

NASHVILLE-DAVIDSON COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE
HOMELESSNESS PLANNING COUNCIL (HPC)-MEETING MINUTES

Planning Council Members Present: Kennetha Patterson, Rico X, Lizzie Goddard, Liz Mallard, Jamie Villegas, Jaha Martin, Pastor Stephen Handy, Dr. Xyzeidria Ensley, Angie Lawless, Michelle Southard, Laura Ward, Andrea Hancock, David Langgle-Martin, John Rutherford (<i>non-voting</i>), Jordan Huffman (<i>non-voting</i>) Staff Present: April Calvin, Raquel de la Huerga, Allison Cantway, Derrick Smith, Hannah Cornejo-Nell	Date: February 12, 2025 Time: 8:30AM Place: Historic Metro Courthouse Council Chambers Recorded by: Raquel de la Huerga
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AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION
I. WELCOME, CONFLICTS OF INTEREST, MOMENT OF SILENCE, MINUTES AND CHAIRPERSON’S REPORT	► Welcome by Chairperson, Kennetha Patterson Chair Patterson shared her appreciation for those who were able to participate in the Homelessness Planning Council Retreat on February 7th. Chair Patterson set forth a vision for a more transparent, human-centered, and effective homelessness response system and the need for the community to be grounded in the work. Chair Patterson highlighted the importance for the lived experience and peer support network to be fully integrated in the Continuum of Care. The Lived Experience cohort hopes to have its members deployed to all committees to ensure collaboration and leverage the strengths of those with lived experience to address systemic barriers within the community. Chair Patterson thanked the HPC members for their commitment and passion to take steps towards creating a more inclusive and supportive homeless service system. ► Remembrance & Moment of Silence Members took a moment of silence for lives lost while experiencing homelessness in the month of January. ► Review of January Minutes No corrections.
II. UPDATES	► Office of Homeless Services Director’s Report, April Calvin: Director Calvin provided an overview of the monthly report on the \$50 million American Rescue Plan Act funding. Director Calvin noted recent developments with two permanent supportive housing sites funding through the gap financing (I Am Next and the Clear Blue Company) that will be coming online. The Affordable Gap Loan component of the \$50 million ARPA funding was initially only supposed to bring on 120 units dedicated to people experiencing homelessness, however, that has now been exceeded to 182 units. Director Calvin shared that the Office of Homeless Services (OHS) is working alongside Councilmember Jordan Huffman to bring leaders from the city of Austin, TX to come to Nashville to share their strategies for bringing on 1,200 units of permanent supportive housing in just one year. Director Calvin reminded the members that all \$50 million have already been allocated and are strategically deployed across the community. The funds are on track to be expensed before the fall of 2026. Director Calvin shared that this is the first time ever that OHS has helped to utilize MDHA’s voucher subsidies to the maximum of their ability. Since October there's been a couple of vouchers for people exiting homelessness that were on pause. Yesterday, OHS received notice that other vouchers are now also on pause, such as mainstream vouchers. Director Calvin noted that bringing up voucher utilization has been necessary for Nashville to request additional vouchers from HUD, however, this news is bittersweet due to the lack of subsidies available for those currently pursuing housing. For example, Nashville had historically underutilized the Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers. This past year, OHS worked with MDHA and the Department of Children Services to improve referrals and utilization for FUP to the point that the program was maxed out. Based on that level of performance, MDHA was then able to submit an application to HUD requesting more FUP vouchers.

