiliation
7.	Lived Expertise of Homelessness/Poverty Member-Youth	12/31/26	Mattias Smith Community Member
8.	Lived Expertise of Homelessness/Poverty Member	12/31/27	Shari Walton Community Member
9.	Lived Expertise of Homelessness/Poverty Member-Family	12/31/26	Kate Wooden Community Member
10.	Lived Expertise of Homelessness/Poverty Member	12/31/26	Kris McAlister Community Member
11.	<i>Lived Expertise of Homelessness/Poverty Member</i>	12/31/27	Maggie Bagon Community Member
	Sector Representatives Voting Board Positions	3-Year Term Expires	Board Members and Agency Affiliation
12.	Sector Representative	12/31/26	Heather Quaas-Annsa Community Supported Shelters
13.	Sector Representative	12/30/25	Terri Hsieh Health and Wellness Non-profit provider
14.	Sector Representative	12/31/27	Johnna Wheeler Eugene Mission
15.	<i>Sector Representative</i>	12/31/28	Mike Fleck Community Sharing
16.	Sector Representative	12/31/27	Kim Lax Hope and Safety Alliance
	Stakeholder Representatives Non-Voting Board Positions	3-Year Term Expires	Board Members and Agency Affiliation
17.	Stakeholder Representative	12/31/26	Jack Boisen St. Vincent de Paul Emergency Services
18.	Stakeholder Representative	12/31/26	Glenn Porter Equitable Social Solutions/ Navigation Center
19.	Stakeholder Representative	12/31/26	Sheila Wegener Department of Human Services District 5
20.	Stakeholder Representative	12/31/26	Debi Farr Medicaid Services, Trillium
21.	Stakeholder Representative	12/31/26	Katharine Ryan PacificSource
BOARD POSITIONS ** Elected representatives shall serve for a term of one year, which terms shall begin within thirty days after the beginning of the calendar year. Community and Citizen Members shall serve for terms of three years. Updated 11/8/2024			

Poverty and Homelessness Board Application

The Poverty and Homelessness Board (PHB) is a group of elected officials, interested parties, sector representatives and individuals who have lived expertise of being low-income and/or unhoused. Board Membership consists of 16 voting positions. Five non-voting members attend meetings and participate in the discussion representing their agencies. For more information about the PHB, click [here](#).

People representing the diversity of our community are encouraged to apply (including but not limited to people with lived experience of poverty and/or homelessness, women, those who identify as BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, persons with a disability, veterans, and people who live in rural Lane County). We are most interested in finding the best candidates for the advisory board, and candidates may come from a less traditional backgrounds. If you are interested in applying, we encourage you to think broadly about your background, lived experience, and skill set for the role.

One voting PHB is open for interested parties which represent various demographics in Lane County.

A meeting attendance stipend is available for those with lived expertise who are not otherwise being paid to attend.

Please contact Diana Alldredge (541-682-4688) with any accommodation needs, including support filling out this application.

Click [here](#) to learn more about advisory committees and boards.

Applicant Information

Name

Genevieve Schaack

Preferred Name

Gen

Preferred Pronouns

She/Her/Hers

They/Them/Their

How long have you lived in Lane County?

22 Years

Do you have a permanent address?

Yes

[REDACTED]

What is your preferred method of contact?

Both

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

NOTE: Information consisting of home addresses and phone numbers may be exempt from disclosure per ORS 192.502(3).

Are you employed by, have any business, contractual arrangements or family connections with programs having contractual agreements with the County or that might be within the purview of the committee on which you are seeking appointment? (If there is a change in your circumstances, please advise the staff for the committee within 30 days.)

No

Do you currently serve on any advisory boards or committees?

No

Share a description of the experience, training and/or advocacy that prepares you for serving as a member of the PHB?

I have worked as an educator and in the nonprofit sector for well over a decade, and was recently elected to the board of the Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District as a representative of Zone 2. I have been involved with the Community Advisory Committee for the CCOs, particularly the Rural Advisory subcommittee since mid-2023 and am part of the Community Health Assessment Design Team for the County, so approach this work through the lenses of public health and rural advocacy. I hold an MPA and a certificate of nonprofit management. In addition to my professional experience, I also have lived experience with poverty and homelessness.

