

**From:** [Kate Gregory](#)  
**To:** [Wiita, Russell](#)  
**Subject:** Ordinance to require addiction treatment  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 10:47:30 AM

---

**CAUTION :** This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Hi Russell,

I saw a post about the upcoming council meeting where the County will vote on buying two properties to house homeless. In general I support the idea of accountability being built into housing programs, but I need to know the details before I can support the measure. I looked at the Aug 17<sup>th</sup> agenda and saw the purchase of the hotels but did not see Councilmember Nehring's ordinance. Can you send me a link to his ordinance?

Thanks,  
Kate Gregory

**From:** [Cindy Vick](#)  
**To:** [Wiita, Russell](#); [Nehring, Nate](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Public Testimony needed at County Council re: homeless hotels  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 10:56:27 AM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Greetings,

My husband and I are unable to participate in tomorrow's hearing, but we do wish to register our opposition to hotels being purchased to house the homeless. There is no evidence to support the idea that providing this type of housing solves or improves the problem of people living on the streets. We could start by deterring bad behavior not enabling it. That sounds so trite, however history documents the veracity of it. What is not discouraged will be repeated.

Thank you for your ordinance, at least requiring participation in a treatment program.

Sincerely,  
Cindy Vick

***Let me add that only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.***

***Ben Franklin***

**Subject:** FW: Public Testimony needed at County Council re: homeless hotels

Hi friends,

Last week, County Executive Dave Somers proposed the purchase of the Days Inn in Everett for homeless housing. This week, he announced the purchase of a second hotel in Edmonds to be used for the same purpose.

The vote on both purchases is scheduled for Wednesday, August 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM at the County Council's General Legislative Session.

Councilmember Nehring has introduced an ordinance that would require participants in county-owned hotel shelters to participate in chemical dependency treatment if they have a substance use disorder (drug or alcohol addiction).

We are asking the County Council to delay the vote on purchasing the hotels until the ordinance can be considered. In our opinion, it is critical to have accountability built into these programs. Requiring drug treatment will help these individuals get better and become more productive members of society rather than warehousing them in a hotel so that they are out of sight.

If you agree, please join the meeting on Wednesday using this [Zoom link](#) (or attend in

person in the Jackson Board Room, 3000 Rockefeller Ave. Everett, WA 98201 – 8<sup>th</sup> Floor). The meeting starts at 9:00 AM and public comment is one of the first agenda items. If you attend virtually, you will need to click “raise hand” to indicate your interest in providing public comment.

Please let Councilmember Nehring or I know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

*Russell Wiita*

Legislative Aide to Councilman Nate Nehring

District 1

Snohomish County Council

SmallTrees



3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609

Everett, WA 98201-4046

425-626-4173 | [Russell.Wiita@snoco.org](mailto:Russell.Wiita@snoco.org)

**From:** [Kate Gregory](#)  
**To:** [Wiita, Russell](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Ordinance to require addiction treatment  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 11:40:00 AM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Hi Russell

Well that's pretty succinct. If the county buys a hotel to use as permanent supportive housing, would it cease being a hotel and, thus, no longer covered by this ordinance? That's how Seattle would roll. I'd like to see all county services geared toward treatment and recovery so that there's a clear path out of addiction. I support the ideas in Michael Shellenberger's book "San Fransicko: Why Progressives Ruin Cities", specifically contingency management in housing.

Best,  
Kate Gregory

---

**From:** Wiita, Russell [mailto:Russell.Wiita@co.snohomish.wa.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 10:56 AM  
**To:** Kate Gregory  
**Subject:** RE: Ordinance to require addiction treatment

Hi Kate,

Thanks for reaching out regarding CM Nehring's proposed ordinance regarding chemical dependency treatment at county-owned hotels. You are correct that the Council will be considering a vote on the hotel purchases tomorrow at their 9:00 AM General Legislative Session (GLS).

Councilmember Nehring's ordinance (attached) has been assigned to the Law and Justice/Human Services committee. That committee meets next Tuesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>. At that time, the Council will move the ordinance to GLS to set a time and date for a public hearing.

So we are asking the Council to delay the vote on the hotels until after a public hearing can be held and the ordinance can be considered.

I hope that answers your questions. It is a convoluted process. Let me know if you have any additional questions.

---

**From:** Kate Gregory <kate@gregory-white.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 10:47 AM  
**To:** Wiita, Russell <Russell.Wiita@co.snohomish.wa.us>  
**Subject:** Ordinance to require addiction treatment

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Hi Russell,

I saw a post about the upcoming council meeting where the County will vote on buying two properties to house homeless. In general I support the idea of accountability being built into housing programs, but I need to know the details before I can support the measure. I looked at the Aug 17<sup>th</sup> agenda and saw the purchase of the hotels but did not see Councilmember Nehring's ordinance. Can you send me a link to his ordinance?

