

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 5th, 2026; 9:00am – 11:00am
Contois Auditorium, 149 Church Street, Burlington

MINUTES

1. Introductions & Announcements **10 Minutes**

BHA's annual purge of their waiting lists will begin on Monday.
Open house on Monday at 11:00am at Bridges Recovery Shelter.

Moment of Silence – Nicolas Walls (five community members: charlne ploof, josh birch, perry Thornley, gary Meyers.

March 17th 2-4 support session at CVOEO, open to anyone. The registration link will be provided by Sarah.

2. Approves Minutes and Agenda **5 Minutes**

a. Approval of the [February Meeting Minutes](#)

David Bogdan reminded Bryce to include the vote results for the January 20th E-Vote. The vote tally will be included in the final version of the minutes.

Jane motioned. Jenn Housing allies seconded. 17 for, 0 opposed, 1 abstention.

b. Approval of the March Meeting Agenda

3. Secretary Nomination – Will Karod - VOTE **5 Minutes**

Ciara Kilburn nominated Will Karod as the new Secretary of the CCHA. The nomination was seconded by Kerri Duquette-Hoffman. The nomination carried by a measure of 16 votes for, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

4. [Coordinated Entry Director MOA](#) - VOTE **10 Minutes**

Jen Hunter motioned to approve the Coordinated Entry Director MOA. Stephanie Bixby seconded the motion. The motion carried by a measure of 19 votes, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

5. [2024 Coordinated Entry Evaluation](#) - VOTE **10 Minutes**

The group asked some clarifying questions about the evaluation. How many folks return to homelessness from subsidized housing? What is that number vs. the general returns to homelessness?

It is hard to know when a person left their housing before returning to the CE system. It would be valuable to understand how long ago folks left their housing before returning to CE.

Mairav Simon motioned to approve the 2024 Coordinated Entry Evaluation. Jonathan Farrell seconded the motion. The motion carried by a measure of 19 votes for, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

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6. **Updated Coordinated Entry Partnership Agreement - VOTE** **10 Minutes**

Jen Hunter motioned to approve the amended Coordinated Entry Partnership Agreement as recommended by the Coordinated Entry Committee. Jane Helmstetter seconded the motion. The motion carried by a measure of 19 votes for, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions.

7. **Legislative Reports** **15 Minutes**

a. Senator Sanders' Office – Andrew Frost

Andrew Frost – Senator Sanders – They introduced the Make Billionaire's Pay Their Fair Share Bill, which would implement a 5% wealth tax on billionaires.

The U.S. Senate is currently considering a final vote for a housing related bill. This bill has bipartisan support, as well as support from the President, so it is likely to pass.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) lawsuit against the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is still active. HUD is making a push to ban mixed immigration status families from subsidized housing. Their office's spending portal is active and will be releasing information about bringing federal funds into the state.

Their office is willing to help with any struggles to bring together identity documents.

Stephanie Bixby mentioned that the ban on mixed immigration status families will cause cost increases for everyone using the Section 8 system. It will also increase the administrative burden for housing authorities across the country, as they will need to verify birth certificates for all the U.S. citizens as well.

b. Housing & Homeless Alliance of Vermont – Chad Simmons

FY26 Budget Adjustment Act (BAA)

The VT legislature passed the FY26 BAA, [H.790](#), on February 27. It now goes to the Governor for his signature. It contains three HHAV priorities including the creation of a Voucher Contingency Fund administered by VSHA. The fund is a critical, timely step to preserving the existing Housing Choice Vouchers. While the final version of H.790 removed the \$5M appropriation for the fund, it does create a process for local PHAs to calculate what is needed and work with DCF to access funds beginning later this year. HHAV will be paying close attention to this fund as it is developed.

Homelessness Response Legislation

On February 25, the House Human Services Committee released a [new draft of committee bill](#) aimed at codifying the state's response to homelessness. After several weeks of working on [H.594](#), the committee abandoned that draft legislation in support of a bill that brings in elements of H.594, [H.91](#) (from 2025, focused mostly on bringing

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most if not all aspects of VT's homelessness response under OEO) and proposals by advocates, including HHAV and CCHA. The bill attempts to define and codify all aspects of VT's homelessness response system including prevention/diversion, shelter services, specialized shelter services, permanent supportive housing, use of hotels/motels for shelter. It also proposes to encourage the BoS CoC and Chittenden County CoC to engage in merger discussions. The draft bill does not yet include an appropriations section, but we anticipate it being added late next week. [Here is a summary](#) of the latest draft of the bill by ACLU-VT. [Here is a timeline](#) of the latest draft by the VT Early Childhood Advocacy Alliance. All HHAV memos can be [found here](#). The committee will pick this back up next week and attempt to pass out of committee by March 13.