	The Office of Homeless Services is gearing up for the Metro budget season. OHS is looking into other subsidy models to potentially request in their budget submission to the Metro Council. Direct Calvin also highlighted the need to explore alternative funding streams, such as the current application for the Lowe’s Hometown Grant. Director Calvin shared that the Office of Homeless Services has partnered with the Center for Advancement of Critical Time Intervention (CT) to host a community training on CTI on February 25th and 26th. OHS hopes that this training and other planned for the rest of the year will help with community capacity building. ► Collaborative Applicant Report, Allison Cantway: OHS did receive the Continuum of Care (CoC) Funding Award amounts for FY2024 and FY2025. As a community, Nashville received \$11.8 million, which a \$2.1 million increase from the previous year. This is the highest amount that the Nashville CoC has ever been awarded by HUD. Unfortunately, HUD did not fund any new projects and instead awarded many of the renewal projects large increases in funding. In talked with other Collaborative Applicants across the state, it seems that this was a common outcome for this funding cycle. The CoC Planning Grant was passed by Metro Council the previous Tuesday. That resolution was to approve Metro’s Office of Homeless Services as the recipient of the Planning Grant, which is practically the final step in the transfer of the Collaborative Applicant from MDHA to OHS. The OHS team will be meeting with the HUD field office later that day to learn more about the logistical aspects of the transfer. OHS recognized Suzie Tolmie from MDHA for her ongoing collaboration and support. OHS noted that MDHA is not a part of Metro Government and is rather quasi-governmental. Thus OHS has been working with Metro Legal to ensure that the grant operations align with the bounds of Metro Government, including limitations on how funds can be expensed. ► HMIS Monthly Report, Hannah Cornejo-Nell: 3,270 people experienced homelessness in Nashville in January. These 3,270 people were in 2,806 households; 248 families and 2,558 adult only households. Over the past 12 months, 10,572 unique people have experienced homelessness in Nashville. Over the last few months, OHS has added a new section to the report to include data from the Nashville Rescue Mission and Cold Weather Shelter. This data is being reported separately as the OHS HMIS team works to integrate the data. In January, 1,191 people were served by the Metro Cold Weather Shelter and 1,662 were served by the Nashville Rescue Mission. 9% of those experiencing homelessness in January were veterans, 8% were youth age 18-24, 46% were experiencing chronic homelessness. 800 individuals were entered into HMIS in January. 51% of those experiencing homelessness were Black, 40% were White, 62% were men, and 37% were women. In January, 115 people were housed across 79 households, including 14 families and 65 adult only households. This is a decrease from previous months. The average length of time from when someone entered HMIS to when they exited was 127 days. The majority of people moved in with friends and family, with the second largest groups being no subsidy and permanent supportive housing. The organizations that housed the most people were the Oasis Center, Operation Stand Down, and Room in the Inn. Of those housed in January, 47% were Black, 36% were White, 53% were men, and % were women. A member requested for the average length of time from entry into HMIS to permanent housing to be charted over time. A member asked if the decrease in the number of people housed this month is correlated with the city having reached max utilization of vouchers. Hannah noted that there are likely several reasons as Nashville regularly sees dip around the holiday seasons, however, the data does show that most people who are moving into housing are not using vouchers, so the pause is likely a factor. Another member asked if everyone staying at the Cold Weather Shelter is being entered into HMIS. OHS responded that the nature of the shelter limits how much time can be spent helping folks fill out the form so detailed information might be missing, however, everyone coming to the shelter is being entered into HMIS. Another member asked if all races and ethnicities could be included in future reports.
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	► Continuum of Care Updates, Raquel de la Huerga: The first General Membership meeting for 2025 is scheduled for the following Thursday. The Nominating and Membership Committee will be releasing a survey to gather input on what the community would like to get out of the General Membership meetings. The Performance Evaluation Committee (PEC) is working on revisiting the Reallocation Policy, which is expected to be reviewed on an annual basis. That committee will likely be bringing suggested amendments to the policy to the Homelessness Planning Council in upcoming months. The PEC will also be following up with organizations that scored below 65% in the local funding competition, which is the current threshold for reallocation. The PEC plans to engage those organizations to explore strategies for improving performance. The Data and HMIS Oversight Committee is hoping to bring back to the Homelessness Planning Council the revisions to the HMIS Policies and Procedures Manual next month. Since their last presentation, that committee has worked to update accompanying HMIS documents to respond to the HPC’s feedback. The Shelter Weather Outreach and Prevention (SWOP) Committee had a robust conversation about cold weather response last month and will be revisiting the city’s outreach capacity at their upcoming meeting.