Thanks,  
Kate Gregory

**From:** [Kent Ellefson](#)  
**To:** [Wiita, Russell](#)  
**Subject:** Wednesday homeless meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 11:59:06 AM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

I just received an email from our church concerning the Homeless meeting Wednesday morning

I have contacted Council Member Nehring in the past and he appeared interested and listened to my comments.

I have a degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmacy) and worked in retail Pharmacy's for about 25 years (full and part time). I also have a degree in Chemical Engineering and have worked with several Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Companies for nearly 20 years, before I retired.

I lived in a home affected by a member who was addicted to prescription drugs (about every 10 months every year; they became some what sobor for Thanksgiving and Christmas) from the age of about 10 until I left for college at 20. I may have a perspective that others may not have.

My belief in drug addiction is not that the addiction is the problem; it is only a symptom of the need to get high or as a method of not having to deal with their issues (they get numb).

The treatment for addiction should be based upon why the person feels the need to alter their mental state. The addiction to the drugs happens as a side effect based upon the drug dosage and length of their use. The addiction does need to be treated, but is usually not effective unless the reasons have been identified and dealt with before the addiction treatments.

As for the homeless I have encountered in the last 50 plus years, I have identified three separate groups;

1. Those who have become homeless due to circumstances "beyond their control". That is, they have lost their jobs, have had illnesses that have drained their resources, etc. They can use all the help we can give them since they do not want to be homeless, and unfortunately are more likely to refuse the needed help due to their preconceived ideas or misdirected pride.
2. Those who have a mental issues (I include drug addiction in this group) that create a situation where they feel more comfortable on the street than "under cover". They actually need medical attention more than they need housing (after the proper treatment, they can learn to cope, then they can overcome and "solve" their own homeless problems). Unfortunately, this seems to be the largest group. It must be noted again, that the problem is not the drugs, but why they feel the need to abuse them.

NOTE: in a series of lectures, to the Pharmacy School I attended, by California State Mental Hospital Mental Health Physicians in Stockton, CA in 1970, they stated, at that time, that the level of "street" heroin addiction was "ZERO", due to the fact the drug had been cut so many times that they were unable to get the drug blood levels high enough to initiate addiction (the physical not mental addiction) - this DID NOT INCLUDE the suppliers of the drug that could get more potent Heroin. They did state that the most addicting drug on the street at that time that they came in contact with, more than any opiate, cocaine, amphetamines, etc., was ethyl alcohol, or booze.

3. Then there are people that just want to "drop out" and not be part of our civilization. These have been known as Hobos, Beatniks, Hippies, Flower Children, etc. in the past. These appear to be more

interested in causing problems than being productive citizens. Their own priorities and wants are more important than anything or anybody Else's. These people are chronic, and I do not believe anything, outside of changing their outlook on life, can be done to get them to stay out of the homeless community. Most people I have known in this group have killed themselves, or "grown up" and become productive on their own.

If you think I can be of any help, just let me know. If I do not hear from you, I will attempt to connect via Zoom (do not actually know at this time if I can set up a Zoom connection since I have never tried)

Kent Ellefson  
425 241-3877  
LFSON72@YAHOO.COM

**From:** [Kent Ellefson](#)  
**To:** [Wiita, Russell](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Wednesday homeless meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 12:13:59 PM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Wiita:

In hindsight, I may have given you the idea that I did not think his mandating drug testing/treatment was not a great (and necessary) idea. I totally support that restriction for any county or state homeless purchases.

Kent Ellefson

On Tuesday, August 16, 2022 at 11:59:00 AM PDT, Kent Ellefson <lson72@yahoo.com> wrote:

I just received an email from our church concerning the Homeless meeting Wednesday morning

I have contacted Council Member Nehring in the past and he appeared interested and listened to my comments.

I have a degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmacy) and worked in retail Pharmacy's for about 25 years (full and part time). I also have a degree in Chemical Engineering and have worked with several Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Companies for nearly 20 years, before I retired.

I lived in a home affected by a member who was addicted to prescription drugs (about every 10 months every year; they became some what sobor for Thanksgiving and Christmas) from the age of about 10 until I left for college at 20. I may have a perspective that others may not have.

My belief in drug addiction is not that the addiction is the problem; li is only a symptom of the need to get high or as a method of not having to deal with their issues (they get numb).

