

Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

CoC Bi-Monthly Meeting

May 31, 2022; 10:00AM to 12:00PM

Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting *and*

1 Smithfield St, Pittsburgh, 15222 (HSB, Lower Level)

Purpose: The Homeless Advisory Board (HAB) is a public/private partnership formed to assist and recommend to Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, the City of McKeesport and the Municipality of Penn Hills on public policy, programs, activities, data and all other efforts that will eliminate homelessness and improve the wellbeing of persons and families who are homeless.

HAB Members¹

Nicole Anderson	Devon Goetze (P)	Diana Reichenbach (P)
Breanna Benjamin	Andy Halfhill (P)	Gale Schwartz (P)
Damian Butler-Buccilli (P)	Knowledge Build Hudson (P)	Katie Stohlberg
Laura Drogowski (P)	Brian Knight (P)	Jeffrey Upson
Chase Archer Evans (P)	Christy Pietryga (P)	Kyona White
Stuart Fisk	Kevin Progar (P)	Bethany Wingerson (P)
Pete Giacalone (P)	Susie Puskar (P)	Michael Yonas

In addition to the below notes, the [meeting recording can be accessed here](#).

Minutes

1. Welcome—Gale Schwartz

Gale Schwartz welcomed all HAB members and CoC participants. March meeting minutes were not yet available and will approved at the July meeting.

2. Committee Updates

CoC Analysis and Planning Committee—Pete Giacalone

Pete Giacalone reported that the Committee had mostly reviewed the Point-in-Time Count results, and discussed opportunities for expanding Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) through reinvestment dollars. For the discussion of PSH expansion, the Committee discussed existing barriers in the system, considerations for who to target, and current best practices to leverage.

Communication and Education Committee—Brian Knight

Brian Knight presented the CEC updates, citing the Committees continued coordination with DHS to develop a CoC webpage. The group has been discussing and planning the development of content for the webpage, and the next immediate focus for that work is soliciting stories and narratives from providers and the people they serve. Within this discussion, the Committee is seeking opportunities to be able to fairly compensate people with lived experience who contributed to the development of content for the webpage.

Homeless Outreach Coordination Committee—Laura Drogowski

Laura Drogowski reported that the HOCC's recent discussions were regarding the plans and preparation for Second Avenue Commons. Key topics raised in that discussion included coordination/linkages with outreach partners across the CoC, and similarly with regards to jail transfers. The HOCC is also continuing to assess the schedule for the Committee and the format of meeting topics to support the Committee being effectively beneficial to the members and CoC. The group is considering an education component for the meetings.

¹ (P) indicates HAB members who were present for the meeting.

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Provider Committee—Diana Reichenbach

Diana Reichenbach reviewed updates from the Provider Committee, citing the most recent meeting involvement of Chase Archer Evans, and efforts moving forward to recruit participants for CORE, and a presentation from the Health Department on Addiction and Overdose Prevention. More broadly speaking, the Provider Committee is working around three core Subcommittees—Housing, Community Relations, and Training and Resources. The Housing Subcommittee includes coordination around a landlord forum at the end of June and connecting with other workgroup efforts to collaborate with the Public Housing Authorities. The Community Relations Subcommittee will seek to continue ongoing collaboration with CORE, as well as working on enhancing the case conference and appeal process. Finally, the Training and Resources Subcommittee with working on developing a common onboarding/training for new staff across the CoC. The group is working with DHS contacts to discuss those needs and other potential trainings.

Consortium of Recognizing Experience (CORE)—Chase Archer Evans

Chase Archer Evans reminded meeting participants that CORE is the new initiative to help center those who have utilized homeless crisis services in the CoC planning, administration and evaluation processes. CORE has established a regular, open forum immediately following each COC/HAB Bi-Monthly meeting. A flyer is now available that speaks to what CORE is and the meeting detail information. All CoC members are encouraged to share the flyer. A Google Document outlining the input/ideas shared by CORE participants is also publicly accessible: <https://bit.ly/CORElist>

3. IO Update—Andy Halfhill

Andy Halfhill provided an update from DHS, the CoC's Infrastructure Organization (IO):

- Staffing updates for DHS:
 - Gabe Krivosh and Remi Harris are now the Managers for Individuals Experiencing Homelessness and Families Experiencing Homelessness, respectively
 - Johanna Kerner is now the Coordinate Entry Systems Manager
 - Garletta Germany is now the Supervisor of Homeless and Housing Services. And Marrie Griffin has been added to the team as a Housing Service Specialist
 - Whitney Nicholson has been added to the team as a Fiscal Specialist
 - In addition, there are a number of vacancies within the Bureau of Homeless Services at DHS, including Manager of Homeless Data and Outcomes, Data Specialist, additional Homeless Services Specialists, Link Service Coordinators, a Link Supervisor position, and a Homeless Supports Coordinator.
- Within the CoC's application to HUD for CoC Program funds for FY22-23, there were 2 projects not renewed for funding. They were the CoC's lowest ranked projects and the two projects appearing in Tier 2—East End Cooperative Ministry's FAITH program, and Mercy's Bridging the Gap. Those projects are set to end at the end of June 2022. DHS has been working closely with the organizations to find housing solutions for all households involved. Many have been successfully exited to housing outside of the homelessness system, and a number of them are on a pathway to subsidized housing through the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program.
- In preparation for the next CoC Program application, Project Outcome Evaluation Tools are being completed now and will then be distributed to each project for review and response. And evaluation committee will then review and rank projects by score.
- Monitoring is scheduled to be completed by the end of June.
- Coordinated Entry & Bureau of Homeless Services Office Hours on Tuesdays, from 12:30P - 1:30P. During this time we will have staff from both Coordinated Entry and BHS available to answer any questions you may have for us. You can pop in to ask questions about monitoring, program regulations, eligibility, etc. If you would like us to officially invite folks, please feel free to email Andrea.Bustos@AlleghenyCounty.US
- As of May 2, 2022, the Office of Community Services Bureau of Homeless Services is launching a revised BHS Incident Reporting form. The expectations remain that all DHS CoC contracted providers are required to report incidents within **24 hours** of the occurrence. Updates, regarding the incident