Why are you interested in becoming a member of the PHB and what specific contributions do you hope to make?

I am excited to work collaboratively to develop and support innovative solutions to a very complex set of problems. I hope to bring to this role my relationships with rural community members, as well as my working understanding of the social determinants of health and the research-backed intervention strategies that improve outcomes based upon them.

What is your present or past involvement in relevant community groups?

As mentioned above, I have been a part of the CAC community for over a year as an OHP client. In the new year, I will begin the role of development director for Burrito Brigade/ Waste to Taste, a grassroots anti-hunger organization. This year, I was contracted to support FFLC's participation in forward contracting with local farmers to increase the amount of fresh produce available in pantries county-wide. Previously having served as the ED of Willamette Farm and Food Coalition, I designed and implemented the farm to food bank, market to pantry, and supplemental nutrition incentive programs at farmers markets across the county. I have been an Egan volunteer since 2014, was a White Bird front rooms volunteer in 2016 and 2017, and have volunteered in various capacities at FFLC since 2006. My mother resides in Cottage Grove, and having lived in and around that community for 7 years, I consider myself "centrally located, but rurally-minded."

In your perspective, what are three major challenges facing our community related to poverty and homelessness? Please share/explain where you feel like changes can be made and why?

The lack of truly affordable housing, addiction treatment, and the "wet" sheltering outside of Egan activations are three major challenges facing our community. I believe creating more safe sleep sites, along with looking at potential zoning exemptions for more affordable housing, would help create options that might better stabilize vulnerable members of our community. This work would be well supported through low-barrier day-shelter sites that offer pathways to wraparound services. If the funding for providing addiction treatment services had more quickly followed the decriminalization of illicit substances, I think we would not have found ourselves in such dire straights. This highlights the need to intervene to keep people from becoming homeless and increasing their risk of addiction and its impacts before it happens.

People of color experience homelessness and poverty at a higher rate, compared to the total populations, than those who are white in Lane County. How would you help to address this issue if

you joined the board?

It is difficult to address the long-standing systemic marginalization of people of color, which include increased negative interactions with police that increase the likelihood of adverse affects (income, housing, etc.) once they have exited the justice system, which compounds to increase the likelihood of recidivism. Advocating for trainings around and supporting opportunities for interventions that might disrupt such a cycle might be one way in which I could contribute to addressing this issue, as well as advocating for increased service delivery and outreach in Spanish to better serve that community.

Identities, Lived Experience, Advocacy, and Professional Background

Please check all lived identities that are true for you:

Person with lived experience of houselessness more than seven (7) years ago.

Person with lived experience of houselessness in rural area outside of Springfield/Eugene

Person with lived experience of houselessness as a youth (under 25)

Person with lived experience of poverty within the last seven (7) years.

Person with lived experience of poverty more than seven (7) years ago.

Which sector(s) do you identify as being a part of as an advocate, as someone with lived experience and/or as someone with professional experience.

(Check all that apply)

Affordable Housing Developer

EMS/Crisis Response Team

Professional Experience

Hospital

Tribal Member

Law Enforcement

LGBTQ+ Population

Lived Experience

Professional Experience

Local Jail

People with Behavioral Health Challenges

Professional Experience

Public Housing Authority

School Administrator/Homeless School Liaisons

Professional Experience

Survivors of Domestic Violence

Advocate

Survivor of Sexual Assault and Stalking

Advocate

Lived Experience

Youth (under age 25)

Professional Experience

Coordinated Care Organization (CCO)

Lived Experience

Professional Experience

People of Color

Business

Advocate

Professional Experience

Veteran

Are you interested in being a PHB stakeholder which is a non-voting member?

No

Are you an elected official in Lane County?

Yes

Optional Demographic Information

Lane County does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, religion, language, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expressions, veteran's status, or political beliefs. Providing this information will not adversely affect your opportunity to serve on this committee or board and this information is processed separately from the application. Completion of this section is entirely voluntary and remains confidential.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date

12/25/2024

Signature

Genevieve R Schaack

Poverty and Homeless Board Application

The Poverty and Homelessness Board (PHB) is a group of elected officials, interested parties, sector representatives and individuals who have lived expertise of being low-income and/or unhoused. Board Membership consists of 16 voting positions. Five non-voting members attend meetings and participate in the discussion representing their agencies. For more information about the PHB, click [here](#).