The treatment for addiction should be based upon why the person feels the need to alter their mental state. The addiction to the drugs happens as a side effect based upon the drug dosage and length of their use. The addiction does need to be treated, but is usually not effective unless the reasons have been identified and dealt with before the addiction treatments.

As for the homeless I have encountered in the last 50 plus years, I have identified three separate groups;

1. Those who have become homeless due to circumstances "beyond their control". That is, they have lost their jobs, have had illnesses that have drained their resources, etc. They can use all the help we can give them since they do not want to be homeless, and unfortunately are more likely to refuse the needed help due to their preconceived ideas or misdirected pride.
2. Those who have a mental issues (I include drug addiction in this group) that create a situation where they feel more comfortable on the street than "under cover". They actually need medical attention more than they need housing (after the proper treatment, they can learn to cope, then they can overcome and



"solve" their own homeless problems). Unfortunately, this seems to be the largest group. It must be noted again, that the problem is not the drugs, but why they feel the need to abuse them.

NOTE: in a series of lectures, to the Pharmacy School I attended, by California State Mental Hospital Mental Health Physicians in Stockton, CA in 1970, they stated, at that time, that the level of "street" heroin addiction was "ZERO", due to the fact the drug had been cut so many times that they were unable to get the drug blood levels high enough to initiate addiction (the physical not mental addiction) - this DID NOT INCLUDE the suppliers of the drug that could get more potent Heroin. They did state that the most addicting drug on the street at that time that they came in contact with, more than any opiate, cocaine, amphetamines, etc., was ethyl alcohol, or booze.

3. Then there are people that just want to "drop out" and not be part of our civilization. These have been known as Hobos, Beatniks, Hippies, Flower Children, etc. in the past. These appear to be more interested in causing problems than being productive citizens. Their own priorities and wants are more important than anything or anybody else's. These people are chronic, and I do not believe anything, outside of changing their outlook on life, can be done to get them to stay out of the homeless community. Most people I have known in this group have killed themselves, or "grown up" and become productive on their own.

If you think I can be of any help, just let me know. If I do not hear from you, I will attempt to connect via Zoom (do not actually know at this time if I can set up a Zoom connection since I have never tried)

Kent Ellefson  
425 241-3877  
LFSON72@YAHOO.COM

**From:** [Sharon Damoff](#)  
**To:** [Wiita, Russell](#)  
**Subject:** Mailing list?  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 12:36:43 PM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Hi Russell,

A friend forwarded me an email you sent out about the vote tomorrow morning on purchasing hotels for the homeless, and about delaying the purchase until an ordinance can be considered that would require drug treatment.

I support that and will try to speak at tomorrow's meeting.

Even though I do not live in Councilmember Nehring's district, I am a conservative and align far more with his positions than with Megan Dunn, who "represents" me.

Does his office have a mailing list that I could be added to so I can be informed of future votes and issues that conservatives could speak about?

Also, if there are any particular points I should be aware of ahead of tomorrow's meeting, I would appreciate further info.

Thank you,  
Sharon Damoff  
Mukilteo

**From:** [Laurie Cooper](#)  
**To:** [Contact Council](#)  
**Subject:** Hotel purchases  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 1:32:42 PM

---

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

I fully support the county purchasing of these hotels for housing needs.

Thank you!

Laurie Cooper  
Edmonds since 1990

**From:** [Mark Smith](#)  
**To:** [Wright, Stephanie](#); [Dunn, Megan](#); [Mead, Jared](#); [Low, Sam](#); [Nehring, Nate](#)  
**Cc:** [Contact Council](#)  
**Subject:** HCESC comments on hotel/motel purchases  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 5:27:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [HCESC Comments 22-330 2022.08.17.pdf](#)

---

**CAUTION :** This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

On behalf of the Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County please accept the attached comments as our full support for using ARPA funds to purchase hotels/motels for conversion to emergency bridge housing.

Best regards,

Mark Smith  
Executive Director  
Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County  
425-339-1015 / [mark@housingsnohomish.org](mailto:mark@housingsnohomish.org)  
<https://www.housingsnohomish.org>  
PO Box 1326, Everett, WA 98206

*Please note that the Consortium's hours are M-Th, 7:30am-6:00pm*



**Housing Consortium of Everett & Snohomish County**

**PO Box 1326**

**Everett, WA 98037**

**425-339-1015**

[mark@housingsnohomish.org](mailto:mark@housingsnohomish.org)

[www.housingsnohomish.org](http://www.housingsnohomish.org)

August 16, 2022

I am writing in support of motion 22-330 to purchase property with ARPA funds for the purpose of creating emergency bridge housing.

Further, I support the implementation of a Housing First model at these properties and oppose any amendments imposing Treatment First requirements prior to housing.

