



CoC Governance Board Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Chair Christina Coulson called to order the regular meeting of the CoC Governance Board at 9:00 a.m. on April 29, 2024 at Polk State College.

Roll Call

The following persons were present:

- Christina Coulson, Chair
- Bridget Engleman
- Jessica Henderson
- Benjamin Ruch
- Mary Beth Moore
- Sandra Stephens
- Jason Saffels
- Yolonda Williams
- Rev. Robert Moses
- Giffe Gil
- Ray Steadman
- Cate Igo

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Yolanda Williams to approve the minutes with roll call corrections and seconded by Rev. Robert Moses.

New Business

- **CoC Governance Board Vision Statement**
 - Christina Coulson led a discussion of the new Polk County CoC Governance Board Vision Statement. Following discussion and edits, Jason Saffels made a motion to approve that was seconded by Mary Beth Moore. The new vision statement is:
To bring together resources who create a community where everyone has a safe, stable place to call home. HCPC is to ensure that homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.
- **Committees and Workgroups**
 - Christina Coulson led a discussion of the Governance Board Committees and Workgroups. The purpose of each was discussed and volunteers were solicited.
 - Capacity Building Committee – Christina Roberts, Bridget Engleman, Jessica Henderson, Yolonda Williams
 - Project Selection Committee – Chair Jessica Henderson, Mary Beth Moore, Yolonda Williams
 - Public Relations Committee (Formerly Advocacy) – Co-Chairs Jason Saffels and Rev. Robert Moses
 - Membership Committee – Chair Sandra Stephens, Giffe Gil,

- Planning Committee – Chair Ben Ruch, Rev. Robert Moses, Ray Steadman

- **Discussion of Concerns**

- Bridget Engleman led a discussion on House Bill 1365. The legislation prohibits municipalities from allowing people to sleep or camp in public places, such as parks and on the beach. Starting January 1, 2025, the law will allow people to file lawsuits against local governments if they fail to remove homeless people. The Board discussed potential outcomes like future lawsuits for causation and Homeless camps. Bridget shared that the City of Winter Haven is introducing a Resource Center, and that Talbot House will be creating a shelter in Winter Haven.
- A brief discussion was held about resources available on the HCPC website, including the membership list, resources, and funding information. Resources are currently being updated.
- Sandra Stephens shared information about Enterprise Village in Pinellas County. One of their goals is the promotion of self-sufficiency by teaching participants budgeting skills. Sandra has a passion for teaching young people and would like to assist with budget classes for local youth struggling with housing insecurity.
- The Winter Haven High School Youth Action Committee is sending their notes to explore how they can partner with the HCPC to eradicate homelessness for young people. They shared a goal of wanting to expand Youth Action Committees to every high school in Polk County. They want to be supported and heard, not corrected. They recently conducted a homeless survey and have over 100 respondents to date.
- Ben Ruch shared that Kathleen Senior High School did a film on youth homelessness. This age bracket needs more attention, support, and assistance. Giffe Gil asked if private schools have been approached. Ben stated that they are the next group to be approached and that three poverty simulations have been held at schools in the past. They helped bring awareness to the growing financial struggles of high school students and how many students are at risk. Rev. Moses discussed the challenges and stigma of being a homeless student in a private school. Schools often have no idea the student is homeless.
- The Planning Committee will work with the Youth Action Committees and update the 1-year and 5-year plans.
- A brief discussion was held about the membership requirements of the Governing Board. Bridget stated there are currently 20 members and 7 are required. She also briefly discussed what the Executive Committee does to support the HCPC.
- Housekeeping items included a reminder from Jason Saffels to have a quorum when voting on or approving items. Jessica stated there have been some communication issues related to email getting kicked back.
- Bridget shared that she has a speaker list for the Capacity Building Committee to help with their education presentations. Six training sessions were held last year and they have several already planned for the upcoming year.
- Yolonda Williams asked why rental classes fall under Membership. After discussion they were moved to Capacity Building.
- Bridget Engleman and Jessica Henderson led a discussion about Project Selection and ensuring eligibility requirements are met. The critical need for accurate data collection was also discussed. Giffe Gil suggested a training be held on how to improve the management information system. Some providers are struggling to report in a timely

fashion. Suggestions were made to offer interns to those agencies to help with reporting and to possibly seek support from Board members for compliance.

- Possible new COC members were discussed, including Lakes Church. Bridget reminded the Board that any member of the community could be a potential good candidate. The membership application is available online.

Next Meeting

- The next meeting of the CoC Governance Board will be held on the Lakeland campus of Polk State College on Monday, May 20, from 9:00am to 11:00am. The address is 3425 Winter Lake Road, Lakeland, Florida 33803. The meeting room is LTB 1120. The LTB building is the first building on campus when entering from US Highway 98/Bartow Highway. The campus flagpoles are directly in front of the entrance to the building. Check in at the reception desk just inside the entrance for assistance locating the meeting room.

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Jason Saffels.
- 2nd Motion to adjourn by Ray Steadman.
- Meeting adjourned at 10:30am by Christina Coulson.