People representing the diversity of our community are encouraged to apply (including but not limited to people with lived experience of poverty and/or homelessness, women, those who identify as BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, persons with a disability, veterans, and people who live in rural Lane County). We are most interested in finding the best candidates for the advisory board, and candidates may come from a less traditional backgrounds. If you are interested in applying, we encourage you to think broadly about your background, lived experience, and skill set for the role.

Three voting PHB seats are open for interested parties which represent various demographics in Lane County.

A meeting attendance stipend is available for those with lived expertise who are not otherwise being paid to attend.

Please contact Diana Alldredge (541-682-4688) with any accommodation needs, including support filling out this application.

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Applicant Information

Name

Johnna Wheeler

Preferred Name

Johnna

Preferred Pronouns

She/Her/Hers

They/Them/Their

How long have you lived in Lane County?

12 Years

Do you have a permanent address?

Yes

Address

[REDACTED]

What is your preferred method of contact?

Both

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Email Address

[REDACTED]

NOTE: Information consisting of home addresses and phone numbers may be exempt from disclosure per ORS 192.502(3).

Are you employed by, have any business, contractual arrangements or family connections with programs having contractual agreements with the County or that might be within the purview of the committee on which you are seeking appointment? (If there is a change in your circumstances, please advise the staff for the committee within 30 days.)

Yes

Provide a brief explanation

I work for a local non-profit who follows the state requirements of Oregon Developmental Disability Services. As well as working with services provided through Lane County Disability Services and Senior and Disability Services.

Do you currently serve on any advisory boards or committees?

No

Share a description of the experience, training and/or advocacy that prepares you for serving as a member of the PHB?

For 5 years I worked for the Eugene Mission. I started in a direct support role and ended my time there as the Manager of Women and Children's Services. During my time there I met and spoke with folks from all different walks of life and backgrounds. No person was the same or had the same history. I learned more in that direct support role than I did in any class room or training. I got to hear from people where their struggles were and do my best to support them in navigating the system set in place. I became very familiar with local resources and government assistance programs. I also became very experienced with our local jail and hospital systems.

I grew up in a low income family. Mental illness and addiction were present. Food insecurity and having to depend on assistance to make sure lights stayed on, food was in the house, running water was available and that we had roof over our heads. I can appreciate the struggle of trying to make ends meet and survive.

Currently, I work for a local non-profit case management entity. We provide case management to adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Homelessness and Poverty are still prevalent in the work I do now. We work with many unhoused individuals, folks who depend on state assistance and local resources in town. The I/DD Community is an often forgotten and overlooked population. I think that's due to the myth that they receive so many resources and services. When in fact, they too struggle to make it day to day. They are seeking assistance with keeping lights on, paying rent, accessing care, keeping food in the house, etc.

I feel that both my professional and live experience would be an asset to the PHB.

Why are you interested in becoming a member of the PHB and what specific contributions do you hope to make?

I am interested in becoming a member of the PHB to make a difference in my community. I want to continue to be a part of the conversation, help find solutions and listen to those who are living it currently. I think I can add a different lens from the I/DD world and also continue to utilize the knowledge I have from my time working in the shelter.

I am hoping to make contributions by thinking outside the box to find solutions. What hasn't been done before? What could we be doing differently? A fresh set of eyes and a pretty current experience.

I also would like to make the contribution of making sure our I/DD community is a part of the conversations as well. How can we make sure these conversations are as inclusive and accessible as possible?

What is your present or past involvement in relevant community groups?

I have not been in any community groups while living in Eugene. All of my current experience has been professional.

In your perspective, what are three major challenges facing our community related to poverty and homelessness? Please share/Explain where you feel like changes can be made and why?