Housing First is a proven model for addressing homelessness that prioritizes access to permanent, stable housing, linked with voluntary services as needed. Housing First recognizes that stable housing is a prerequisite for effective psychiatric and substance abuse treatment and for improving quality of life. Once stably housed, individuals are better able to take advantage of wrap-around services – to help support housing stability, employment, and recovery. Without stable housing, attaining these goals becomes much more difficult.

Three studies/reviews of Housing First

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Hud-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing

- 84% of veterans remained stably housed after 3 years
- Emergency room visits decreased by 27%
- Hospitalizations decreased by 33%
- Healthcare costs decreased by 32%

2009 Journal of the American Medical Association

95 participants in a Housing First model and 39 on the waitlist for Housing First housing

- 53% cost reduction from median \$4066 per person to \$1911 per person
- Number of daily drinks decreased from 15.7 to 10.6 per day median after 1 year

Journal of Public Health, Oct 13 2021 – Peer reviewed

Peer review of twenty six studies

- Decreased homelessness by 88%

Plainly speaking, if the goal is to move people off the street Housing First programs improved housing stability and reduced homelessness more effectively than Treatment First programs.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark B. Smith".

Executive Director

**From:** [Wiita, Russell](#)  
**To:** [Lao, Elena](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Ordinance 22-033  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 17, 2022 8:13:45 AM

---

Additional testimony for Motions 22-330, 22-338 and Ordinance 22-033.

---

**From:** Pam Felt <huntrgathrr@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 6:11 PM  
**To:** Wiita, Russell <Russell.Wiita@co.snohomish.wa.us>  
**Subject:** Ordinance 22-033

**CAUTION :** This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

In regards to proposed Ordinance# 22-033 I am in favor of chemical/drug treatment agreements required as proposed in this Ordinance. I have heard multiple unhoused community members state that they really need "tough love" so to speak, in order to be compelled to seek and use treatment services. It is doing our community members a disservice NOT to incorporate accountability requirements as proposed, Thank you, Pam Felt

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [ThomMaria Jackson](#)  
**To:** [Contact Council](#)  
**Subject:** Motion 22-330  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 8:35:46 PM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

As a resident of Snohomish County I support Motion 22-330. I support the motion for the following reasons:

Snohomish County has a severe lack of shelter. We simply need more shelter and housing in every city in our community. Homelessness is currently at a 10-year high in Snohomish County and will only continue to increase as the cost-of-living skyrockets and the variety of housing stock options are limited. This proposal would pair shelter with voluntary supportive services, which is extremely effective at helping individuals stabilize and recover from homelessness. Purchasing a hotel or motel for the provision of shelter is a wise investment of ARPA funds and advances our community's work of ending homelessness. It is far more cost effective for cities and the county to provide shelter than it is to criminalize homelessness and spend resources on constantly moving encampments.

I oppose the proposal to require individuals with substance use disorder to participate in treatment as a condition of living in this or any other similar facility. The requirement for services goes against the Housing First model, which is the generally accepted best practice for housing persons experiencing homelessness both in Snohomish County and nationally. There is a significant body of research, as well as on-the-ground wisdom from local providers that unhoused individuals need to have safe, stable housing in place before they can turn their attention to addiction recovery, education, or employment. Recovery from substance use disorder is difficult, complicated, and not a linear process. Each individual with substance use disorder will have a different path in their recovery, and attaching treatment requirements to housing is counterproductive. People need stable housing in place in order to be successful in recovery. Forcing a person to leave shelter if they do not make progress in their recovery only prolongs the recovery process and sets people up for failure.

Sincerely,

Maria Jackson

21329 95th Ave W

Edmonds, Wa 98020

**From:** [Susan Northrop](#)  
**To:** [Contact Council](#)  
**Subject:** Days Inn- comment for 8.17.22 meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 9:21:01 PM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Hello

I would like to make a comment on the Days Inn proposal for the meeting and vote tomorrow. I think that the concept of "housing first " needs to be studied much better before buying hotels and turning them into low barrier shelters.

The problem that we see in Everett on a daily basis has nothing to do with where these people sleep. We see massive drug addiction and severe mental illness as a result of the addiction. Housing these people without a strict requirement for addiction treatment is only sweeping the problem under the rug.

Please reconsider this for now and use REAL compassion rather than band-aid compassion.

Thank you for listening to our concerns

The Northrop Family



**From:** [Susan N](#)  
**To:** [Contact Council](#)  
**Subject:** Comment for meeting 8.17.22  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 11:47:01 PM

---

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Hi

I had earlier sent in a comment with concerns about the Days Inn project. I would like to add to it after reading this evening about the Everett men who were arrested in Fresno with 15 pounds in fentanyl.