III. NEW BUSINESS	Continuum of Care Funding, Allison Cantway: OHS noted changes that are happening at the federal level that might impact the Continuum of Care funding. A great number of executive orders have been issued by the new administration. A couple of weeks ago, the Office of Management and Budget issued a memo to put a pause on all federal funding to ensure that the funds were in compliance with the executive orders. That memo caused the entire system for agencies to draw down CoC funds to be down for a day. That memo has since been rescinded and Nashville has not received any direct guidance from HUD since that point. OHS noted that the National Alliance to End Homelessness, which is a national non-partisan, non-profit, has shared multiple communications that they have great concern that the CoC funding is “at extreme risk”. Additionally, this is the first year where HUD was planning to implement a two-year cycle for the CoC grants, however, there are concerns that this decision, which was made under the past administration, might be rolled back. A member working in refugee resettlement noted that the state department funds for refugee resettlement has already been shut down. There will likely be many refugees who have been receiving assistance who will not have anywhere to go. The member suggested intentional collaboration with the three agencies helping with refugee resettlement locally. Cold Weather Response, April Calvin: Director Calvin shared that this is the first year that the Office of Homeless Services is operating the Cold Weather Overflow Shelter, however, they were actively involved in cold weather response in previous years. Director Calvin noted that the shelter is designed to be “overflow” on nights where the temperatures get below 32 degrees for three consecutive hours. OHS shared data from the nights of cold weather shelter thus far. OHS projects an additional seven to ten more days of cold weather shelter this season. Director Calvin shared that OHS operates internally with three tiers of cold weather response. Tier 1 is normal shelter operations where the temperatures only get below 32 degrees during the nighttime and the shelter is open from 7AM to 7PM. Tier 2 is for when low temperatures continue into the early morning and the shelter remains open for extended hours, closing at 10AM. Tier 3 is for critical times where extreme temperatures warrants 24-hour operations. In previous years, on average 199 people utilized there shelter. This year, OHS has seen an average of 250 people per night. OHS has operated the shelter for 34 nights thus far. OHS has a 1 to 22 ratio of staff to guests along with 6 to 8 security guards at a time. OHS has leaned heavily on partnerships with other Metro Departments such as the Health Department and MNPS to provide additional staff support. The Health

	Department’s Behavioral Health team and Neighborhood Health come on-site to the shelter to address health concerns. OHS is pursuing having a pre-certified Registered Nurse on-site for more intensive medical intervention. In the days after it snowed in January, OHS operated the shelter for 24 hours on multiple consecutive days, which posed challenges for appropriately cleaning the building and providing respite for staff. The Mayor’s Office and Metro Council members leaned in during this time to provide additional support. Director Calvin shared that there is ongoing need for support at the WeGo bus station. Director Calvin noted that there was a Request for Proposals that went out two years in a row for Cold Weather Shelter, however, there were zero takers. OHS will modify that RFP to see if any providers are interested. OHS also noted that many are not utilizing the shelter for “overflow” as there have been nights where the Cold Weather Shelter numbers are high, while shelters like the Nashville Rescue Mission are not yet at max capacity. Director Calvin shared that a member of the Homelessness Planning Council reached out expressing concerns regarding things they witnessed at the Cold Weather Shelter. Some of those concerns related to plumbing issues, staff training, and soap in the bathrooms. Director Calvin shared that the OHS staff are constantly working to address concerns and improve shelter operations. Soap, for example, posed challenges as the hand soap was regularly getting stolen or pulled from the walls, which caused OHS to add the provision of hygiene kits and hand sanitizer stations. The school building that the shelter operates out of has old pipes, however, the more significant plumbing issue has been guests flushing items such as hats and pill bottles that have caused blockages down to the sewer line. In those instances, General Services and the Water Department have responded promptly to send technicians to address the concern. As for training, OHS staff underwent de-escalation training in addition to specific team members having specialized training for specific roles. Director Calvin shared that she has received questions from the community for why OHS is not requesting funding for the city to provide additional shelter. Director Calvin shared that her office is focusing more on Permanent Supportive Housing that could provide longer term solutions, recognizing that those on the streets need permanency and interventions that go beyond emergency shelter. Director Calvin hopes to create more opportunities for people to exit into permanent housing rather than remaining in crisis. Members that engaged with the shelter this season complimented OHS for their care and dedication during this season, noting that emergency shelter is not an ideal situation for anyone. Members noted that many of those coming to the shelter need a higher level of care than what an emergency shelter can provide, emphasizing the need to explore the expansion of permanent supportive housing along with potentially skilled nursing facilities to address these complex needs. One of the members that raised concerns about the shelter emphasized the need to explore solutions to ensure that OHS is supported and that interventions are strengthened. The member asked how the HPC can better support OHS as they release the RFP again. Director Calvin shared that there is a feasibility study for the current shelter location in place that is exploring potentially creating a multi-use campus, that would include an improved shelter that would feature additional amenities, such as showers. OHS continues to engage General Services and Metro Council to explore this potential opportunity to improve the shelter facility. Chair Patterson encouraged for this topic to be raised at the next All Chairs meeting to ensure the Continuum of Care is engaged on exploring solutions. Lived Experience Cohort, Chair Kennetha Patterson: The Lived Experience Cohort is working on building a strong foundation of understanding and strategic planning to effectively deploy across the Continuum of Care. The cohort is actively conducting power mapping and identifying partners to help strengthen their work. Chair Patterson shared the value of being able to participate in this year’s Point-in-Time Count and being able to leverage lived experience to connect with and learn from those encountered on the streets.