I feel three major challenges facing our community related to poverty and homelessness are:

1. Stigma
2. Accessibility to resources/Long waitlists
3. Actual Affordable Housing

There is a stigma not just locally, but nationally surrounding poverty and homelessness. The common mindset is "they must be addicts, mentally ill, they don't want to work, they want everything for free, they chose this lifestyle, etc." During my time working with this population directly I encountered people with PHD's, Nurses, Teachers, Business owners, World Travelers, Mothers, Fathers, Grandparents and all the inbetween. Homelessness and Poverty can effect anyone at anytime. It is not linear and it is not a one size fits all situation. The percentage of people I worked with, who chose to live on the street, was very low. If you asked most of our neighbors, I'm sure you would hear that they are not in favor of their current situation. Something happened, by choice or by a life altering event that significantly impacted their world. They are human, they deserve basic need care whether they chose this for themselves or not. Meet people where they are at, let them tell you what they need/want. I think our community is quick to decide what's best for our neighbors rather than allowing them to be a part of the conversation.

During my time working in the shelter I became very familiar with local resources. Eugene/Springfield has a plethora of resources and services. However, they are not accessible for everyone, certain criteria has to be met to utilize a service, they are not funded efficiently and the waitlists are too long. People who need the help, can't use it or aren't eligible based on some minor disqualification. These resources are not meant to be a forever need. However, most people who are trying to access that help can not.

We have affordable housing programs. We have waitlists. We have Front Door Assessments/Coordinated Entry. We have programs for specific populations. What I don't see is housing being built for low-income families and individuals. We have had a few in the past year be built which is fantastic. However, how long did those folks have to wait? We have 1-3 year long waitlists for housing, but no where to place people. I would love to see more of that being built instead of eco-friendly condos and student housing. I would love to see some conversations happening with the folks who have the finances and capabilities to either donate or partner with our local resources to work on getting folks into secured and safe housing. Representation matters and it would be wonderful to have folks currently experiencing homelessness/poverty to lead the conversation and have support from the board, local officials, peers, etc.

People of color experience homelessness and poverty at a higher rate, compared to the total populations, than those who are white in Lane County. How would you help to address this issue if you joined the board?

I would ask if they are part of the conversation. How are we being visible as a board to this particular population so they know they can be included. Are we visible in spaces where they feel comfortable being? I would address this issue by making sure we are being as diverse, equitable and inclusive as possible. I would want to make sure we are doing the work as a board to make sure we are creating that space. Seeking input from lived experience, doing our own research, seeking partnership with local resources and organizations that provide support to this particular community. In short, making sure we as a board are doing the work keep people of color a part of the conversation and involved in the conversation at all times.

Identities, Lived Experience, Advocacy, and Professional

Background

Please check all lived identities that are true for you:

Person with lived experience of poverty more than seven (7) years ago.

Which sector(s) do you identify as being a part of as an advocate, as someone with lived experience and/or as someone with professional experience.

(Check all that apply)

Affordable Housing Developer

EMx/Crisis Response Team

Professional Experience

Hospital

Professional Experience

Tribal Member

Law Enforcement

Professional Experience

LGBTQ+ Population

Lived Experience

Local Jail

Professional Experience

People with Behavioral Health Challenges

Professional Experience

Public Housing Authority

Professional Experience

School Administrator/Homeless School Liaisons

Professional Experience

Survivors of Domestic Violence

Professional Experience

Survivor of Sexual Assault and Stalking

Lived Experience

Professional Experience

Youth (under age 25)

Professional Experience

Coordinated Care Organization (CCO)

Professional Experience

People of Color

Professional Experience

Business

Veteran

Are you interested in being a PHB stakeholder which is a non-voting member?

No

Optional Demographic Information

Lane County does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, religion, language, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expressions, veteran's status, or political beliefs. Providing this information will not adversely affect your opportunity to serve on this committee or board and this information is processed separately from the application. Completion of this section is entirely voluntary and remains confidential.

What is your ethnicity/race?

[REDACTED]

What is your age?

[REDACTED]

What is your preferred language?

[REDACTED]

Gender

[REDACTED]

Will you be needing any accommodations?

[REDACTED]

Select ALL identity options that apply to you:

[REDACTED]

Date

10/23/2024

Signature

Johnna Wheeler

Poverty and Homelessness Board Application

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Applicant Information

Name

Kimberly Lax

Preferred Name

Kim

Preferred Pronouns

She/Her/Hers

How long have you lived in Lane County?

