



HAWNY Monthly Meeting Minutes

Meeting Information

Date: Wednesday, September 17th, 2025

Time: 3:03 PM -3:45 PM

Location: Zoom

Attendance: Kexin Ma, Evan Coyle, Abby Szarowicz, Sam, Amy, Bethesda Thompson, Cathie Gibbons, Cbrown, Christine Slocum, Clare Corbett, Dan Gordon, Dan Szewac, diane Aquila, Deanna Atkin, Destiny Williams, Haley Diagostino, Jamie Dolan, Jill Bianchi, Jody tassone, Kaitlyn Dickey, Kashmir Bowser, Katey Soellers, Kelly DeMatteo, Kristin Tanner, Lisa Freeman, Maddie Fooks, Maria brecht, Marthe Limage, Matthew Schaefer, Meg Honan, Mia Clark, Michael Devine, Morgan Hoffman, Nick Arlain, Nicole Lalonde, Nate Pyzikiewicz, Peggy Nowakowski, Rae Frank, Rebecca Batt, RPiazza, Sara Carlson, Sara Gartland, Sarah catherine Sargeant, Sasha Rodgers, Shannon Stachowski, Stephanie Saunders, Thanh Nyugyen, Tiffany Knight, Tom Grinnell, Will Marcy, Yulissa Pena,

1. Welcome and Introduction

Executive Director of the Homeless Alliance Kexin Ma, welcomes attendees to the meeting

2. Project Update: Build Promise

Presented by Samuel DiVincenzo, Executive Director of Build Promise

Build Promise will serve as a community access center offering Year round shelter, Code Blue Facility, and The ReFresh Spot (showers, Laundry, Hygiene). The project will open in phases starting this Fall.

- October 9th, 2025 is the ribbon cutting ceremony 1297 Sycamore street Buffalo
- Website <https://buildpromise.com/> for detailed project information and plans

- The Project Includes 96 Beds for a Mens shelter
- 100 additional cots available
- Lockers for people to stow personal belongings
- 17 shower facilities and 2 showers dedicated for pets
- Full Kitchen designed for large scale meals
- On site community resources from DMV, Best Self, and various organizations
- Plan to assist with Care coordination and job Skills Training
- Plan to have ability/Capacity to host Code Blue

3. Introduction of New HAWNY Staff

Homeless Alliance of WNY New Staff Update

Angel Torres: Coordinated Entry Specialist

Donna Fitts: Coordinated Entry Specialist

Maddison Fooks: Coordinated Entry Specialist

Matthew Schaefer: Communications Coordinator

Abigail Szarowicz: Housing Systems Coordinator

Kyla Dyer: Housing Navigator

Destiny Williams: Housing Navigator

Cadence Aguilar: Intern

Jariesha Thomas: Intern

4. Preparing for the Annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count

PSH coordinator Sara Carlson Discusses the annual Point in Time (PIT) count occurring on January 22nd and 23rd

The HUD Point in Time Count is an annual event that happens every January on one specific night. CoC's organize to count the number of sheltered and un sheltered individuals experiencing homelessness. The Pit Count raises community awareness,

helps us to understand local trends, and helps us to advocate for local and federal funding.

We need your help! If you have participated in the Pit Count before please sign up to be a Lead Volunteer using the link Below.

Lead Volunteer sign up:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc83FmDGTDL0jeyHtfv-3aO46FG69AznlsfFadQq7n9U_PcNQ/viewform

5. CoC Updates

Kexin Ma, Executive Director, HAWNY

Recently, HUD issued additional rounds of the CoCBuils NOFO that introduced new and unlawful requirements, shifting funding away from communities like ours that follow evidence-based, best practices. As a result, Western New York lost \$7 million that we had been originally selected to receive for building affordable housing. These funds could be redirected to states that agree to conditions unrelated to housing need or performance.

This isn't just about one program. It's about protecting the \$23.7 million our region currently receives each year through the Continuum of Care (CoC) Program — funding that supports permanent housing, rapid rehousing, and essential services for people experiencing homelessness.

The NAEH link below discusses the matter further and suggests ways to advocate

<https://endhomelessness.org/act-now-stop-hud-from-sowing-chaos/?emci=636a3836-768e-f011-b484-6045bdeb7413&emdi=6de2f933-7a8e-f011-b484-6045bdeb7413&ceid=4808723>

In Response NYS filed a lawsuit against the Federal Government

<https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/court-filings/new-york-et-al-v-united-states-department-of-justice-et-al-memo-and-order-2025.pdf>

6. Community Announcements

Understanding NSPIRE (Inspection Model) at Belmont (click link below for more info)

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfffrllabm_qVvaAtCISVmx56sbklQTTPEmuGR3PAUXpNSGMg/viewform

Project Homeless Connect is on Friday September 19th, at the Buffalo Convention Center

7. Adjournment