Landlord/Tenant Bill. H.772

House General and Housing Committee spend the first part of the session working on a bill, [H.772](#), to create efficiencies in VT's eviction processes and add more tenant protections. After weeks of debate and testimony from non-profit housers, landlords, and advocates, the committee passed the bill out by 8-3 margin. There are aspects of the bill that create some concern that people could potentially lose their rental housing and don't go far enough to protect tenant rights. There are several programs and supports added to the appropriations section including more advocacy supports, resources for community action agencies as well as rental arrears supports through VSHA. The bill is not in House Judiciary where it may be taken up, or, may be moved through quickly. HHAV has an action committee that will be meeting in the coming week to hear from members and advocates on the best next steps.

8. Breakout Groups – Vermont Housing Legislation **20 Minutes**
a. [26-0766 - An Act Relating to the Establishment of the Vermont Homelessness Response Continuum](#)

Doug Bishop also provided an overview. The committee is drafting a new version of the bill that will be considered next week. The process has been a struggle to bring together varying perspectives. The legislature is hoping for guidance from the Governor's office regarding how a state could help to administer a new program. The bill emphasizes services included with housing options to ensure stability. There will need to be a balance of shifting resources to the new plan from where resources are currently committed.

All state funding for homelessness would move into this new structure

The bill also encourages a merger between CCHA and HHAV in cooperation with the Office of Economic Opportunity.

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The Human Services Committee's intent is to align the budgeting with the total amount laid out in the Governor's proposed budget.

b. How do you feel about the bill and why? What do you think is missing from the bill?

9. Breakout Group Recap

20 Minutes

We have concerns that we don't know how to weigh in until we see the appropriations for the motel program. It has been mentioned that a cap on total rooms available will be imposed in the bill.

There is also concern regarding increased scrutiny regarding eligibility criteria.

If the temperature threshold remains at 10 degrees Fahrenheit, the emergency response will become an everyday version of our services in the winter. The temperature should reflect a true disaster response.

Seasonal shelters are easier to operate than pop-up shelters, so we would like to see the cold weather season to remain.

Chittenden County is housing far more people in the emergency setting than other communities across the state, and those numbers are not sustainable for everyday services at current funding levels.

There is concern that CCHA would lose resources if we merged with the Balance of State Continuum of Care. CCHA would not have equal representation. CCHA partners will feel like they don't have a voice. We want to retain our current involved membership.

We would like to have more intentional planning time with the legislature in the off session to shape the future bill responding to homelessness.

Concerning Emergency Cold weather Shelter – raise threshold of opening to 32 degrees. Also – the current system which utilizes after hour care through our 411 system must be re-evaluated to address the needs of participants and staff from both 411 and state.

Statewide Coordinated Entry system is great idea. Utilize administrators of both CCHA & BOS CE systems to design.

Increase focus of work on prevention & retention and include eviction prevention keeping in mind both parties – tenant & landlord.

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Increase staff numbers & training for housing case management.

Find other ongoing funding sources to include progressive taxation.

We agree with the concept of “participation in services as able” in concert with obtaining/keeping housing is important to success. To accomplish this outcome, three things are essential – additional skilled staff, ongoing assessment, and sufficient housing options, to include Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH).

System should offer a continuum of housing options to allow individuals to advance successfully from homelessness through shelter to the goal of permanent housing.

Enlist the expertise of case managers who work daily in the field – along with the participants of the services - to help design the system.

There is uncertainty about how the program will operate.

It may be positive to incorporate services in motel housing.

The process seemed to be rushed.

Some folks think the temperature threshold should be higher.

Funding should be provided for eviction prevention.

More funding is needed for additional case managers.

How can state taxes be more progressive to fund the state budget?

We want providers and participants to help design future bills.

How do we build a long-term plan with stakeholders?

We would like to see more funding provided for the programs we know already work but have been historically underfunded.

How do we align data requests with the data we collect as a system?

10. Data Review

15 Minutes

- a. [Coordinated Entry](#) – Stephanie Smith
- b. [Unsheltered Data – Community Resource Center](#) - Brenna Bedard

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The CRC was closed for a few days this past month, which impacted their count. The construction is now complete in the new location. They are trying create a feeling of home, focusing on more than just the food that has traditionally provided. The CRC has been advocating for continued funding with the legislature. They have partnered with CHCB to provide medical services onsite.

c. Unsheltered Data – COTS Daystation - Jonathan Farrell

Utilization for January was 2,234 visits.

Services include a meal, showers, laundry, internet hub, mail hub, etc.

53% of their guests are staying in a shelter, which is an increase from last year.

Staff from the Community Health Centers of Burlington (CHCB) are also onsite twice weekly to provide services onsite. They have also partnered with the Turning Point Center to have recovery coaches onsite at the Daystation. Hireability will also be at the Daystation to provide services.

We encourage questions and participation in discussion and place great emphasis on hearing from people with lived experience of homelessness and/or housing insecurity. If you are a person who has lived experience, you will be provided with a stipend for attending; please let us know after the meeting concludes. Please reach out to us prior or let us know when you arrive at the meeting should you need any accommodation(s).

Thank you so much for joining us.