

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)
Steering Committee Meeting Agenda
Thursday, January 8th, 2025; 9:00am – 11:00am
Contois Auditorium, 149 Church Street, Burlington

Minutes

1. Open Forum **5 Minutes**

Bryce will correct the calendar invitation for the Steering Committee meetings; they were accidentally posted as weekly but should be monthly.

Ciara announced Steps to End Domestic Violence has hired Lizzy Lyons as their Executive Director to start in February.

Craig Johnston announced the legislature announced that property taxes will be going up 12% this year.

Travis announced CVOEO's tax services will be running again in 2026. They are scheduling appointments through Vermont 2-1-1.

Harm Reduction Advocates announced that someone was found dead in Burlington after sleeping outside overnight.

KidSafe Collaborative is still accepting nominations for its Outstanding Service Awards.

Language from the draft was pulled from the Background section of the MOU: "This MOU does not create mandated services. It simply documents available community resources and partnerships already operating in practice."

Casey is a person with lived experience who spent the last year walking around Vermont. He drove his car to Burlington where it was towed by Handy's. He did not find his car for almost a month, at which time he owed \$4,000. He then lost his transportation. He has felt harassment from the police force in Brattleboro and Burlington and experienced significant hostility and trauma living on the street. He suggested we host a conference of homeless service providers to talk about the greater policy solutions we could adopt in the community. He believes a therapeutic recovery site in rural Vermont would be helpful.

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

a. Approval of the December Meeting Minutes

Robert Harris motioned to approve the December meeting minutes. Travis Poulin seconded the motion. The motion passed by a measure of: 19 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions.

b. Approval of the January Meeting Agenda

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Taylor Thibault announced the Collaborative Application consultant, Abby Miller, will be speaking at the start of the meeting.

Taylor Thibault motioned to approve the January meeting agenda, as amended. Travis Poulin seconded the motion. The motion passed by a measure of: 21 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

3. Collaborative Applicant Consultant – Abby Miller

The current status of the NOFO is that it is tied up in the courts. HUD has pledged to submit a new version of the NOFO to the courts today. We do not yet know what the contents of the updated NOFO will be. The NOFO has not officially been in affect since it was rescinded. Some national organizations are anticipating a return to the 2-year NOFO conditions laid out in 2024, but we are not certain how the program will continue this year. HUD is not obligated to award funds for renewals at this point; however, the courts are aware of this issue and will hopefully validate that congress allotted the funds. HUD is not required to obligate funds for renewals projects until September of 2027. This would be long after the current programs across the country will run out of funding. In the past, 90-95% of renewal funding was guaranteed, but now only 30% is proposed to be guaranteed. More updates will be available after today's court hearing. The documents that are announced today may not be the full story; more changes may be on the way. We will continue to prepare as planned with the submission date of January 16th.

Jess Radbord was not offering legal advice, but announced the ACLU has reviewed the legal documents that were submitted to the federal district court in Rhode Island. If the Rhode Island court's decision is appealed, the case will proceed to the next level of federal district court. Then the Supreme Court would be the next step for appeals. Common Good Vermont is going to be hosting a training for non-profits with the Vermont Solicitor General.

Meghan Masterson asked if someone can explain what the HUD funding has supported in the past to offer context to the wider group. The [2024 NOFO Application](#) is linked to provide an overview of the programs supported by HUD in Chittenden County.

4. Governance Charter Update – Steering Committee Slots - VOTE 10 Minutes

Maggie Callaghan provided an overview of the additional language proposed for the Governance Charter. The language is linked above. The language comes straight from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and will help the Continuum of Care (CoC) earn more points on future applications.

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Amy Carmola motioned to approve the proposed amendment to the Governance Charter, Travis Poulin seconded the motion. The motion passed by a measure of: 20 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention.

5. NOFO Project Scoring Tool Update – VOTE **10 Minutes**

There are no large policy changes involved, but the change clarifies the points of the language within the Scoring Tool. These changes were created in reaction to the previous HUD NOFO, which is the best information we have available at this point.

Organizations who are applying for funds may not vote.

Jonathan Farrell motioned to approve the proposed changes to the Project Scoring Tool. Jen Hunter seconded the motion. The motion passed by a measure of: 14 vote in favor, 0 opposed, and 4 abstentions.

6. NOFO & Collaborative Applicant Update **35 Minutes**

a. CCHA MOU - VOTE

Rebecca Reese provided an overview of the above linked MOU. The MOU is meant to build partnerships with more organizations to strengthen the work of the CCHA. This is meant to gain maximum points on the HUD NOFO application. The work has already been ongoing, but the MOU formalizes the partnerships for additional points on the CoC NOFO application.

Jessica Radbord asked if we have thought about how to protect personally identifiable information that may be shared through this MOU. Rebecca mentioned these organizations are aware of the releases of information and will continue to be mindful of data protection.

Chelsea Alsofrom mentioned the language in the MOU discusses Housing Programs, but she would not consider shelters to be housing programs. It was mentioned that shelters could be covered under the language regarding services provisions.

Taylor Thibault motioned to approve CCHA Service Provider MOU. Jonathan Farrell seconded the motion. The motion passed by a measure of: 19 votes in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions.

b. Barriers for Collaborative Applicant

Kara Alnasrawi, from The City of Burlington's Community Economic Development Office (CEDO), provided an overview of some of the barriers their office faces in acting as the Collaborative Applicant for CCHA. Kara announced the City of Burlington is committed to bring an overdose prevention center to Burlington. The

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HUD NOFO asks each Collaborative Applicant to sign-off saying they will not support overdose prevention centers, so if they continue as the Collaborative Applicant we risk losing all funding from the Collaborative Application.