I'm sure that you are aware how dangerous that amount of fentanyl would be on our streets.

So I would implore the council to please consider using any available funds to fight this destructive drug epidemic before buying housing that could very well make the problem worse.

Susan Northrop

**From:** [Kristen Holdsworth](#)  
**To:** [Contact Council](#)  
**Subject:** August 17 Council Meeting - Support for H2A and 6A  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 17, 2022 8:54:13 AM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Hello-

Apologies for the tardiness of this email. I was planning on attending to provide public comment but am required to be in a meeting for work I cannot miss.

I am a resident of unincorporated Snohomish County in the east Silverlake area (District 5). One of the hotels you are considering acquiring is very close to my house.

I urge you to vote yes to acquire both hotels and to not require treatment as a stipulation for housing. (I am in support of agenda items H2A and 6A).

I especially appeal to Council Members Nehring and Low, as moderate conservatives and not far-right extremists. I thank you for your consideration and dedication to listening and learning from a broad variety of perspectives.

I have worked on housing strategies and solutions for over a decade. I can share first-hand experience about the policy work I have done and how by providing housing it reduces overall costs to taxpayers. Upstream solutions cost, on average, a magnitude of 10 times less than downstream clean up. Rather than share anecdotal evidence, I want to provide you with some facts and data for your consideration. As Sharon McMahan of "SharonSaysSo", a former high school civics teacher turned educator for government for grownups says, "facts don't require your approval to be true." Please listen to the facts and data regarding this topic.

Here are the data:

1. Providing housing first paves the way for other improvements in a person's life. Studies are clear: once someone has a steady address and safe/secure place to exist, all other outcomes (such as health and employment) also get better.
2. Substance abuse is a medical disorder. We need to recognize it as such. It is NOT a moral failure. We wouldn't require someone with diabetes to get their blood sugar levels steady as a condition of housing. That would be ridiculous. In the same manner, we shouldn't force as a condition that someone be in drug treatment.
3. Studies show that forcing or coercing people with addiction into treatment isn't very effective. As fiscal conservatives, I'm sure you will agree you want the best outcomes that are most cost effective. Simply put, requiring drug treatment when someone isn't ready is a waste of money and time. People are much more successful when they willingly enter into treatment.
4. We can't legislate and arrest our way out of any of these shelter or addiction challenges. Snohomish County has tried the "change their hearts and minds" approach. We

repeatedly have criminalized poverty. It hasn't worked and those experiments need to end. It's time to address housing and substance use disorders with compassion, empathy, and our wallets. Instead of spending money to house people in jails, we can get a far better rate of return by providing bridge and supportive housing.

5. Accountability is inherently built into these projects through the embedded services. We don't need required treatment to have accountability.
6. During the 1590 hearings, two Councilmembers kept asking for "guarantees" that by having the tax funds the programs will work. It is great that you truly want to see this issue resolved. The tough reality is that the amount of funding provided through 1590 is a drop in the bucket compared to the backlog of need we haven't addressed. Snohomish County has one of the highest banked property tax rates. Council has repeatedly put off raising taxes (ie- funds) to address these issues and our County budgets for services on a per capita basis continues to shrink. At some point, the consequences and bill for deferred maintenance and lack of investment in forward thinking and planning will be due. Housing is one small indicator of this, and will continue to get worse if we don't address the problems our generation and the previous one have created by failing to adequately fund social service programs.

Thank you for your time, and thank you for being the courageous leaders we need to act now to address this challenge.

Sincerely,  
Kristen Holdsworth, AICP

---

Kristen Holdsworth, AICP

**From:** [Tana Axtelle](#)  
**To:** [Contact Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support motion 22-330  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 17, 2022 9:20:29 AM

---

CAUTION : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Dear Council members,

I am writing you to express my support of purchase of local hotels to provide bridge housing for people experiencing homelessness. I oppose the proposal to require individuals with substance use disorder to seek treatment before being allowed housing in these facilities. We should be providing housing first and then addressing what issues the individual has. Most of the people requiring housing will not have resources to seek treatment. People need stable housing in place to be successful in recovery. Please support Motion 22-330.

Thank you,  
Tana Axtelle  
Edmonds

Sent from my iPad Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Kent Ellefson](#)  
**To:** [Wiita, Russell](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Wednesday homeless meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 17, 2022 10:56:01 AM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Russell:

I was on the webcast, but unfortunately when my time to speak came (lfson) my computer would not transfer my voice. attempted to unmute, but selecting the icon several times was unsuccessful.

