

# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

---

## **CoC Bi-Monthly Meeting**

November 29, 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 Members**<sup>1</sup>

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

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

### **Minutes**

- **Welcome—Gale Schwartz**

Gale Schwartz welcomed all HAB members and CoC participants. The September meeting minutes were approved, with all participating members voting in favor.

- **Annual CoC Processess—Gale Schwartz**

*HAB Membership*

Each Fall, the CoC opens a nomination period to seek new HAB members. HAB membership terms are 3 years, and service begins following the January HAB meeting. Members can serve 2 terms. The Nomination Form was shared with the CoC on November 28, 2022 and are being accepted through Friday, January 6, 2023. Note: There are 3 Provider Representatives on the HAB, and they are selected via a provider committee vote. The Executive Committee will review all nominees and propose a slate of members to be voted on by the full HAB at the January 31, 2023 meeting

There are 4 seats for members who will have completed their time with the HAB: Pete Giacalone, Christy Pietryga, Bethany Wingerson, Knowledge Build Hudson. Additionally, Kyona White's term as a Provider Rep will be completed, and the new representative will be named via the Provider Committee vote. Finally, two current members can seek second terms: Susie Puskar and Dan Palka.

*Governance Charter and Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures*

Every year the Allegheny County CoC Governance Charter and Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures are reviewed and approved. While necessary changes to these documents can be made at any time, confirmed by a HAB vote, the annual review builds in a recurring opportunity to review the documents. These two documents have been shared with the full CoC via email and can also be

---

<sup>1</sup> (P) indicates HAB members who were present for the meeting.

## Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

---

found on the CoC page of the DHS website. Proposed revisions can be emailed to Hilary Scherer by Friday, January 6th. Again, the revisions will be reviewed by the full HAB and approved at the January 31, 2023 meeting.

- **CoC Funding Applications Debrief—Hilary Scherer**

*FY2022 CoC Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)*

Every year the CoC needs to apply for HUD CoC Program Funds (about \$23 million for Allegheny County CoC). The NOFO application consists of narrative responses regarding the governance, administration, and performance of the CoC; project applications for each of the individual projects we are seeking funding for, and a ranking of all the projects we are seeking CoC Program funding for. The HAB had approved the performance outcome tool used to inform our ranking of projects in March. DHS populates the tools with system data, fiscal information and monitoring results; they go through a final internal review and then are shared with each project for review. Providers review the results, note any issues they see, and can provide justification/context for any areas not meeting the targeted benchmarks. An evaluation Committee then reviewed all tools and put forward a ranking recommendation to the HAB. This year, it included a recommendations to: reallocate funds away from the lowest performing project into expansions of high performing RRH and PSH programs; apply for the expansion of another high performing PSH project via bonus funds; and the ranking of all projects. The CoC's full application was approved and submitted in advance of the September 30, 2022 deadline.

*Supplemental CoC Program NOFO to Address Unsheltered Homelessness*

This year, HUD also released a supplemental NOFO targeted towards unsheltered and rural homelessness. The Allegheny County CoC was able to apply for funding under the unsheltered competition. Initial awards through this NOFO will be for 3 years, and then become part of the annual renewal competition. The CoC submitted an application, but are cognizant of HUD's intention to hone in on unsheltered homelessness, and the awarding of bonus points to CoC's with much higher PIT counts than ours. Included in our application was: a new PSH project, a new RRH project, and two new SSO projects. Additionally, the application required a Comprehensive CoC Plan for Serving Individuals and Families Experiencing Homelessness with Severe Service Needs. The CoC's submitted plan was developed based on CoC and HAB input collected through CORE, CoC/HAB meetings, CoCAPC and Provider Committee meetings, and CoC web-based surveys. The specific projects included in the application were informed via an open and competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) procurement process.

HAB member Chase Archer Evans noted that the submitted Plan did not include any language around decriminalizing homelessness and spoke to repeated finding that moving people around, whether as sweeps or as not allowing people to stay in locations, does not help.

- **Shelter Updates—Andy Halfhill**

Andy Halfhill provided an update on the shelter at Second Avenue Commons and Winter Shelter. Regarding Second Avenue Commons, he explained that the intention originally was to open in September, however construction related delays pushed back the opening until November. Specifically, the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units were opened on November 17<sup>th</sup>, following by the shelter opening on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, the engagement center with day programming opened on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, along with the medical center. With delays in opening Second Avenue Commons, the annual winter shelter was opened at Smithfield United on November 15<sup>th</sup>. Across the Smithfield Unit and Second Avenue Commons shelter spaces there have been 160-180 individuals served each night, which is higher than the capacity at Second Avenue Commons, so both locations will remain

# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

---

open throughout the winter season.