8 years

Do you have a permanent address?

Yes

Address

[REDACTED]

What is your preferred method of contact?

Both

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Email Address

[REDACTED]

NOTE: Information consisting of home addresses and phone numbers may be exempt from disclosure per ORS 192.502(3).

Are you employed by, have any business, contractual arrangements or family connections with programs having contractual agreements with the County or that might be within the purview of the committee on which you are seeking appointment? (If there is a change in your circumstances, please advise the staff for the committee within 30 days.)

Yes

Provide a brief explanation

Hope & Safety Alliance, my employer, was recently awarded the CE Grant from the County and are working to create a Program Plan

Do you currently serve on any advisory boards or committees?

Yes

Names of the boards or committees?

Coordinated Entry Committee

Share a description of the experience, training and/or advocacy that prepares you for serving as a member of the PHB?

As someone who oversees Hope & Safety Alliance's housing and shelter programs, I bring a comprehensive understanding of the housing and homelessness challenges facing our community. This role has allowed me to navigate the complexities of housing systems, from managing funding streams and compliance requirements to ensuring equitable access to services for diverse populations. I have firsthand experience with the critical need for affordable housing and the innovative strategies required to address gaps in our local housing continuum.

My work has focused on designing and implementing programs that prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable populations, including survivors of domestic violence, families with children, and those experiencing chronic homelessness. By applying trauma-informed and client-centered approaches, I've been able to ensure our programs not only meet immediate housing needs but also support long-term stability and empowerment.

In addition to my program management expertise, I have developed and sustained strong partnerships with numerous community organizations, including local nonprofits, government agencies, and private-sector stakeholders. These relationships have been instrumental in fostering a collaborative approach to addressing housing challenges. By aligning resources and coordinating efforts, we've been able to maximize impact and reduce duplication of services.

Furthermore, I bring a commitment to advocacy and systems change. My work has included engaging in policy discussions at the local and state levels, advocating for increased funding for affordable housing, and supporting initiatives aimed at reducing barriers for marginalized groups. This advocacy has deepened my understanding of the systemic factors driving homelessness and equipped me to contribute to meaningful solutions.

Finally, my training in strategic planning, fundraising, and equity-focused program development has prepared me to serve as an effective member of the PHB. I understand the importance of leveraging data, centering equity, and prioritizing community input in decision-making. My goal is to bring this experience to the board to help create sustainable, inclusive solutions that address homelessness and poverty in our region.

Why are you interested in becoming a member of the PHB and what specific contributions do you hope to make?

I am passionate about addressing the systemic challenges that contribute to homelessness and poverty in our community. Serving on the PHB would allow me to work collaboratively with other dedicated individuals to create meaningful, sustainable change. With my extensive background in organizational management, program oversight, and community partnerships, I have a deep understanding of the barriers individuals

face when accessing housing and support services.

Joining the board is an opportunity for me to contribute my expertise and perspective to shape policies and strategies that prioritize equity, efficiency, and innovation. I am particularly drawn to the PHB's mission of ensuring resources are allocated effectively and that services reach those who need them most.

Specific Contributions I Hope to Make:

Coordinating Entry Efforts:

I can help streamline the coordination of entry efforts by identifying gaps in the system, improving data collection processes, and advocating for policies that eliminate barriers to access. My goal is to ensure that resources are not only maximized but also directed to the most vulnerable populations.

Promoting Equity and Inclusion:

With diversity, equity, and inclusion as core priorities, I aim to contribute to decision-making processes that elevate the voices of underrepresented communities. I would advocate for culturally competent programs and policies to ensure equitable access to housing and services for all.

Strengthening Partnerships:

Through my experience developing and sustaining community partnerships, I can bring stakeholders together to build innovative collaborations. These partnerships would leverage shared resources and expertise to expand the impact of the board's initiatives.

Enhancing Program Efficiency:

Drawing from my background in overseeing housing and shelter programs, I can identify opportunities to enhance program delivery. By focusing on outcome-driven strategies and evidence-based practices, I hope to help the board achieve measurable results in reducing homelessness and poverty.