If you could forward my comments to the council, it would be appreciated.

1. My name is Kent Ellefsoon
2. I live in Snohomish County
3. I have 10 years of undergraduate and graduate university education. Several degrees including one in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmacist)
4. I lived for over 10 years with an addictive parent, from age 10 until I left for college at age 20
5. My parent "kicked" her addiction every year starting about a week before Thanksgiving and stayed "sobor" until just after Christmas. This continued until her death, over 35 years
6. Addiction is not a problem of the homeless, it is a symptom. Drug abuse is the problem. First comes the substance abuse then comes the addiction, as a result of the abuse
7. While in Pharmacy School, the local state run mental hospital, who handled those with mental problems and substance abuse, let us know that they believed that ethyl alcohol was the most addicting street drug, more so than opiates, amphetamines, cocaine, etc.

- A. I believe that treatment of addiction is totally useless, useless one first identifies the cause for why the person takes mind altering drugs.
- B. Unless a person truly wants help, he will just use the system. Government housing has never helped, just look at the public housing created in the past 50-60 years.
- C. Homelessness CAN NOT EVER BE SOLVED, just attempted. There are those who are homeless because that chose that lifestyle. They are in the great minority, but they are there.
- D. Homeless should be worked upon by helping those;
  - a. are homeless through no fault of their own, lost job, health, etc.
  - b. are willing to help identify why they abuse substances, then work to get off of them
  - c. attempting to help those who do not want to be helped is a losing battle.
- E. The hotel purchases are good ideas, but those in residence must not use them for any illicit use.
- F. The non-substance abuser should be separated from those who are there due to mental or substance abuse

In conclusion, I believe that those who want help will first not need the substance abuse intervention, those who have had substance abuse problems and do not want to straighten out their life with medical intervention, are not really wanting anything but a free bed to act as before. I totally support the requirement for treatment as a term to use the hotel. If they do not want treatment, they really are not looking to get out of their present situation.

Kent Ellefson  
31210 N Brooks Creek Rd  
Arlington, WA 98223  
425 241-3877

LFSON72@YAHOO.COM

On Tuesday, August 16, 2022 at 12:28:58 PM PDT, Wiita, Russell <russell.wiita@co.snohomish.wa.us> wrote:

Hi Kent,

Thank you for reaching out and sharing your thoughts and experiences regarding homelessness and addiction. We appreciate you sharing this perspective.

Our approach has always been one rooted in compassion and achieving positive results for the individuals participating in County programs. Without a certain level of accountability, folks that are chronically addicted will not get better. Identifying the underlying causes of their addiction and homelessness is critical. We have been supportive of the wrap-around services to make sure that these issues are properly identified and treated.

If you are able to provide testimony tomorrow morning, that would be great. If you are having difficulties with Zoom, you can call this number: (253) 215 8782 and when prompted, enter the following meeting ID: 948 4685 0772. Once you are in the meeting, press \*9 to digitally raise your hand. You will be called on based on your phone number if you choose to call in rather than using Zoom.

Please let me know if I can help in any other way. Thanks again for reaching out.

Sincerely,

*Russell Wiita*

Legislative Aide to Councilman Nate Nehring

District 1

Snohomish County Council



3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609

Everett, WA 98201-4046

425-626-4173 | [Russell.Wiita@snoco.org](mailto:Russell.Wiita@snoco.org)

---

**From:** [Joseph Alonzo](#)  
**To:** [Contact Council](#)  
**Subject:** Hotel Purchase  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 17, 2022 10:56:51 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)

---

**CAUTION : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.**

Dear Council,

I witnessed the public comment on today's council meeting, and appreciate the views and input from all. However, I want to speak in strong and active support that the Council moves forward with the use of ARPA funds to purchase the hotels for emergency bridge housing using a housing first model. It bears repeating that recovery, stability, and ultimately goal attainment can ONLY occur once basic secure housing is accessible. While I understand the intent, the population we are trying to serve will not be served with putting sobriety or treatment requirements as a stipulation of access. Please trust the Human Services staff and non profit organizational experts to put into place services and programs that truly and effectively support the continued progress of a resident AFTER they've been given access to a hotel unit.

Please do not delay these property acquisitions using available ARPA funds. Please instead trust that this community has the will and expertise to prove successful outcomes for so many homeless neighbors who, without this immediate opportunity, would remain on the streets.

Thank you for your consideration.

