HAWNY Monthly Meeting Minutes

Meeting Information

Date: Wednesday, October 21st, 2026
Time: 3:02 PM -3:54 PM
Location: Virtual
Attendance (64) Evan Coyle, Dan Gordon, Daniella Gallego, Katey Soellers, Michael Devine, Nate Pyzikiewicz, Sara Carlson, Kexin Ma, Mark McComas, Alexandra Osberg, Amanda Aykanian, Arianna Halter, Becky Detlef, Bryan Roth, Caitlin Bauer, Carly Grimm, Cathleen Gibbons, Carly Alvarez, Celina Bryan, CKunaschk, Daniella from DePaul, Darwin Rosales, Deborah Goldman, Donell Gibson, Edwina, Emily Reese, Erin Hooks, Haley Diagostino, Holly Rutkowski, Ian McCully, Jackie Keller, Jamie Dolan, Jody Tassone, Joelle Dempsey, John, John Banas, John McMahon, Joyelle Tedeschi, Katie Fermani, Kelly Demateo, Kevin Reynolds, Krisdtin Rivera, Kristin Tanner, Laura Pennington, Lisa Freeman, Maddie Fooks, Matthew Schaefer, Melissa Figini, Mike Seitz, Nate Pyzikiewicz, Nguyent, Nick Arlain, Paul Martell, Ron Dixon, Roxanne Bryant Collins, Sam, Sara Carlson, Sara Gartland, Sarah Leibring, Shanique Hordge, Stephanie Saunders, Tanisha Taylor, Tatianna Royster, Teonna Wiley, Terron, Treya Gough, Yassin A., Yulissa Pena

Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions

Kexin Ma, Executive Director, Homeless Alliance
Kexin Ma welcomes attendees and opens the meeting.

2. Continuum of Care (CoC) Update

CoCBuilds Grant Award: Hope on Main

- Salvation Army has been awarded **$9.2 million through the CoCBuilds grant program**.
- The project will include 160 housing units, including 80 supportive housing beds for individuals experiencing homelessness, with access to supportive services.
- The project was one of only 13 selected nationwide for this grant.

- This achievement is a significant victory for The Salvation Army and the entire CoC community.

The Salvation Army: Family Homeless Shelter

Bryan Roth, Executive Director, The Salvation Army

- Phase I of the 80-bed Family Homeless Shelter will celebrate its ribbon-cutting on Friday, October 23.

CoC Funding and HUD Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

- The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) and the Coalition of States are pursuing litigation against HUD regarding the NOFO, particularly the proposed shift of funding from permanent housing toward transitional housing.
- HUD appealed the ruling, and the court determined that HUD could move forward. Litigation remains ongoing.
- HUD reopened the NOFO in September and provided a two-week application submission window.
- The CoC submitted **37 project applications totaling $27 million**.
- HUD is expected to announce funding decisions on December 1.

Potential Impact of the NOFO

- A significant portion of resources has shifted toward transitional housing.
- The NOFO places a strong emphasis on employment and public safety.

For more details see slides in meeting minutes

3. CoC Board Structure and HUD Technical Assistance

Mark McComas, HUD Technical Assistance

- Discuss current CoC Board structure and opportunities for improvement.
- Gather feedback from CoC stakeholders regarding current practices, challenges, and areas for growth.
- Engage community partners in conversations to help shape the future direction of the CoC.
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4. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Update

Nate Pyzikiewicz, HMIS Director

Recent HMIS accomplishments and initiatives include:

- Updated two data-related policies.
- Joined NYSHADE.
- Completed onboarding for 100% of Erie County shelters.
- Onboarded and trained 100 new users.
- Resolved more than 800 overlapping entries.
- Developed new training courses and updated the HMIS knowledge base.
- Updated the Release of Information (ROI) and Privacy Notice to improve clarity.
- Continued presentations on data performance and security.

Questions or support: Contact the HMIS team at hmis@wnyhomeless.org. For more details, see slides in meeting minutes

5. Upcoming Point-in-Time (PIT) Count

January 26th–27th
The annual Point-in-Time Count is required by HUD and helps determine the number of individuals experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness in our community.
Volunteer Recruitment Community members are encouraged to participate in this important effort.

- **Lead Volunteers:** Sign up to become a lead volunteer
- **General Volunteers:** Sign up to volunteer

6. System Mapping Updates

Daniella Gallego, CoC Supervisor

- Updates and discussion regarding ongoing system mapping efforts.

For details see slides in meeting minutes

7. Youth Action Board Update

- **Paid engagement opportunity:** The Youth Action Board offers young people an opportunity to share their perspectives and help improve how the community engages with youth.
- Police representatives recently attended a Youth Action Board meeting to share their perspectives and listen to feedback from youth participants.
- Officers plan to use the feedback to inform and strengthen officer training.

8. Coordinated Entry (CE) Oversight Committee Update

Dan Gordon, Coordinated Entry Lead
CE Evaluation RFP

- Within the next week, the subcommittee will review and evaluate proposals to determine the best partner to assess the community's Coordinated Entry system.

Emergency Oversight Committee

- Discuss strategies for housing individuals experiencing homelessness.
- Review funding expenditure and spend-down strategies.
- Address potential changes and challenges resulting from the HUD NOFO.

Questions about the committee: Contact gordon@wnyhomeless.org.

Coordinated Entry: HAWNY First Year Implementation

Holly Rutkowski, System Access Lead

- 852 Coordinated Entry assessments completed representing 40.7% of all VI Assessments across the CoC
- 323 housing referrals made.
- Nearly 4,000 clients served at the library.
- 1,754 emergency care items distributed.

9. Coordinated Entry (CE) Landlord Engagement Initiative

Ron Dixon, Senior Housing Systems Coordinator

- Update on the CE Landlord Engagement Initiative.

For details, click on slides in Meeting minutes

10. Community Announcements

Section 8 Voucher Opportunities

John McMahon, Executive Director, Rental Assistance Corporation of Buffalo

- Announcement regarding the upcoming availability of Section 8 vouchers and the prioritization for individuals experiencing homelessness who are currently enrolled in a CoC program.

Annual Bruncheon

When: December 11th

- **Tickets:** Purchase tickets for the 2026 Annual Bruncheon
- **Award Nominations:** Submit an award nomination

11. Adjournment

Kexin Ma, Executive Director, Homeless Alliance

Kexin Ma thanks attendees for their participation and adjourns the meeting.