

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)
Steering Committee Meeting Agenda
Thursday, June 5, 2025; 9:00am – 11:00am
Contois Auditorium, 149 Church Street, Burlington

Minutes

1. Open Forum

10 Minutes

Travis announced the Fresh Produce Program starts July 1. He also announced that stipends are available for those with lived experience of homelessness in attendance.

Sarah announced Marcella Gange has been laid off as part of budget cuts at the City of Burlington. She also announced that Rebeka Lawrence-Gomez intended to take over Marcella's Collaborative Applicant duties, but she recently gave her notice to leave the City of Burlington. CCHA is working to find a new Collaborative Applicant for the organization.

Sarah also announced the July 3rd CCHA Steering Committee meeting will be held virtually due to the proximity to the holiday.

The Housing and Homeless Alliance of Vermont is hosting its monthly Balance of State (BOS) meeting next Tuesday June 10.

2. Approves Minutes and Agenda

5 Minutes

a. Approval of the April Meeting Minutes

Travis, of Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO), motioned to approve the April meeting minutes. Meghan, of KidSafe Collaborative, seconded the motion. The motion passed. 18 in favor. 3 abstentions.

b. Approval of the Spring Community Meeting Minutes

Will, of Spectrum Youth Services, motioned to approve the Spring Community Meeting minutes. Travis, of CVOEO seconded the motion. The motion passed. 15 in favor. 3 abstentions.

c. Approval of the June Meeting Agenda

Sarah, of the City of Burlington, announced the two votes to approve the 2023 Coordinated Entry Evaluation and the Coordinated Entry Phasing Changes will be tabled since the presenter, Stephanie Smith, is out sick. Lacey, of the Burlington Police Department, motioned to approve the agenda with amendment to table the votes to approve the 2023 Coordinated Entry Evaluation and the Coordinated Entry Phasing Changes. Elaine, of the Howard Center seconded the motion. Motion passed. 21 in favor. None opposed. None abstained.

3. Governance Charter Update

10 Minutes

a. Request for the Removal of Vermont Veterans Committee on Homelessness (VVCH) – Jason Brill

Jason, of the White River Junction Vermont Veterans Affairs Medical Center, announced the Veterans Committee has been reevaluating the role of the Committee statewide. There will be a vote presented to both CCHA and BOS to remove the VVCH from the charters; the vote for the CCHA will likely be presented at the Fall Community meeting. The VVCH Executive Committee passed a vote to dissolve the existing committee and now Jason requests the removal be made formal through a vote of the CCHA.

Jason has been with the Committee since 2015. The VVCH also serves four New Hampshire counties and by naming the committee after Vermont they exclude their New Hampshire partners. This change will help them work better together across state lines. They are focusing on a “One Team” approach to be inclusive of all their partners.

The United States Interagency on Homelessness may be eliminated by the new presidential administration. The name and purpose of the committee will change over the next months.

Jason made it clear his team is still supportive of, and wants to continue to be a partner with, the CCHA and BOS even though the committee will be dissolved.

4. Data Review

20 Minutes

a. Coordinated Entry – Travis Poulin

Travis, of CVOEO, presented the [CE data report](#).

Craig, from Howard Center, mentioned the rising prices in Vermont are forcing people out of their housing. The numbers will continue to increase if Vermont, as a state, does not produce a solution.

b. Community Resource Center – Brenna Bedard

Brenna, of CVOEO, presented the [MONTHLY DATA REPORT](#) from the Community Resource Center (CRC). More people are finding the new location now they have been established for a couple of months. They are receiving an abnormal amount of housed folks visiting for the free food truck on Wednesdays. The CRC has secured funding from the state to stay in operation over the next fiscal year. They are down two staff at the CRC currently and they are working to fill those positions now.

5. [Coordinated Entry Phasing Changes](#) Approval – VOTE – Stephanie Smith

10 Minutes

Tabled.

6. [Coordinated Entry 2023 Evaluation](#) Approval – VOTE – Stephanie Smith

10 Minutes

Tabled.

7. Affordable Housing Development, Planning, & Advocacy

20 Minutes

a. Vermont Housing Conservation Board (VHCB) – Emily Phillips

Emily Phillips presented her [REPORT](#) highlighting housing development in Chittenden County. Emily has been doing this work for about 15 years now and was an Americorps VISTA intern with the Community and Economic Development Office (CEDO) and worked in this auditorium earlier in her career. A significant amount of the funding they have spent over the last five years has been one-time funding, meaning more funding will be needed to sustain the recent rate of development.

