

November 19, 2009

To: Kittitas County Homeless and Affordable Housing Committee
Re: Kittitas County Senior Rent Assistance Program

Thank you for your time during the last Committee meeting to discuss this project. As you well know this project was the direct result of a request from the BOCC in 2007. We have continued to administer this program through 2009 and now need the clear direction as to how the Committee would like to proceed. During our meeting on Friday, November 13, there were questions about the program and a clear request for a proposal from HopeSource as to how to continue with the program. The following is the answer to the two specific questions from our meeting, additional program information as discussed, and our proposed funding level. You will notice the proposed funding level is at its original dollar amount as I will just be presenting the information requested and leaving the end decision with the committee.

Questions –

What is defined as crisis?

Up to this point with this program it was determined that crisis was a household below or within \$100 of breaking their budget and then having to decide between essentials for living and rent.

Where are people at after receiving this service? Are they better off for having received this assistance?

There were a total of 44 unduplicated households that have received this service throughout 2008 and 2009. HopeSource administers a follow-up survey with each household that receives assistance and has received an amazing response from the households who accessed this service. Our past history of receiving feedback from households receiving any service has at its best 10%. For the Senior Rent Assistance Program over the last two years we have had a 63% response to our follow-up and have compiled the following information:

In response to the question, “Were you able to improve your situation (pay bills, save, etc.) while receiving this assistance?” 96% (27 of 28) responded yes.

The following are each of the written responses to the question. “How did this program help you?”:

- #1. This has helped me so much. I only wish it could help me 12 months instead of six. By the time I get my rent and all my bills paid and still pay for prescription drugs there is nothing left.
- #2. I have learned to put the rent that you supplemented in my checking account. Thank you so much.

#3. During the time with meds. Food, gas we were able to come to terms. This is the best help possible. Back when I was working, I thought everything worked. Boy, I was sure wrong. Thank you for all the help you have provided myself and my wife.

#4. I can get along on what I have but it is just a bare living. On this program, I was able to get my car heater fixed, get a broken motor mount fixed, and was able to rent a carport until I get the roof fixed. I could buy better food and there was less stress.

#5. It gave me 6-months of being able to not live in a state of constant turmoil and fear of any unexpected financial debts. Thank you so much for this time of peace in my life.

#6. I was able to catch up on overdue bills and have a extra amount to put on my food. Looking forward to getting the help next year. Thanks.

#7. It is helping me get some of my medical bills paid. I still owe \$3000.00 .

#8. Thank you for helping so much.

#9. Helped me pay bills and clean up my apt.

#10. Without this program I was just existing. It has enabled me to take better care of myself. I was able to buy some winter clothes, eat good food which is very expensive thesedays, pay for my medicine, and most of all, I can see the dentist. It's important to take care of your teeth (health).

#11. Thank you so much for your help. For a while there was a shinny light.

#12. To pay bills and obtain the items of clothes I needed and other items. I really do appreciate the help. Thank you.

#13. I don't know what I would do without this help. I never made it from one month to the next. Since I got help I have had to buy so many things I needed. My insurance on my medications has gone up in price and I know my heating bill will be high this winter.

#14. I was able to save some money to aid in expenses when not on the program. I could see a dentist. I was able to buy xmas gifts for my great grand kids. Replace things in my apartment like shower curtains and broken appliances.

#15. I repaired several things around my kitchen and apt. that couldn't be done if I didn't have what you could give me. After 91 years, ones personal things do wear out. Hope you can keep this program going on. I'm not the only person. There are so many people that really need some help. Thank you.

#16. My rent is very high and so it really was a great help. Thank you.

#17. It was a God-send. Thank you so much. It would be really nice to have it 3 more months but there are others who need it more.

#18. I was able to buy much needed underwear, diabetic shoes, meat (I don't get very often), some food storage, extra bath tissue, soaps of gel kinds, dog harnesses for my service dog. I got my car tuned up and bought gas for more trips to Yakima (to see specialists).

#19. Paid almost all of the medical bills, got veterinary care for my dog, had the car tuned up, had friend in for a few meals and saved some money. I also could sleep since my bills were current.

#20. Helped me keep a place of my own. Thank you so much.

#21. Yes it has helped me stay in a place of my own.

#22. I am a Dominican Nun. Our community pays this bill. Because it receives so little they were very happy not to have to pay so much. Sister

#23. This program was helpful to me for six months. Please consider me again in the future for the program. Thank you.

#24. Just about caught up with necessities. It has been a great help.

#25. I got 2 bills paid off and was able to send more than minimum payments on 2 bills. I am so greatfull for this program! Thank you so very much.

#26. This program has enabled me to pay all my bills on time. It's been wonderful to have enough each month. Thank you so much.

#27. Husband died in August and my income really dropped. Your help has helped me greatly. Thank you so much.

#28. I have paid out two of my bills. I still owe 3 more big ones. I really appreciate this help. Thank you.

We propose that the program be funded at the \$61,000 level as it has in the past. We also propose two very specific changes to the program. One, any household trying to access the program must be in a crisis situation using a new definition that requires the household to be showing a deficit in income to expenses at the time they apply for the program. If a household is able to pay their expenses with even one dollar to spare they would not be considered in crisis for this program. Second, we propose that no household be able to access this program more than one time. I believe that the 2 proposed changes give the committee the ability to make any financial decisions that need to be made and still give the SRA program the ability to help our senior citizens with the most need in a difficult time.

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Our Vision - To strive for excellence in all areas **Our Mission** - To move people out of crisis into permanent self-sufficiency