Joe Alonzo

**Joseph Alonzo**

**CEO**

**Cocoon House**

**Pronouns:** he/him/his

**Office:** 425.259.3184

**Email:** [joseph.alonzo@cocoonhouse.org](mailto:joseph.alonzo@cocoonhouse.org)

**Cocoon House empowers young people, families, and the community to break the cycle of homelessness through outreach, housing and prevention.**

Your [support](#) will have a lasting, positive impact on the lives of teens and families. Visit our website at [www.cocoonhouse.org](http://www.cocoonhouse.org)

**Statement of Confidentiality:** *This communication, together with any attachments hereto or links contained herein, is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain information that*

*is confidential, privileged, or legally protected, and as such is not a public document. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any review, disclosure, copying, dissemination, distribution or use of this communication is STRICTLY PROHIBITED. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately by return e-mail message and delete the original and all copies of the communication, along with any attachments hereto or links herein, from your system.*

**Connect with us:**





**From:** Kent Ellefson <lfson72@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 16, 2022 12:14 PM  
**To:** Wiita, Russell <Russell.Wiita@co.snohomish.wa.us>  
**Subject:** Re: Wednesday homeless meeting

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Wiita:

In hindsight, I may have given you the idea that I did not think his mandating drug testing/treatment was not a great (and necessary) idea. I totally support that restriction for any county or state homeless purchases.

Kent Ellefson

On Tuesday, August 16, 2022 at 11:59:00 AM PDT, Kent Ellefson <[lfson72@yahoo.com](mailto:lfson72@yahoo.com)> wrote:

I just received an email from our church concerning the Homeless meeting Wednesday morning

I have contacted Council Member Nehring in the past and he appeared interested and listened to my comments.

I have a degree in Pharmaceutical Sciences (Pharmacy) and worked in retail Pharmacy's for about 25 years (full and part time). I also have a degree in Chemical Engineering and have worked with several Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Companies for nearly 20 years, before I retired.

I lived in a home affected by a member who was addicted to prescription drugs (about every 10 months every year; they became some what sobor for Thanksgiving and Christmas) from the age of about 10 until I left for college at 20. I may have a perspective that others may not have.

My belief in drug addiction is not that the addiction is the problem; li is only a symptom of the need to get high or as a method of not having to deal with their issues (they get numb).

The treatment for addiction should be based upon why the person feels the need to alter their mental state. The addiction to the drugs happens as a side effect based upon the drug dosage and length of their use. The addiction does need to be treated, but is usually not effective unless the reasons have been identified and dealt with before the addiction treatments.

As for the homeless I have encountered in the last 50 plus years, I have identified three separate groups;

1. Those who have become homeless due to circumstances "beyond their control". That is, they have lost their jobs, have had illnesses that have drained their resources, etc. They can use all the help we can give them since they do not want to be homeless, and unfortunately are more likely to refuse the needed help due to their preconceived ideas or misdirected pride.

2. Those who have a mental issues (I include drug addiction in this group) that create a situation where they feel more comfortable on the street than "under cover". They actually need medical attention more than they need housing (after the proper treatment, they can learn to cope, then they can overcome and "solve" their own homeless problems). Unfortunately, this seems to be the largest group. It must be noted again, that the problem is not the drugs, but why they feel the need to abuse them.

NOTE: in a series of lectures, to the Pharmacy School I attended, by California State Mental Hospital Mental Health Physicians in Stockton, CA in 1970, they stated, at that time, that the level of "street" heroin addiction was "ZERO", due to the fact the drug had been cut so many times that they were unable to get the drug blood levels high enough to initiate addiction (the physical not mental addiction) - this DID NOT INCLUDE the suppliers of the drug that could get more potent Heroin. They did state that the most addicting drug on the street at that time that they came in contact with, more than any opiate, cocaine, amphetamines, etc., was ethyl alcohol, or booze.

3. Then there are people that just want to "drop out" and not be part of our civilization. These have been known as Hobos, Beatniks, Hippies, Flower Children, etc. in the past. These appear to be more interested in causing problems than being productive citizens. Their own priorities and wants are more important than anything or anybody Else's. These people are chronic, and I do not believe anything, outside of changing their outlook on life, can be done to get them to stay out of the homeless community. Most people I have known in this group have killed themselves, or "grown up" and become productive on their own.