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must be given until the issue is closed as determined by the Office of Community Services staff. **All incidents must be reported using this electronic form. Emailed, faxed, hand-written, or hard copies will no longer be accepted.** This is to ensure that all incidents are being reported and tracked in a consistent way. The link to the new form can be found here: [BHS Incident Reporting Form](#)

- The 2022 Point-in-Time was conducted on February 23 and the CoC's report was submitted to HUD in April. Overall, the CoC saw a slight decrease from last year, but numbers that were consistent with the year prior. A DHS Dashboard contracting all the PIT data from 2009 through this most recent year: <https://analytics.alleghenycounty.us/2022/05/23/allegheny-county-annual-point-in-time-homelessness-count-2009-present-interactive-dashboard/>

4. Second Avenue Commons

A key effort of the CoC over the past few years has been the development of a year-round low-barrier shelter. While various HAB and CoC members have been deeply involved in the work, and the full HAB has been updated on progress, we wanted to provide an opportunity for a fuller review ahead of Second Avenue Commons's opening. The presented slides can be found in Appendix A, and videos on Second Avenue Commons are available via the below links:

[Second Avenue Commons - The Genesis](#)
[Second Avenue Commons - The Need](#)

5. Public Comments/Announcements

- Chuck Keenan, Administrator of Housing with DHS noted to meeting participants that the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) stopped accepting applications in March 2022, but payments were continuing to be made for applications already in queue.

Next CoC Meeting

July 26, 2022 from 10:00am to 12:00pm
Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting *and*
1 Smithfield St, Pittsburgh, 15222 (HSB, Lower Level)

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Appendix A Second Avenue Commons



Abby Horn
Deputy Director
Office of Community Services
Allegheny County DHS

Gabe Krivosh
Senior Manager
Services for Adults Experiencing Homelessness
Office of Community Services
Allegheny County DHS

Jacqueline Hunter
Senior Manager, Homeless Services
Pittsburgh Mercy

Michael Turk
Vice President of Community & Wellness Services
Pittsburgh Mercy

Anita Leon-Jhong, MD
Clinical Assistant Professor
Division of General Internal Medicine
UPMC



Opening September 2022

Second Avenue Commons

- 24/7 Access Low Barrier Shelter
- Daytime Drop-in Center
- Medical Clinic
- Single Room Occupancy Apartments

Pittsburgh Mercy Low Barrier Shelter and Drop-in Center

- Low Barrier to Entry
- Holistic – All-Inclusive Approach
- Partners stay together
- Individuals Determine which sleeping room is best for them
- Pets Stay with Owners
- Amnesty Lockers
- No Length of Stay Requirement
- Active Collaboration with DHS, City Police/EMS Services, Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership and a Multitude of Supportive and Service Providers
- All staff trained in Trauma-Informed Care, Harm-Reduction Principles and De-escalation Strategies



Range of Services

Shelter Services – Circle of Care

- Case Management Linkage: Housing Diversion and Recovery Specialists
 - Benefit Acquisition
 - Employment Linkage
 - Referrals to Medical Services
 - Referrals to supportive and clinical service providers

Drop-In Center – Range of Services

- Hours of Operation – Monday – Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm
Some weekend hours as scheduled for special activities
- Engagement within the Drop-in Center:
 - Housing applications
 - Benefits Acquisition
 - Reconnection to supportive and/or service providers
 - Bagged lunch available
 - Site-based Support



UPMC Clinic at Second Avenue Commons

Vision

- To provide a welcoming, warm environment where patients feel comfortable seeking medical and behavioral health care.
- To help patients who are in transition meet their health goals while connecting them with long-term providers.



Clinic Overview

Hours: Monday through Friday, 8:30am-4:30pm, with flexibility to meet needs of community served

Walk-in and by appointment

Open to all

No cost to uninsured patients

Staffing Plan

- 1.5 FTE RN
- 1 FTE LSW
- 1 FTE MA/Admin
- .5 FTE Physician/NP
- Consulting Psychiatrist



Clinic Services Offered

- Care of acute issues (infections, wounds, injuries)
- Care of chronic diseases (diabetes, hypertension, COPD, depression)
- Gynecological care (pap smear, contraception, STDs)
- Buprenorphine prescribing
- Behavioral health assessment, counseling, linkage to treatment
- Lab services (blood, urine, HIV/HepC) -> send out to Quest
- Basic meds on site, others sent to local pharmacy – will cover copay

Goal: coordinate with patients' care teams to link to prior/new PCP

Single Room Occupancy Apartments

- 43 SRO units
- Flexible option for those in various housing situations
 - CoC program subsidies
 - Self-pay
 - Collaborative efforts across systems



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