



HAWNY Monthly Meeting Minutes

Meeting Information

Date: Wednesday, March 19th, 2025

Time: 3:02pm-3:48pm

Location: Zoom

Attendance: (76) Dan Gordon, Kexin Ma, Dan Stegeman, Ashley Matrassi, Tracy Schmidt, Ann Kuriy, Alissa Venturini, Bailey Norris, Caitlin Bauer, Carrie Borges, Celina Bryan, Christine Slocum, Clare Corbett, Colette Graham, Danielle Gallego, Darwin Rosales, D Hill, Dinoshka Ortiz, Elise Robinson, Endeavor Health Services, Flor Aber, Gigi Grizanti, Haley Diagostino, Holly Rutkowski, Jamie, Jamie Dolan, Jenifer Kaminsky, Joanne Irizarry, Joyelle Tedeschi, Kashmir Bowser, Katey Soellers, Katie, Katrina Cropo, Kendra Calhoun, Kristen Lazarony, Kristen Weese, Kristin Rivera, Kristin Tanner, Kristina Lutz, Lisa Freeman, Luanne Firestone, Luna Vasquez, Marek Parker, Meg Honan, Mercedes Ruiz, Mlotempio, Nadia Pizarro, Pam McKinney, Patricia Rejewski, Rae Frank, Rebecca Batt, Rebecca Piazza, Robyn Krueger, Ryan Undercoffer, Build Promise, Sara Carlson, Sara Gartland, Sarah Catherine Sargeant, Sasha Rodgers, Shannon Boswell, Shannon Stachowski, Stacy Arlain, Stephanie Mejia, Stephanie Vroman-Goodrich, Thanh Nguyen, Walt Koch, Will Irene, Yulissa Pena, Alissa Venturini, Donell Gibson, Edwina, Jennifer Kaminsky, Jmbadillio, Jocelyne Gonzalez, Meg Honanm, Luna Vasquez

1.) Introductions

Homeless Alliance Executive Director Kexin Ma welcomes attendees and introduces Dan Stegeman to present on Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program.

2.) Dan Stegeman (VA) Presents on Veteran Services

Health Care for Homeless Veterans Program

Drop-In Center:

Offers veterans immediate housing assessment, medical care, showers, clothing, computer access, laundry, Veterans Benefits Assistance, job postings, phone access and more.

Walk-in drop-in center open 8:30-3:00. VA Social Worker available to complete intakes, discuss housing situations and receive referrals to shelters, programs.

VA Doctor on site once a week for those without a primary care provider.



Outreach and In-Reach:

VA will go out in the community where veterans are staying, including shelters in the community, to complete intakes and connect with veterans.

Social worker assigned to different programs within the VA to complete housing intakes when appropriate.

The Team Approach:

HUD-VASH, Housing Authority, Peer Support, Employment and Vocational support, and more.

Contract Residence:

Eagle-Star Emergency Housing in Pembroke NY. Up to 60 days. VA Shuttle between Batavia to Buffalo. 16 male beds. Shared rooms.

Buffalo City Mission Grant and Per Diem:

Transitional Housing through VA partnership with a community provider (Buffalo City Mission). Average length of stay is 6-9 months. 30 Male beds.

HUD-VASH:

Combines HUD's Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) rental assistance with case management and other services provided by the VA. Supportive housing currently targets the Chronically Homeless veteran population, but does not need to meet definition.

WNY HUD-VASH pilot program in 1996 - 25 vouchers.

Expansion in 2008.

Currently have 335 vouchers.

Briefing and orientation for recipients.

1-3 months to find housing once they have secured a voucher.

1325 Main St. Buffalo 14209. Veterans can walk-in. Providers can contact Dan Stegeman or VA Office to help connect clients with the VA.

Service Area: Genesee, Orleans, Wyoming, Chautauqua, Cattaraugus, Erie, and Niagara.

3.) Updates on Federal Funding

Kexin Ma provided an update on Continuing Resolution (CR). 500+ CoCs throughout the country coming together, including NY-508 working with other CoCs in New York, to protect funding.



There are already programs being impacted throughout the country and locally.

The (CR) preserves the overall funding level of \$4.051 billion for the US HUD Homeless Assistance Grants programs at the following levels

\$290 million for Emergency Solutions Grants.

\$107 million for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program.

\$3.544 Billion for the CoC program.

CR does not account for the increase in 2026 Fair Market Rent (FMR).

- FY 2024 one bedroom Fair Market Rent (FMR) was \$992
- FY 2025 one bedroom FMR is \$1011 → a 1.9% increase
- Projected FY 2026 average one bedroom FMR: $\$1011 * (1+1.9\%) = \sim\1030
 - NY-508 CoC will need an increase of \$250K to \$300K in FY2025 to carry all the renewals for operating year 2026-2027.
- National Alliance estimated nationally we need about \$150 - 200M to carry the contract to 2026
 - 18,000 clients potentially impacted nationally

The CR provides enough to renew the announced awarded programs for this fiscal year.

Walt Koch from Congressman Tim Kennedy's office encourages continued communication with the representative's office.

Ashley Matrassi emphasized the advocacy efforts of CoCs across the state. Updates to come.

Joyelle Tedeschi from Belmont Housing provided an update on Housing Choice Vouchers. Advised to put a hold on the issuance of vouchers.

Referral sources informed of the pause on new referrals. The goal is to prevent people from receiving a voucher and then it being taken away.

4.) Adjournment

Homeless Alliance Executive Director Kexin Ma thanks attendees for joining the meeting.