Joining the PHB is not just an opportunity to contribute my skills—it's also a way to deepen my commitment to creating a community where everyone has access to safe, stable housing and the support they need to thrive.

What is your present or past involvement in relevant community groups?

I was recently appointed to the Coordinated Entry (CE) Committee, and while my involvement is still in its early stages, I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to contribute to this vital work. Coordinated Entry plays a critical role in ensuring that resources and services are allocated effectively to those who need them most, and I am eager to bring my experience and perspective to these efforts.

Although my role on the CE Committee is new, my broader professional and community involvement has provided me with extensive relevant experience. For example:

Leadership in Housing and Shelter Programs:

As a leader overseeing Hope & Safety Alliance's housing and shelter programs, I have worked closely with various community organizations, coalitions, and stakeholders to address homelessness and poverty. These collaborations have given me insight into the challenges faced by vulnerable populations and the importance of coordinated efforts to create lasting change.

Building Collaborative Partnerships:

My work has involved developing and sustaining partnerships with a wide range of community groups, including nonprofits, government agencies, and advocacy organizations. These relationships have been instrumental in addressing housing and homelessness issues collaboratively, ensuring that services are comprehensive and accessible.

Advocacy and Systems Change:

I have actively participated in advocacy efforts aimed at addressing systemic barriers to housing and equity, including policy work at local and state levels. These experiences align with the mission and goals of community groups like the CE Committee, where systemic approaches to service delivery are central to success.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:

Much of my work has been informed by a deep commitment to equity and inclusion, which has driven me to engage with groups and initiatives focused on addressing disparities in housing, employment, and access to services. This aligns with the goals of community groups dedicated to serving marginalized populations.

As I continue to deepen my involvement with the CE Committee and other relevant groups, I am committed to leveraging my skills and experience to make meaningful contributions. I look forward to collaborating with others to address the root causes of homelessness and poverty and to build a more equitable and supportive community.

In your perspective, what are three major challenges facing our community related to poverty and homelessness? Please share/explain where you feel like changes can be made and why?

Lack of Affordable Housing:

One of the primary drivers of poverty and homelessness is the shortage of affordable housing. Rent costs often outpace wages, making it difficult for individuals and families to maintain stable housing. This issue disproportionately affects marginalized populations, including single parents, people with disabilities, and communities of color.

Potential Changes:

Increase investments in affordable housing developments and subsidies.

Advocate for policies that protect tenants, such as rent control and anti-eviction laws.

Expand housing-first initiatives that prioritize permanent housing as a baseline for addressing other challenges.

These changes create stability, allowing individuals to address employment, health, and educational barriers more effectively.

Insufficient Access to Mental Health and Substance Use Services:

Many individuals experiencing homelessness struggle with untreated mental health issues or substance use disorders. Without accessible, affordable, and trauma-informed care, these issues remain cyclical and hinder individuals' ability to regain stability.

Potential Changes:

Enhance funding for integrated health care services that address physical health, mental health, and substance use concurrently.

Establish more mobile outreach teams to bring services directly to individuals in need.

Partner with local organizations to create culturally competent care tailored to the community's unique needs.

Addressing these challenges at their root helps individuals build sustainable paths out of homelessness.

Systemic Barriers to Employment and Economic Opportunity:

Low-wage jobs, limited access to education and training, and systemic discrimination in hiring processes often trap people in cycles of poverty. These barriers disproportionately impact historically marginalized groups.

Potential Changes:

Advocate for a living wage and ensure fair workplace protections.

Expand job training and education programs aligned with market demands.

Strengthen support systems like childcare and transportation assistance to help individuals remain

employed.

Empowering individuals with economic opportunities builds community resilience and reduces reliance on emergency services.

Why These Changes Matter:

Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative, systems-based approach that prioritizes equity and long-term sustainability. By investing in housing, health, and economic opportunity, we can create a more inclusive community where all members have the chance to thrive.

People of color experience homelessness and poverty at a higher rate, compared to the total populations, than those who are white in Lane County. How would you help to address this issue if you joined the board?