The availability of housing vouchers is crucial, as it will be harder to fill the units if more people cannot afford the price.

b. Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission – Sarah Muskin & Kate McCarthy

Sarah, of the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), presented a [REPORT](#) overviewing the organization.

They funnel federal funds for transportation to Chittenden County.

They spend a lot of time addressing ACT 181 by creating clearer ties between planning, state investment, and Act 250 jurisdiction.

The HOME Act also tasks CCRPC with disaggregating regional housing targets by municipality.

They can directly support housing development through partnerships regarding transportation improvements, brownfield remediation, and municipal technical assistance.

There may be an opportunity to partner with CCHA to include a piece about homelessness during their next biannual conference.

Sarah, of the City of Burlington, reported there was a slight increase in the number of people who were homeless in Chittenden County between 2024 (811) and 2025 (826). Frank Knaack mentioned the increase was similar on the state level for the BOS.

Someone mentioned that the use of the phrase “someone who has a substance-use disorder” is politically incorrect and a better term is to use is “someone who is a substance user”. It was mentioned the language is specifically created by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and reports generated for them must contain their specific language.

Meghan Morrow-Raferly asked if all income brackets were considered and if there was a racial breakdown. She mentioned the highest income brackets can skew the numbers. Sarah, of CCRPC, mentioned they did disaggregate their data by race.

Sarah, of the City of Burlington, reiterated the importance of using transportation funding to assist those experiencing homelessness. Transportation can be a key factor in the success of someone using affordable housing.

Sarah and Kate, of CCRPC, also shared another [informational one-pager](#) about the organization’s recent initiatives.

8. Legislative Updates

20 Minutes

a. Housing & Homelessness Alliance of Vermont – Frank Knaack

The FY 2026 budget was signed by the governor last week.

The VHCB received its full share of funding from the state. They received an additional \$5 million in one-time funding as well, although this is less than needed to produce the units required in the state.

VHCB also received \$33 million of Housing Opportunity Program funding was appropriated and \$38 million for General Assistance. This means the current eligibility criteria and room caps will exist through FY 2026.

HHAV is hearing that the people living in the motel general assistance program are receiving letters saying there will not be a reset of the caps and that the caps are based upon the last 12 months of program participation. The letter is linked [HERE](#).

S. 127 was also impactful to housing during the last legislative session. It will offer housing protections for the undocumented folks in Vermont. The bill also includes provisions to allow the creation of TIFS for the development of utilities for housing. HHAV supported the bill, but was hoping for more housing support to be included in the bill.

b. Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity - Paul Dragon

Paul Dragon, from CVOEO, presented an [OVERVIEW](#) of the final version of the H.91 Bill. Paul also shared a [Graphic](#) of an expected timeline for the changes included in the legislation.

He also said “Thank You” to the Community Resource Center (CRC) team who has exhibited resilience with all the changes at the CRC.

The governor’s veto session for the bill is on the 15th or 16th of June.

The CCHA will play a role in the creation of the Regional Advisory Committees that provides localized guidance to the community action agency.

The temperature threshold for declaring a cold-weather emergency will be determined through collaboration between CVOEO and the Agency of Human Services.

The goal of the bill is to eventually reinvest funds spent on hotel rooms to innovate and create new, sustainable solutions for homelessness; this will be a balancing act as the hotel rooms provide a safety net for the most vulnerable Vermonters.

Sarah, of the City of Burlington, noted one of the changes... the HOP funding will now be transferring to CVOEO in 12 months, instead of the 24 months originally proposed. Paul mentioned he understands the timeline is too short and will be difficult to meet.

Sarah also announced the Housing Opportunities for People with Aids program is proposed to be eliminated by the current presidential administration.

Stephanie Bixby said the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) bill will not be supported by the presidential administration, but the final budget may ultimately include funding for the organization.

Stephanie announced that HUD was supportive in providing affordable units at the Cambrian Rise project.

9. Standing Sub-Committee Updates

15 Minutes

a. Strategic Planning

Amy Carmola announced the subcommittees are using workplans to stay on track with the Strategic Plan. The committee co-chairs are now all convening quarterly to align efforts for the Strategic Plan.

b. Coordinated Entry

Ciara Kilburn presented an [Overview Report](#) regarding the structure of the local Coordinated Entry system.

c. Housing Retention

d. Outreach and Membership

e. NOFO and Ranking

f. Data, PIT, & HMIS

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.