The City of Burlington will be reevaluating its role in administering the grant projects for permanent supportive housing through the Collaborative Application. Chittenden County is at risk of losing all its CoC funded permanent supportive housing.

Jonathan Farrell thanked CEDO for their years of service as the collaborative applicant and for bringing these new changes to the conversation.

c. CCHA – United Way Partnership

Taylor Thibault mentioned the CCHA has been searching for an alternative organization to fill the Collaborative Applicant role. United Way has been identified as a potential partner. CCHA just shifted its fiscal agency to United Way, so this may be a timely change. Amy Carmola provided an overview of United Way's perspective. They believe it makes sense for them to fulfill the role of Collaborative Applicant, as they maintain a neutral role in serving the community. They are an active participant in CCHA and have already taken on the role of the fiscal agent. They have experience with collaborative funding programs. United Way also receives and administers funds from the State of Vermont. The current administration may try to flag United Way as a funder of organizations who support harm reduction approaches, but they do not specifically fund those programs.

7. Breakout Groups – Collaborative Applicant & the NOFO 20 Minutes

a. Given the information we have shared about the potential Collaborative Applicant change, what questions or concerns do you have?

8. Breakout Group Recap 20 Minutes

How much will CEDO be participating moving forward? We are concerned.

They will remain a Steering Committee member and provide subcommittee support.

We want to think about the long-term solution, which may mean United Way is a better fit.

There is concern that the political nature of the City of Burlington and State of Vermont may put a target on our back.

CEDO plans to be involved with the CCHA going forward. It is still up in the air as to how involved they will be.

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The Overdoes Prevention Center is supposed to be funded by a Purdue Pharmaceuticals settlement. How is that tied to the City of Burlington funding? The City is receiving funding from the State of Vermont, which is a pass through from the Opioid Resettlement Fund for Vermont.

We are excited about United Way as a potential partner. They can serve as a neutral, unbiased representative for the Collaborative Applicant position.

When is the Overdose Prevention Center actually open? How does this affect the City's ability to hold the Collaborative Application role this year?

It is unclear when and where the Overdose Prevention Center will be established.

CEDO can remain the Collaborative Applicant this year if the application deadline is moved to the fall.

It makes logical sense to move to United Way, thinking on a systems level.

What happens to the permanent supportive housing projects CEDO currently administers?

VSHA is speaking with CEDO about potentially transitioning the administration of the permanent supportive housing programs.

CEDO will provide technical support to United Way during the transition of the Collaborative Application.

United Way provides support to the whole county and may be a better fit as Collaborative Applicant for that reason.

Meghan Masterson would like to make a formal motion to thank the City of Burlington for their historic support of the CCHA through the role of the Collaborative Applicant. This will be added to the February agenda.

Some feedback was that the process of shifting seems like a bit of a mess.

When do we sound the alarm in the community for households at-risk of losing their permanent supportive housing? Burlington Housing Authority will be starting the conversations shortly.

HUD is now funding transitional housing instead of permanent supportive housing; there may be ways to alter the permanent supportive housing programs to meet the requirements of the transitional housing definition.

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Transitional housing is time-limited and much of the tenant autonomy is lost.

There is support to move forward with United Way as the new Collaborative Applicant, especially since they are a non-political organization.

CCHA explored merging with HHAV and transitioning to them as Collaborative Applicant, but the timing will not work for them. We will continue the conversation of a merger at a future date.

The HUD NOFA process seems like a bit of a mess.

The in-depth explanation at the start of the meeting, outlining the background of the HUD NOFA process and how we have gotten to this point, and the legal jargon, dragged down the conversation and could have been covered by a shorter summary.

There was group consensus of the understanding why the CCHA wants to move to a new to a new Collaborative Applicant (C.A.), why the City is no longer a good fit, and why the United Way seems a good fit, but there was also concern that the United Way might feel pressure to change their stance on data driven services related to harm reduction when they become the C.A.

When do we sound the alarm and begin working with the specific people who are housed under the PSH program, notify them that their long-term housing stability is in jeopardy, and work with them on a plan for moving off PHS services and housing subsidies? (Stephanie from BHA stated that that process of notifying specific households, in BHA properties, is starting now).

It was mentioned that the work and structure of Transitional Housing is very different than the work and structure of Permanent Supportive Housing – they are apples and oranges, and people with higher needs being met by a long term Permanent Supportive Housing model will not have those needs met under a Transitional Housing model.

Have we (the CCHA) considered merging with HHAV (the Balance of State CoC)? It seems like it would make service delivery more uniform across the state and make responding to the HUD NOFO more simple and clear.

9. PIT Count 2026

15 Minutes

The 2026 PIT Count will occur on the night of Wednesday January 28th, and surveys will be completed for that entire week following. The Streets Outreach group will be convening before the PIT Count to strategize outreach and survey efforts.

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10. Legislative Reports – Written Reports Only

- a. [Vermont Attorney General's Office Update](#)

11. Data Review – Written Reports Only

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

12. Shelter Updates – Written Reports Only

- a. [CVOEO](#)
- b. [COTS](#)
- c. [ANEW Place](#)
- d. [Spectrum](#)
- e. [Steps to End Domestic Violence](#)

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.