I would actively contribute to Lane County's commitment to diversity and inclusion by bringing a focused, equity-driven approach to addressing the systemic barriers that disproportionately affect communities of color. Leveraging my extensive experience in organizational management and my deep commitment to equity and inclusion, I would implement the following strategies:

Fostering Inclusive Leadership and Decision-Making:

Representation matters. I would advocate for the inclusion of individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds in leadership roles and advisory capacities to ensure that decision-making reflects the lived experiences of those most affected by poverty and homelessness. By amplifying the voices of underrepresented communities, we can design programs and policies that are more responsive to their needs.

Building Authentic Partnerships with Diverse Communities:

I would prioritize building strong, trusting relationships with culturally specific organizations and leaders within communities of color. These partnerships are essential for understanding the unique challenges these communities face and for co-developing solutions that are culturally appropriate and sustainable. Collaboration ensures that services are accessible, relevant, and impactful.

Promoting Equitable Recruitment and Service Delivery:

To address systemic inequities, I would work to ensure that recruitment strategies for housing and support programs intentionally reach historically marginalized populations. This includes removing barriers such as language, transportation, and documentation requirements that may prevent people of color from accessing services. Additionally, I would advocate for using data to monitor equity outcomes and guide resource allocation to areas of greatest need.

Enhancing Education and Awareness:

Addressing racial disparities requires ongoing education for board members, staff, and service providers. I would promote continuous training on topics such as systemic racism, implicit bias, and cultural competency. These trainings equip stakeholders to better serve diverse populations and foster an organizational culture of equity and inclusion.

Advocating for Policy Change:

Structural racism and economic inequality are deeply rooted in public policies. I would work to advocate for systemic changes that address these root causes, such as increasing investments in affordable housing for communities of color, supporting workforce development programs that prioritize equitable access, and dismantling discriminatory practices in housing and employment.

By fostering inclusive leadership, building authentic partnerships, and advocating for systemic change, I aim to help Lane County address the disproportionate rates of homelessness and poverty among people of color. Together, we can create equitable solutions that ensure all community members have the opportunity to thrive.

Identities, Lived Experience, Advocacy, and Professional Background

Please check all lived identities that are true for you:

Which sector(s) do you identify as being a part of as an advocate, as someone with lived experience and/or as someone with professional experience.

(Check all that apply)

Affordable Housing Developer

EMS/Crisis Response Team

Hospital

Tribal Member

Law Enforcement

LGBTQ+ Population

Local Jail

People with Behavioral Health Challenges

Public Housing Authority

School Administrator/Homeless School Liaisons

Survivors of Domestic Violence

Survivor of Sexual Assault and Stalking

Advocate

Lived Experience

Professional Experience

Youth (under age 25)

Coordinated Care Organization (CCO)

People of Color

Business

Veteran

Lived Experience

Professional Experience

Are you interested in being a PHB stakeholder which is a non-voting member?

Yes

Are you an elected official in Lane County?

No

Stakeholder Designation

Which stakeholder designation do you align with?

Training and Employment

Direct Service Provider

Agency Recipient of CoC or ESG

Faith Based Organization

Coordinated Care Organization (CCO)

Philanthropy

Mainstream Providers

Mental Health and Substance Abuse (Behavioral Health) Providers

Hospitals

Health Care

University

Affordable Housing Developer

School District

Veterans Administration

Optional Demographic Information

Lane County does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, religion, language, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expressions, veteran's status, or political beliefs. Providing this information will not adversely affect your opportunity to serve on this committee or board and this information is processed separately from the application. Completion of this section is entirely voluntary and remains confidential.

What is your ethnicity/race?

[REDACTED]

What is your age?

[REDACTED]

What is your preferred language?

[REDACTED]

Gender

[REDACTED]

Will you be needing any accommodations?

[REDACTED]

Select ALL identity options that apply to you:

[REDACTED]

Date

12/5/2024

Signature

Kimberly K Lax

Poverty and Homeless Board Application

The Poverty and Homelessness Board (PHB) is an action oriented group of elected officials, community stakeholders, and individuals who represent low-income and unhoused people's concerns. Board Membership consists of 16 voting positions. Eight Ex officio members attend meetings and participate in the discussion representing their agencies. For more information about the PHB, click [here](#).