- **Committee Updates**

*CoC Analysis and Planning Committee—Pete Giacalone*

Ciara Stehley has joined DHS as the Manager of Homelessness Data and Performance, and is the IO Representative for CoCAPC. Mr. Giacalone encouraged providers who have not yet connected with Ms. Stehley to do so. In then speaking to the upcoming focus areas of CoCAPC, Mr. Giacalone highlighted returning to quarterly reviews of the Performance Management Plan, leveraging the Performance Management Plan to support meaningful data reporting and the annual review and ranking of projects, and conducting data deep dives to inform system strategies and plans. Mr. Giacalone called out the importance of the data review and analysis work, noting that the goal isn't about making outcomes look better for the purposes of HUD, but to center outcomes on the individuals served and the impact on wellbeing.

Mr. Evans inquired about CoCAPC working on efforts around policy work, specifically speaking to the example of coordinating with government to relieve property tax burden for people trying to build affordable housing as a mechanism for improve system outcomes. In response to this suggestion, HAB and CoC members shared the following:

- Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA): [https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/15070 Tax Abatement Programs - July 2020.pdf](https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/15070_Tax_Abatement_Programs_-_July_2020.pdf)
- Tax Increment Financing: <https://dced.pa.gov/download/tax-increment-financing-guarantee-guidelines-pdf/?wpdmdl=58155>; <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/economic-development/authorities/tif-guidelines.aspx>; <https://www.ura.org/media/W1siZiIsIjIwMjIvMDgvMjkvN2dpNHpmbm1wdl9USUZfR3VpZGVsaW5lc182XzE4XzlwLnBkZiIjXQ/TIF%20Guidelines%20-%206-18-20.pdf>
- Inclusionary Zoning: <https://pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/izod>

*Communication and Education Committee—Brian Knight*

The Communication and Education Committee had been working on development of a dynamic COC website, but with further development stalled, the Committee is seeking to identify tangible activities that would support the progress and needs of the CoC. One area identified is relationship building with people outside of the homelessness system, connecting around need and how the other systems and partners can contribute. The Committee is also seeking to connect with homelessness system providers about their public engagement needs, as well as compiling different events that providers could participate in and share information around.

*Provider Committee—Devon Goetze*

The Provider Committee has been coordinating around common barriers experienced by providers. In particular, the Committee has highlighted: increasing behavioral health needs among service participants, agency staffing retention struggles, and increased time required for access to subsidized housing.

*HOCC—Laura Drogowski*

The Homeless Outreach Coordinating Committee has not met for several months and will seek to reorient what the Committee should prioritize, recognizing the current landscape.

# Allegheny County Homeless Advisory Board

---

- **Consortium of Recognizing Experience (CORE)—Chase Archer Evans**  
Chase Archer Evans requested additional HAB and CoC support to inform structure and process improvements so that people with lived experience can be meaningfully integrated into the efforts of the CoC.
- **Allegheny County Discounted Fares Pilot Program—Seth Chizeck**  
Seth Chizeck, Analyst in DHS's Office of Analytics, Technology and Planning (ATP), provided an overview of the Allegheny County Discounted Fares Pilot Program. The program launched November 17<sup>th</sup>, and provides different discount levels for Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) for SNAP beneficiaries. The program has been set up as a pilot, with randomly assigned levels of discount, to build evidence of impact and inform availability of future, fuller funding and the longer-term version of a sustainable program design. Applications for the program will be open until about 14,000 individuals are enrolled. Program information can be found at <https://discountedfares.alleghenycounty.us/>

HAB members shared the following feedback:

- Within the evaluation, solicit qualitative feedback to inform impact assessment
  - Recommendation to not use SNAP benefits as the parameter, but rather to target towards the most vulnerable and make it so that people who are staying outside are immediately eligible
- **Public Comments/Announcements**  
No public comments or announcements were made

## **Next CoC Meeting**

January 31, 2023 from 10:00am to 12:00pm  
Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting *and*  
1 Smithfield St, Pittsburgh, 15222 (HSB, Lower Level)