

Housing: Commissioners seek voice on health board

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groups and one medical transportation system.

Board representatives include four people from each county, Regional Director Mimi Haley told commissioners. Those representing Clatsop are officers from Providence Seaside Hospital and Columbia Memorial Hospital, the director of Clatsop Community Action, and



Haley

the president of the Warrenton-Hammond school board.

"I don't care who does sit on the board. The point is who *does not* sit," Thompson said.

Commissioner Pamela Wev agreed.

"I think we should be at the table -- not by invitation, but because we need to be there," Wev said. "I'm just very concerned that it isn't part of doing

business of the CCO to have us on board as a voting member. ... Especially on issues of housing and mental health and public health in general, the buck stops here. Right here. On the Clatsop County Commission."

While there was no resolution Wednesday on the board representation issue, the agency's director thanked commissioners for their "honest, straightforward conversation."

The Columbia Pacific CCO has focused on vaccinations, emergency food allocation, and housing during the pan-

demic, Haley said during her annual report to the board. The region's lack of housing is critical, she said.

In Clatsop County, 17 in every 1,000 people experience homelessness, a rate nearly six times the state's rate of 3 per 1,000, according to her report.

Clatsop County's own housing study shows the need for more than 2,600 new housing units by 2038, she pointed out.

Trillium House, a low-income housing project in the works near Home Depot in Warrenton, will provide some of the 163 additional housing units needed per year.

"A hundred and sixty-three just seems like a really big number," Commissioner

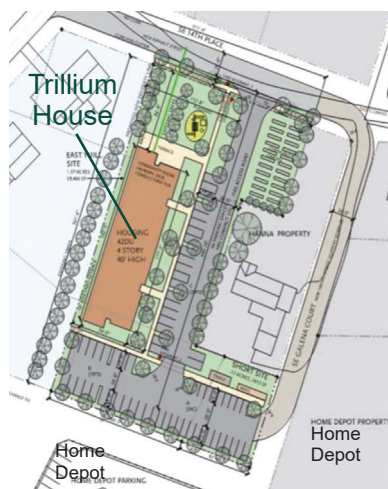
Courtney Bangs said. "Can we open a discussion in the future that talks about how we in the county can immediately take action? We need to do anything we can to help promote activity, building activity. ... Housing is critical. We have job openings everywhere and we have nowhere to put people."

Commissioner Thompson, co-chair of the Association of Oregon Counties Housing Subcommittee, will participate Monday in a statewide meeting on housing shortages.

"Part of my angst this morning is that it has taken so long," Thompson said. "We are on the cusp now of being able to take the administrative actions that are needed. ... We have been disconnected. We need to be connected at every level."

Housing will be the topic of an upcoming work session, County Manager Don Bohn said.

"We have some really immediate needs such as micro-housing options, which I think are a viable path forward to meet some of those needs," Bohn said. "It's just getting everybody aligned politically and communitywise to work together."



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