People representing the diversity of our community are encouraged to apply (including but not limited to women, those who identify as BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, persons with a disability, veterans, and people who live in rural Lane County). We are most interested in finding the best candidates for the advisory board, and candidates may come from a less traditional background. If you are interested in applying, we encourage you to think broadly about your background, lived experience, and skill set for the role.

Click [here](#) to learn more about advisory committees and boards.

Applicant Information

Name

Shari Walton

Preferred Name

Shari

Preferred Pronouns

She/Her/Hers

How long have you lived in Lane County?

9 years

Do you have a permanent address?

Yes

Address

[REDACTED]

What is your preferred method of contact?

Both

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Email Address

[REDACTED]

NOTE: Information consisting of home addresses and phone numbers may be exempt from disclosure per ORS 192.502(3).

Are you employed by, have any business, contractual arrangements or family connections with programs having contractual agreements with the County or that might be within the purview of the committee on which you are seeking appointment? (If there is a change in your circumstances, please advise the staff for the committee within 30 days.)

Yes

Provide a brief explanation

I work as a Family Coach for the State of Oregon and our employment specialists are contracted by Lane County.,

Do you currently serve on any advisory boards or

committees?

No

Share a description of the experience, training and/or advocacy that prepares you for serving as a member of the PHB?

Why are you interested in becoming a member of the PHB and what specific contributions do you hope to make?

I have personal lived experience with poverty and unstable housing. In my role as a Family Coach with the State I work with families receiving TANF who are often constantly at risk of homelessness. I have worked both as a volunteer and as a paid employee with people experiencing homelessness. So many of our programs are aimed at single adults who are unhoused. Families with children living on the street have unique stories and need different supports. I want to add that voice to this group.

What is your present or past involvement in relevant community groups?

St Vincent De Paul- Coordinator for Egan Warming Centers 2019, staff member at both First Place Family Center and the Dusk to Dawn camp on Highway 99.

Occupy Medical- co-lead for hospitality services providing medicine and basic needs on the street

Sponsors Inc- working with individuals returning to our community after incarceration

Community Outreach and Event Coordinator for the State Diversity and Inclusion Committee

In your perspective, what are three major challenges facing our community related to poverty and homelessness? Please share/explain where you feel like changes can be made and why?

Affordable housing and the incentive to build it/ permanent supportive housing shortage

Resources are scattered all across Springfield and Eugene which make it difficult for someone on the street to access

Not enough mental health services or SUDS treatment providers

People of color experience homelessness and poverty at a higher rate, compared to the total populations, than those who are white in Lane County. How would you help to address this issue if you joined the board?

I want to bring the Equity and Inclusion committee that I sit on as an officer into the conversation. I want to bring together groups actively working on Diversity, Equity, and Belonging in our community. Begin the conversation and actively work to have the right people at the table.

Identities, Lived Experience, Advocacy, and Professional Background

Please check all lived identities that are true for you:

Person with lived experience of poverty

Which sector(s) do you identify as being a part of as an advocate, as someone with lived experience and/or as someone with professional experience.

(Check all that apply)

Affordable Housing Developer
Advocate

EMx/Crisis Response Team
Professional Experience

Hospital

Tribal Member

Law Enforcement

LGBTQ+ Population

Advocate
Lived Experience

Local Jail

Professional Experience

People with Behavioral Health Challenges

Advocate
Lived Experience
Professional Experience

Public Housing Authority

Advocate

School Administrator/Homeless School Liaisons

Survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual

Lived Experience
Professional Experience

Assault and Stalking

Lived Experience
Professional Experience

Youth (under age 25)

Professional Experience

Coordinated Care Organization (CCO)

People of Color

Advocate

Business

Veteran

Are you interested in being a PHB stakeholder which is a non-voting member?

No

Optional Demographic Information

Lane County does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, religion, language, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expressions, veteran's status, or political beliefs. Providing this information will not adversely affect your opportunity to serve on this committee or board and this information is processed separately from the application. Completion of this section is entirely voluntary and remains confidential.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Date

4/26/2024

Signature

Shari Walton