



HAWNY Monthly Meeting Minutes

Meeting Information

Date: Wednesday, July 15th, 2026

Time: 3:02 PM -3:53 PM

Location: Virtual

Attendance (64) Evan Coyle, Dan Gordon, Daniella Gallego, Katey Soellers, Michael Devine, Nicole Lalonde, Nate Pyzikiewicz, Sara Carlson, Kexin Ma, Aimee White, Amin Shah, April Tapin, Ashley Matrassi, Ashley Olsen, Bailey Norris, Brandy Loveland, Bridget Janese, Bryan Roth, Cadence Aguilar, Carrie, Celina Bryan, Daniella Depaul, Darwin Rosales, Deanna Hughes, Donell Gibson, Emily Reese, Haley Diagostino, Holly Rutkowski, Jackie Keller, Jamie Dolan, Joelle Dempsey, John Banas, Joyelle Tedeschi, Katey Soellers, Katie, Kelly DeMatteo YWCA, Kristen Lazarony, Kristen Tanner, Kyla Dyer, Laura Gates, Lisa Freeman, Luanne Firestone, Luna Vasquez, Maddie Fooks, Matthew Schaefer, Mia Clark, Pam Quigley, Rae Frank, Rob Williams, Robyn Kreuger, Rebecca Piazza, Sara Gartland, Sarah Sargeant, Sasha Gerard Place, SHannon Kibby, Stacy Arlain, Stephanie Saunders, Tatianna Royster, Teonna Wiley, Thanh, Tracy Schmidt, Treya Gough, Veronica T page, Yulissa Pena.

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction

Homeless Alliance Executive Director Kexin Ma welcomes attendees to the meeting.

2. CoC Funding Competition

NOFO FY 2026 was released on June 1st, However application has not yet been opened and the application is due August 26th.

The new NOFO includes:

- Only 60% of Annual Renewal Demand is protected (previous percent protected was 90%)
- Greater emphasis on Transitional Housing with Intensive Supportive Services
- Service Participation is now a major factor in program competitiveness
- These changes require CoC to rethink how we position projects to remain competitive while protecting as much funding as possible for our community

Ongoing litigation including a suit filed by NAEH and partners emphasizes the possibility that NOFO FY 2026 could still change

3. NAEH Conference

- Housing First Reframed: "Move people, quickly out of homelessness and into housing with individualized, client-centered treatment and support."
- We should not assume/accept each policy change as permanent, hence the importance of advocating for evidence based solutions.
- Building stronger partnerships beyond the homeless response system.
- Leverage Medicaid State, local and private resources- not just CoC funding
- Think beyond individual programs and invest in shared system capacity
- We need to embrace change as an opportunity to strengthen our homeless response system

NAEH is Advocating for

- Increased Housing Assistance funding 5.1 B includes CoC and ESG
- Increase section 202 to support older adults
- Make sure contracts are issued timely
- Place better protection from 0% protected to 85% protected
- Place protection on states for potential funding loss
- One of the benefits of being a Homeless Alliance of WNY Member is access to reimbursement for events like NAEH conference and other trainings

3. Coordinated Entry Oversight Committee Meeting Update

- Dan Gordon CE Lead announces the oversight committee has been rebooting.
- All five counties we serve are represented
 - All entities are represented ex: Housing, outreach, medical, veterans, government
 - First meeting: we will set up a review of our system to see what is working and where we can make improvements.
 - We will send out an RFP for an evaluation
 - Policies and Procedures will be reviewed and changes will be made to ensure the document is up to date with how the system is functioning
 - The committee will meet again in August

4. Older Adult Taskforce

Haley Diagostino Aging Systems Coordinator

Email: diagostino@wnyhomeless.org

Next Meeting: Wednesday Sept 3rd

Please fill out **Interest form** if you would like to join the older adult Taskforce

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe2t355DNcNk9CfJFePu3fVmH2AkXVc8Gv4Mv1vTFHmuavnA/viewform>

-The goal of this taskforce is to bring together a group to address the needs of our aging community.

