

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)
Steering Committee Meeting Agenda
Thursday, May 7th, 2026; 9:00am – 11:00am
VIRTUAL ONLY MEETING
Minutes

[Virtual Meeting Link](#)

1. Announcements & Introductions **10 Minutes**

NOFO Timeline and Communication: Bryce announced that the NOFO is expected to be released by the end of May and due in late August, with broad communication to be sent out in mid-May to update stakeholders on the process and preparation steps.

Working Group Composition and Recruitment: Bryce described the current working group as including CCHA co-chairs, the coordinator, United Way collaborative applicant team, and consultant Abby, and called for additional specialists from various areas to broaden the group's expertise and resource base.

Leadership Transition Announcement: Bryce shared his upcoming departure from CCHA, outlined the transition plan being developed with the steering committee and United Way, and committed to supporting the committees during the interim period.

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

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

Approval of Minutes and Agenda: The group reviewed and approved the April meeting minutes and the May agenda, with Travis and Meghan making and seconding motions, and votes recorded including one abstention due to a participant driving.

b. Approval of the May Meeting Agenda

3. Camping Laws Update **10 Minutes**

a. City of Winooski – Justin Huizenga & Ray Coffey

Winooski Ordinance and Enforcement Approach: Ray explained that Winooski has an ordinance prohibiting camping or structures in public spaces, but enforcement is handled with a focus on safety and support, typically involving a 72-hour notice and initial contact by police, with an emphasis on non-punitive engagement.

Police Department Practices and Community Outreach: Justin clarified that the police have not issued ordinance violations in the past decade, respond only to community calls, and prioritize connecting individuals to services, often involving Howard Center outreach and ongoing follow-up.

Resource Sharing and Situation Table: Taylor and Kerri highlighted the Situation Table as a resource for addressing high-risk cases, inviting Winooski staff to participate and emphasizing the availability of services beyond Burlington.

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Policy Comparisons and Recommendations: Sarah and Rebecca from Burlington described their city's structured encampment policy, developed in consultation with the ACLU, and recommended Winooski consider adopting a similar policy to ensure equity, clarity, and legal protection, with Rebecca offering to share Burlington's policy and experience.

Discussion of Public vs. Private Land and Railroad Property: Ray and Justin discussed the distinction between parks and other city-owned land, noting that most encampments occur in parks, but challenges arise with railroad property, which falls outside municipal jurisdiction.

4. **HOP Award Presentations**

20 Minutes

a. Champlain Office of Economic Opportunity

Bridges Recovery Shelter Overview: Lacey described the 12-bed Bridges Recovery Shelter, its focus on individuals with substance use histories, program requirements, and the intentional approach to admissions and length of stay, noting a significant waitlist and ongoing efforts to support residents' recovery and housing goals.

Champlain Place Operations and Winter Shelter: Tiffany outlined Champlain Place's 42 year-round beds and additional winter capacity, the integration of community partners, case management, and the decision to convert winter beds to permanent beds to prevent displacement, with ongoing needs for garden supplies highlighted.

New 100-Bed Year-Round Shelter Initiative: Sarah announced CVOEO's plan to open a 100-bed year-round, low-barrier shelter in Chittenden County, with walk-in capacity and a 24/7 service model, aiming to eliminate the need for extreme cold weather shelters and integrate with the broader shelter network.

Shelter Network and Service Integration: Sarah provided an overview of CVOEO's regional shelter network, including Champlain Place, Bridges, family and domestic violence shelters, and partnerships with other providers, emphasizing wraparound services, case management, and connections to long-term supports.

Questions on Program Models and Best Practices: Jane and Taylor inquired about models from other states and the inclusion of walk-in capacity, with Sarah confirming research into best practices and ongoing engagement with individuals with lived experience to inform shelter design and operations.

5. **VOTE – Defining CCHA Committee Co-Chair Responsibilities**

5 Minutes

Co-Chair Responsibilities Document: Bryce introduced a new document developed by the strategic planning committee to clarify subcommittee co-chair roles, responsibilities, and expectations, which was discussed and approved by the group to support leadership transitions and committee effectiveness.

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Jane motioned to approve the CCHA Co-Chair Responsibilities Guide. Ciara seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. 19 votes for, 0 votes opposed, 0 abstentions.

6. Data Review

15 Minutes

a. Coordinated Entry – Stephanie Smith

Coordinated Entry Data Trends: Stephanie reported 583 households enrolled in coordinated entry as of March, with a notable increase in family enrollments, steady numbers for veterans and youth, and 11 households moving into permanent housing, while highlighting the impact of reduced rental assistance and fewer new housing projects on placement rates.

Data Collection and Reporting Enhancements: Stephanie responded to Taylor's request for more detailed breakdowns of housing placements by subsidy type, explaining that while the data is collected, a new report would need to be built, and suggested quarterly reporting to avoid identification issues.

b. Unsheltered Data – Community Resource Center - Brenna Bedard

Community Resource Center Utilization: Brenna shared that the CRC served 388 unique individuals in March with 2,281 visits, noting a significant increase in April, and described the center's services, outreach efforts, and recent grant funding to support emergency needs and expand service partnerships.

c. Unsheltered Data – COTS Daystation - Jonathan Farrell

COTS Daystation Service Overview: Jonathan reported 2,060 visits and 335 unique individuals at the COTS Daystation in March, described the range of services and partnerships, and discussed the impact of overflow beds during winter, which will not be continued next year due to operational challenges.

Data Integration and Volunteer Support: Participants discussed the potential for integrating CRC and COTS data using HMIS, with Louise offering technical support, and Jonathan and Brenna expressing interest in improving data tracking and exploring volunteer roles for data entry and guest engagement.

7. Legislative Review

15 Minutes

H938 Bill Status and Testimony: Taylor updated the group on the progress of the H938 bill in the Senate, noted ongoing testimony from service providers, and offered to share memos and updates with interested participants.

Concerns About Eligibility and Service Access: Jonathan and Sarah expressed concerns about restrictive eligibility criteria in the bill, potential negative impacts on shelter access and provider operations, and the risk of increased churn and trauma for clients due to time limits and assessment requirements.

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COC Merger Requirement and Local Autonomy: Taylor and Sarah highlighted the bill's language requiring COC mergers, questioned its enforceability, and advocated for maintaining local decision-making, with Ari clarifying that the requirement is directed at OEO and may not have direct enforcement on COCs.

Bridge to Rental Assistance Program (BRAP) Details: Daniel and Ari explained the proposed BRAP, its intent to provide additional rental assistance in anticipation of HUD funding reductions, and clarified that DMH subsidies would remain separate, while Taylor raised questions about program consolidation, eligibility, and funding equivalence.

8. Open Forum

10 Minutes

Community Meeting and Housing Resource Series: Bryce invited participants to the spring community meeting at the newly remodeled CRC and the Housing Resource Series (scheduled for Thursday May 21st from 9:00-11:00 AM in Contois Auditorium at Burlington City Hall) focused on housing retention, highlighting the importance of post-housing services and the rising rate of returns to homelessness.

BRAP Program Update: Daniel provided an update on the anticipated Bridge to Rental Assistance Program, its goals, and ongoing advocacy to ensure eligibility for shelter plus care recipients, with further clarification from Ari and Adnan regarding program structure and DMH subsidy separation.

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.