I. Call to Order & Introductions
Chair Jack Keolker called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. Attendees introduced themselves.

II. Changes to Agenda
None.

III. Approve Meeting Summary – January 26, 2011
It was M/S/A by Bill Hallanger and Sheila Thomas to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2011 meeting. There was no meeting in February due to inclement weather. The minutes were unanimously approved.

IV. New Business
A. Elections – Chair/Vice-Chair
Jack Keolker was nominated by Bill Hallanger to continue serving as Chair; Jack Keolker nominated Bill Hallanger for Vice-Chair. The motion was seconded by Julie Hourcle´ and unanimously approved by the group.
IV. Unfinished Business
A. Vulnerable Populations Disaster Planning

Melissa introduced Kate Griffith, of Emergency Planning Resources, Inc. in Vancouver WA. Kate was selected to conduct the Vulnerable Populations disaster planning effort. Margaret Lapic asked for a definition of “vulnerable populations”; Mike Kerins suggested that it would depend on the type of disaster. Kate indicated that this group includes:

- People served by agencies who assist them because they have limitations on their ability to conduct everyday activities. These agencies have a good idea of who they include in their particular client base of “vulnerable populations.”

- People who become vulnerable following a disaster; for instance, someone who relies on a medication that is not available following a disaster.

- People who live independently but need help to prepare for disasters and to maintain their independence during a disaster.

Facilities housing vulnerable populations should have an emergency plan, but there is a lot of variation in the quality and comprehensiveness of these plans. Each agency may have slightly different needs during an emergency. Resource management is typically coordinated by city, county, state and federal governmental entities during a disaster.

To complete the planning process, work groups have been formed to address key functional areas to solicit input and feedback on the approach taken. These groups include: Sheltering, Communications, Transportation/Evacuation and Medical Needs. Members of this group may also participate in a larger advisory committee known as COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disaster), which meets on the first Thursday of each month at 2 PM at the Salvation Army. For this plan, a steering committee was created to guide the overall process.

One key concept in the planning process is to identify the existing resources and to determine how we can add more resources during a major event. Creation of a resource data base is one of the deliverables under the contract. Workshops will also be offered to any agency interested in “Filling the Gaps” in their emergency plan. The final document will identify policies and strategies to address the needs of vulnerable populations for each applicable Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). Templates will be created for other counties to use in a similar process, and for agencies to use in creating a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan.

Margaret Lapic asked how we can raise awareness within our community about the need for such planning. Sheila Thomas suggested the use of water bill reminders and notices. Melissa distributed a list of upcoming meetings, which included the “Filling the Gaps” workshops, which will be advertised in the newspaper and other media.

Kate mentioned several other factors that will likely be considered during the planning process:
- A policy to prioritize vulnerable populations for housing in the long-term recovery phase;
- FEMA does not intend to assist with ramp repairs; we must develop our own community strategy for this need;
- Hand-held devices are now common and can be used to community emergency notification to a variety of vulnerable populations, particularly the vision- and hearing-impaired;
Map Your Neighborhood is an exercise that communities, neighbors and city blocks can use to identify vulnerable people as well as resources that could be helpful during an emergency; CERT training is available through the county Department of Emergency Management (DEM); this is an extensive training for members of Citizen Emergency Response Teams; Faith-based organizations are often interested in helping with disaster response and recovery; some groups are very well practiced and offer their own training seminars;

Kate summarized the group’s primary concerns as two-fold: 1) Communication of Preparedness Information (venues, increased awareness for the need, etc.); and 2) Redundancy in Communications (to accommodate potential failure of systems). There was agreement with this summary.

Bill Hallanger observed that bus drivers were home taking care of their families during Katrina, and asked how staffing needs can be met at these times. Kate responded that staff preparedness is part of facility preparedness. We know there are many natural hazards in our area; the urban core is developed on lands that were reclaimed with dikes to hold back the water. Sheila Thomas emphasized the need for neighborhood preparedness, especially to help with communications and resource identification.

A list of facilities that serves vulnerable populations was distributed. Members were asked to indicate any concerns or past emergency events in the space provided.

VI. Roundtable Discussion & Updates

Mike Kerins – Kelso has updated their zoning code to allow accessory apartments and temporary homes for aged/infirm relatives. These are allowed as temporary uses with definitions provided for clarity in what qualifies for this use. These changes were made in advance of the coming Comprehensive Plan update.

Julie Hourcle’ - The Impediments to Fair Housing Study has been delayed, but will finish up later this spring. Bessie Scott of the Washington Fair Housing Center will conduct a Community Fair Housing Forum on April 13th at Longview City Hall from 6:00-7:30 PM. Real estate groups and landlords, as well as citizens, will be encouraged to attend. Julie reminded everyone of the HOME Public Hearings and Doc Fee Hearing on April 27th. A list of proposed projects was distributed.

Maple Terrace Apartments – A question was raised regarding the need for assistance to people living in these units prior to demolition. Chris Pegg prepared a report on several items because she could not attend the meeting; this report was referenced with the announcement that all tenants have vacated the apartments, which will be demolished later this spring.

Mike Kerins/Sheila Girt – Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds have been restricted to REO properties (bank-owned homes), which makes it very difficult to acquire the properties. There may be a third round of NSP funding; stay tuned. Chris Pegg’s memo reported that Longview Housing Authority used the Longview NSP fund to purchase a house they will use as transitional housing for their homeless veterans program.

VI. Set Next Meeting Date
The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 27th at 1:30 PM in the Altrusa Room at CAP.

VIII. Adjourn
The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.