If you think I can be of any help, just let me know. If I do not hear from you, I will attempt to connect via Zoom (do not actually know at this time if I can set up a Zoom connection since I have never tried)

Kent Ellefson

425 241-3877

[LFSON72@YAHOO.COM](mailto:LFSON72@YAHOO.COM)

**From:** [ed\\_edp](#)  
**To:** [Wiita, Russell](#)  
**Subject:** Check out this school for homeless kids in Oklahoma  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 17, 2022 10:59:27 AM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

**Big picture thinking!**

**Check out this school for homeless kids in Oklahoma**  
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=128657022445355>

**We are asking the County Council to delay the vote on purchasing the hotels until the ordinance can be considered. In our opinion, it is critical to have accountability built into these programs. Requiring drug treatment will help these individuals get better and become more productive members of society rather than warehousing them in a hotel so that they are out of sight.**

**The state has failed enormously with kids getting booted out of the foster care system at age 18, and they do not have their high school diploma. YET, they are eligible to still attend high school till age 21!! None of this makes sense to those who want success achieved with our tax dollars that have sky rocketed!**

**Please get this right! Success on multiple fronts is necessary!**

Shelley Droz  
property tax payer

Reposting because this is important:

Last week, County Executive Dave Somers proposed the purchase of the Days Inn in Everett for homeless housing. This week, he announced the

purchase of a second hotel in Edmonds to be used for the same purpose.

The vote on both purchases is scheduled for Wednesday, August 17th at 9:00 AM at the County Council's General Legislative Session.

Councilmember Nehring has introduced an ordinance that would require participants in county-owned hotel shelters to participate in chemical dependency treatment if they have a substance use disorder (drug or alcohol addiction).

**We are asking the County Council to delay the vote on purchasing the hotels until the ordinance can be considered. In our opinion, it is critical to have accountability built into these programs. Requiring drug treatment will help these individuals get better and become more productive members of society rather than warehousing them in a hotel so that they**

**are out of sight.**

If you agree, please join the meeting on Wednesday using this Zoom link (or attend in person in the Jackson Board Room, 3000 Rockefeller Ave. Everett, WA 98201 – 8th Floor). The meeting starts at 9:00 AM and public comment is one of the first agenda items. If you attend virtually, you will need to click "raise hand" to indicate your interest in providing public comment.

Please let Councilmember Nehring or I know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Russell Wiita

Legislative Aide to Councilman Nate Nehring

District 1

Snohomish County Council

3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609

Everett, WA 98201-4046

425-626-4173 | [Russell.Wiita@snoco.org](mailto:Russell.Wiita@snoco.org)

**From:** [Sharon Damoff](#)  
**To:** [Contact Council](#)  
**Subject:** Please collect data from homeless hotels  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 17, 2022 2:10:47 PM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Dear Councilmembers,

I listened and spoke at this morning's meeting. About half of the public speakers claimed the Housing First model works, and about half of us thought agreeing to treatment should be a requirement of residency because housing addicts in the same building as moms and kids seems like a terrible plan.

The county will now have the chance to find out if Housing First works. As suggested by a councilmember (Councilmember Mead, I believe, though it was hard to tell on the tiny screen), the county should keep thorough data. Then we will know for sure.

Data that should be kept (at a minimum; other info would be useful too)

- Names of residents admitted
- Length of stay
- How many get treatment for addiction or mental illness
- How many get clean, get jobs, and move out
- Deaths in or near the facility, with cause of death listed
- Detailed list of crimes committed on the facility grounds (don't cover up assaults, etc!)
- Crimes committed within a few blocks of the facility
- Change in rate of crime in the area
- An accurate accounting of how much it is costing taxpayers per resident once you add in maintenance, operations, management, security, treatment, cleanup--all costs associated with the facility--divided by the number of residents in a year. We need an accurate account of how much is spent and how many people are served.

I personally think the Housing First model is just enabling, but I would be happy to be proved wrong by thorough, demonstrated data from these two county facilities, rather than the vague, wishful-thinking claims we heard today.

It would be great to get regular reports.

Thank you,  
Sharon Damoff  
Mukilteo

**From:** [Graham Link](#)  
**To:** [Contact Council](#)  
**Subject:** Housing first approach  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 17, 2022 8:43:59 PM

---

**CAUTION** : This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Council members-

I just want to congratulate you on the hotel purchases. I believe the quote from the Everett herald was ...

“Snohomish County is following in King County’s footsteps“...

Well done. Kudos.

In all seriousness, when you read that statement in the herald, it should sound like an insult to this plan/approach. Have any one of you visited king county lately? I understand this is a difficult and nuanced problem; following in king counties foot steps for this problem seems insane considering the results.

It doesn’t take the “studies” referenced in the article to see how well king county has handled the issue- it’s an unmitigated disaster. And so Snohomish council members, instead of attempting to find a real solution to a crisis of epic proportions (mental health/drug addiction), just said... “let’s do what king county does.”

I see two members voted for delay to mandate treatment. Thank you two those two for recognizing these people aren’t on the street due to lack of beds. But rather a debilitating addiction or mental health.

Sincerely,

Soon to be former Snoco taxpayer Graham Link

Sent from my iPhone