



HAWNY Monthly Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, January 19, 2022

Time: 3:05 PM - 3:55 PM

Location: GoToMeeting Video Conference

Attendance (66): Alan Huntington, Alissa Venturini, Allison Geddes, Andrew Dearing, Ariel Peters, Byron McKinnney, Christine Slocum, Dan Gordon, Dannise Elie, David Bishop, David Rodriguez, Deborah Goldman, Diane Bressel, Friends of the Night People, Gabriela Vega, Gigi Grizanti, Gordon Williams, Grace Andriette, Ilian Galan, Jarrett Steffan, Jason Morosey, Jean Bennett, Jeremy Garson, Jessica Budzinack, Jessica Starks, Jill Mattson, Jocelyn S. Bos, Joe Heary, Josh Curry-Bascom, Joshua Zicarelli, Judy Martin, Kailee Van Brunt, Kate Hilliman, Kathleen Leonard, Kelley Swann, Kelsey Lignos, Kenneth Gholston, Kexin Ma, Kimberly Tolley, Kristen Brening, Kristin Rivera, Laura Pennington, Lisa Freeman, Lu Firestone, Major Santiago, Marie Kaiser, Meg Honan, Meichie Latham, Michael Henry, Michelle Laraby, Nadia Pizarro, Nate Pyzikiewicz, Nellie Rodriguez, Nicholas Calandra, Robert Goods, Rachel Straker, Ryan Trubits, Sara Gartland, Sue Lumadue, Teneva Dennis, Thanh Nguyen, Tracy Schmidt, Sara Caitlin, Vicky Garcia, CharBrenna Marks, Kathy Zunner

1. Introductions

2. Board Election

- 6 Open board positions
- Nominees (6):
 - Kenneth Gholston
 - Diane Bessel
 - Nadia Pizarro
 - Byron McKinney
 - Sister Mary Augusta Kaiser
 - Kelley Swann

- CharBrenna Marks from Erie County Department of Social Services requested to be considered to serve on the board

- An online ballot was shared. Voting members use the online ballot to vote. Kexin and Jarrett are designated to count the ballots. 32 Valid votes received. Members vote to approve the original slate of nominees listed above, and they are approved to serve on the board for 3 year term.

3. Eviction Moratorium Update – Grace Andriette, Neighborhood Legal Services

- The expiration of the eviction moratorium occurred on January 15th, 2022;
- Two strategies that are most effective in preventing eviction;
 - ERAP applications
 - StandUp applications
- There won't be much money left to payout from ERAP funds but tenants should be encouraged to apply because as long as there is an ERAP application/application number, that can be presented to the court that will put off an eviction until it has been adjudicated in the court system;
- The current law states that the eviction cannot take place until the ERAP or StandUp application has been processed;
- Another protection that exists is the Tenant Safe Harbor Act which;
 - Was enacted on June 30th, 2020 and it gives the possibility for tenants to have certain protections against eviction for unpaid rent.
 - Tenants facing eviction for nonpayment of rent must prove financial hardship in court, and show that they experienced the hardship during the "covered period".
 - If a tenant successfully proves hardship, they may be able to stay in their apartment and a judge would decide in a nonpayment case whether the tenant has proven their financial hardship and if that hardship sufficiently falls within the covered period.
 - Tenants awarded the ability to stay in their apartment would still be responsible for rent debt. This unpaid rent would become a "non-possessory" judgment.

4. Point in Time Update

- Point in Time Count will be conducted next Wednesday, January 26th into Thursday January 27th.
- The Point in Time count drives major federal funding from HUD into localities and we are trying to reflect the actual number of persons experiencing homelessness in each area.
- HAWNY has been working with our partner agencies and have established routes and time slots for volunteers to sign up, some sign up spots still available.
- HAWNY will be conducting the unsheltered surveys in the 5 counties, with teams going out street canvassing. Sheltered surveys have been provided to our area shelters as well.
- HAWNY will also be collecting data straight from HMIS as well as our DV and non-HMIS providers by using an aggregate survey tool.

5. Shared Housing Institute

- Shared Housing Institute provided training to our partner agencies that ran from October through December of 2021.
- Shared housing is when two or more unrelated people live in one rental unit or house and share common space which is in response to the lack of available one bedroom apartments, and a way that communities can try and think outside the box when it comes to the current rental market.

6. Covid-19 Update

- Covid statistics:
 - Currently, there is a 70.6% rate of people having at least one vaccine in the Western New York Region (Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, and Niagara), which is up from 68.6% from November 17th, 2021.
 - There is currently a 79.4% rate of vaccine across NYS up 6.7% from November of last year;
- Rapid home testing is very difficult to find currently, and because of this the White House has created a website to get home testing sent to households, which will take about 14-20 days to get the tests delivered;
- The White house is also attempting to get out around 400 million N95 masks to people across the country;
- The CDC recommends people to quarantine inside their homes for at least 5 days, and then evaluate the symptoms after that time period;
- The CDC does recommend wearing N95 and K95 masks which are much more effective preventing the spread of the virus;
- Only 54.7% of people who are eligible for the booster shot in NYS have received it.

7. Community Announcements

- Restoration Society, Inc. - Searching for MRT candidates, will send email to community with more information.
- WeSoldierOn has 2 new employees, and are taking referrals for veterans that are seeking housing or financial assistance. Do not need a court ordered notice but just any type of late rent or financial statement showing a debt is owed.
- There is a new community COVID testing site at the Niagara Family Center at 1522 Main St. Testing is available from 9a-4p Mon, Tue, Wed, and Fri. They do rapid and lab tests.
- HAWNY announces that a new quarterly report will be published within the next few weeks and providers are encouraged to go look at the report and how it might apply to them.

8. Adjournment

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 at 3:00 PM