-Attendees have included, gov depts, housing, outreach, APS, etc.

-Some of the discussion points have included stigma, older adults using emergency shelter system, and identifying/ filling in gaps in Erie County and beyond

5. Upcoming Training Opportunities

The Homeless Alliance of WNY is hosting a Motivational Interviewing Training on September 24th and September 25th. The training is all day from 9am-4pm. Lunch will be provided and the training will be held at the Homeless Alliance Office on Delaware Ave. More information will follow (Lookout for a Google Doc Sign up sheet)

6. Unsheltered Mapping Committee Update

The System Mapping Initiative was created in part due to the 24% increase in Homelessness across our community.

Goals of System Mapping:

Identify where Individuals are currently sleeping outdoors

Ensure outreach Teams can follow up intentionally and Consistently

Strengthen connections to Coordinated Entry and housing pathways

Reduce repeated Contacts without clear next steps

Improve communication across systems

Coordination with the community is more important than ever. We are addressing community needs through partnerships with outreach, the Buffalo Police Dept (Community Engagement), etc.

5. Community Announcements

There will be a Free Public Screening of "No Place to Grow Old" on Wednesday July 22nd from 4-6pm at the Buffalo and Erie County Linbray (see flyer by pressing link below)

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScAzHv1BLSY_90eK1JNyl7v18LqYljT-Sr

[2EsB5lsalZ-Z-Jw/viewform](https://wnyhomeless.org/homeless-alliance-of-wny-buffalo-erie-county-public-library-to-host-free-community-screening-and-discussion-on-older-adult-homelessness/)

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Belmont Housing (Joy Tedeschi): Mainstream Housing Voucher Waitlist will be opened next week July 21st

Case Workers can complete for clients and clients will be placed in the lottery. See link below.

<https://www.belmonthousingwny.org/housing-choice-voucher-section-8/>

Family Promise is hosting a Community Social on Thursday July 23rd at Trinity Episcopal Church (flyer below)



Every child deserves a safe home.

More and more families in our community are facing housing insecurity.

We can help - 95% of the families we work with return to stable housing.

Family Promise is seeking to build a Family Stabilization Hub on the parking lot behind Trinity Episcopal Church on Franklin Street and we'd love your feedback!

Join us for a Community Social on
Thursday, July 23rd from 5:30-7:30pm at
Trinity Episcopal Church at 371 Delaware Avenue

LEARN
MORE
HERE



Harvest House is hosting the annual Harvest Festival on August 29th (Flyer w/ details below)



The flyer is for the 4th Annual Harvest Fest, a family-friendly neighborhood block party. It features a photograph of a busy outdoor event with people, tents, and colorful balloons. The top section has a yellow background with the Harvest House and Highmark logos. The main title 'Harvest Fest' is in a large, blue, cursive font. Below the title, the event details are listed: 'Aug. 29 12 - 3 PM' and '175 JEFFERSON AVE'. The bottom section, on a dark blue background, lists various activities and sponsors. The sponsors include Cornerstone Community Federal Credit Union, Liberty Dental Plan, and Hospice & Palliative Care Buffalo.

Harvest House & **HIGHMARK®**

INVITE YOU TO
THE 4TH ANNUAL
Harvest Fest

JOIN US FOR A FAMILY FRIENDLY
NEIGHBORHOOD BLOCK PARTY

Aug. 29
12 - 3 PM
175 JEFFERSON AVE

FEATURING:

- EXPLORE MUSIC HANDS ON!
BLOOD DRIVE WITH FREE SWAG!
FREE VISION SCREENINGS!
- FREE FOOD!
MUSIC AND GAMES!
COMMUNITY HEALTH HUB!
- MEET BUSTER BISON!
WIN A TOPS GIFT CARD!
AND MORE!

Cornerstone
Community Federal Credit Union
Bank. Borrow. Experience Freedom.

LIBERTY
DENTAL PLAN.

HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE
BUFFALO

6. Adjournment

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