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	Chair Patterson named that as the Collaborative Applicant transitions the cohort will need to explore creative ways to sustain the cohort and continue to build the cohort up as leaders. A member asked how the transition of the Collaborative Applicant will impact payments to those with lived experience, considering that Metro Legal has advised that those serving on Boards and Commissions cannot be paid under the Metro Charter. OHS shared that due to the Metro Charter, those serving on Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Subcommittees cannot be paid. OHS has been working with Metro Legal, Chair Patterson, and national lived experience advisors for the past 6 to 8 months to explore alternative solutions to address this concern. Months ago OHS sent an AAAQ up to the federal government hoping to receive guidance on how to align with the best practice of paying people with lived experience under the limitations of the city’s Charter. As it stands, Metro is still not allowed to pay Boards, Commissions, Committees, etc. OHS also noted that many of the HUD resources that they had used to advocate for paying people with lived experience are now disappearing from HUD’s website, which poses additional challenges. Chair Patterson noted that the Youth Action Board is also compensated using the Planning Grant and will simultaneously suffer from not being compensated. Chair Patterson noted concerns with not compensating those with lived experience for their service across the Continuum of Care, recognizing that many continue to face extreme poverty and are leveraging their lived expertise to improve our homeless response system. A member asked if the Office of Homeless Services could provide an estimate of how much funding has gone towards compensating those with lived experience. OHS responded that those with lived experience have received \$20 an hour. OHS noted that data on the amounts paid out each month would fluctuate dramatically over the course of the past year, as there was a point where there were over 80 people attending a single CAB meetings and over 200 people engaging with the CAB. However, since then, the lived experience leaders have transitioned to a cohort model of only 14 members on each the CAB and the YAB that has caused the monthly amount paid out to decrease. OHS shared that at this time they are reaching out to foundations and exploring potential changes to the Continuum of Care Charter to identify potential opportunities to continue to compensate people with lived experience, while aligning with the Metro Charter. Point-in-Time Count Debrief The count took place on the evening of January 23rd. This was the Office of Homeless Services’ first time leading the Point-in-Time Count. This was the first year since COVID, that the PIT Count Subcommittee hosted a Kickoff Event, which was held at the Rescue Mission and allowed teams to coordinate and pick up supplies. There were over 100 volunteers who went out to canvass all areas in the city to count those experiencing unsheltered homelessness. OHS is still working on cleaning the data from the count and will need to have the data accepted by HUD before it can be released to the community. OHS shared that tragically one of the teams that were conducting the count did find someone who was deceased. MNPD was called immediately and it does not appear that this individual passed from a cold weather related death. OHS continues to check in with the team of volunteers.
V. STORY OF PROGRESS	► BLOOM, Kewanna Frierson: BLOOM’s mission is to provide a pathway to homeownership for pregnant and post-partum women experiencing homelessness. Kewanna shared that pregnant people experiencing homelessness are more likely to experience a range of negative health outcomes. BLOOM hopes to provide a solution to this problem, by providing housing and a social enterprise to support and sustain mothers. BLOOM is lead by Dr. Rolanda Lister who is a Maternal Fetal Medicine Specialist, who designed the program to address disparities she saw among pregnant mothers. BLOOM has launched a house a flower farm in Joelton to help provide sustainable housing and income generation for program participants.
VI. ADJOURNMENT	► Adjourned: 10:17am NEXT MEETING: March 12, 2025 at Sonny West Conference Center

