

CONTINUUM OF CARE MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

January 21, 2026 9:00am

BY PAITON BECKNER

Our mission: Teaming up to make homelessness rare, non-recurring, and short-lived.

Roll Call – **Please sign in the chat for attendance.**

Motion to approve previous minutes: Cedric Cox; Denise Harrison

Old Business

- 1,473 Total **Households**; 3,970 **Individuals** (Literally Homeless, At Risk, DV, Vet)
- 467 **Households** Literally Homeless; 910 **Individuals**
- 11 **Households** Fleeing Domestic Violence; 20 **Individuals**
- 995 **Households** At Risk; 3,040 **Individuals**
- **Veterans: 15**
- Referrals sent to providers in December: 44 (including Housing referrals, ELC, Griffin Lofts and Jersey Commons)
- 156 Total CE Assessments taken last month. (December)
- 111 Total CE Assessments taken to date so far for this month (January)

New Business

PIT Count 2026

- **Jessica** led discussion on the upcoming **Point-in-Time (PIT) Count**:
 - Scheduled for **Thursday, January 29**
 - Teams and assignments already emailed
 - Packets being prepared for team leads
- **Instructions**:
 - Complete virtual training
 - Email **Brennan** for app access code
 - Do not use the app after 4 AM on the day of the count (data becomes live)
 - Offered support for questions and coordination.
- **Bridget Engleman** gave shout-outs:
 - **Josh (board member)** – donated two pallets of water
 - Volunteers (John, Luke, Brennan, others) – helped transport supplies
 - **Mulberry Community Center** – provided a truck
 - **St. Vincent & Homeless Coalition** – donated Winn-Dixie gift cards for snacks
 - **Mark (Tri-County)** – assisted in Auburndale

- **Cosmo Project** – distributed coats and hygiene kits
- 250 coats donated and fully distributed within 3 days
- Additional 400 socks donated

2025 NOFO Current NOFO (Due February 9)

- Refers to **2024–2025 renewal funding**
- Already awarded; no action required
- Expected to **auto-renew in eSNAPS**
- Bridget confirmed intent to renew with HUD
- **Upcoming/New NOFO (Uncertain)**
 - Originally expected January 28
 - Currently **on hold due to court/legal issues**
 - No application available yet
- **Guidance:**
 - **Renewals:** Proceed automatically
 - **New projects:**
 - On hold until further notice
 - Likely delayed ~6 months (possibly July)
- **John clarified:**
 - Current discussion refers to **2025–2026 awards (renewals)**
 - Next cycle would be **2026–2027 (new funding)**
- **Bridget Engleman confirmed:**
 - Situation remains fluid due to court involvement
 - Multiple revisions of the NOFO have occurred
 - Overall reassurance: *“We’re all good on our NOFO.”*

HMIS Office Call: Bridget Engleman emphasized:

- HMIS office hours held monthly (2nd Wednesday)
- Strong encouragement for staff attendance
- Key message: **“If it’s not in HMIS, it doesn’t exist.”**
- Importance: Required for monitoring, reporting, and future funding

Cold Weather Shelter Summary:

- Shelters opened: Tobbett House, Mulberry Community Center, Lighthouse
- **Bridget** requested:
 - Agencies report shelter usage numbers
 - Mentioned potential **state funding** if emergency status is declared.

Advocacy & State Funding Updates (Bridget Engleman)

- Encouraged agencies to:

- Contact **congressional representatives** using a shared template
- Advocate regularly (weekly or monthly)
- **State funding updates:**
 - **Staffing funding:** Likely fully funded ✓
 - **Challenge grant:** Likely fully funded ✓
 - **Challenge unsheltered funding:** *Not currently in budget* ✗
- Emphasized that advocacy efforts contributed to positive funding outlook.
 - Open Floor - Next meeting: **2/18/26 (Zoom)**

General Sentiment

- **Denise:** Agencies continuing to “do the work” despite challenges
- **Deborah (Talbot House):**
 - Expressed relief about funding stability
 - Noted importance for permanent supportive housing residents

Volunteer Opportunity

- **John:**
 - Shared availability of student volunteers (Florida Southern College)
 - Looking for:
 - Weekend or non-weekday opportunities
 - Fundraising support (confirmed they can help)

Program Success Highlight (P.J. Brooks – CASL)

- Update on **Jersey Commons pilot program:**
 - Targets **high-need, high-utilizer individuals**
 - Includes **permanent supportive housing + wraparound services**
- Results (since Sept 1):
 - **0 acute care admissions** among 15 participants
- Credit given to:
 - **Tri-County** (care coordination)
 - **Castle & Carteret** (housing + management)
- Key takeaway:
 - Stable housing + services = significantly improved outcomes

PIT Count Concern – Winter Haven

- **MaryBeth Moore** asked about potential impact from:
 - Attorney General / City of Winter Haven situation
- **Bridget Engleman** and **Cedric Cox, Sr.** responded:
 - **No expected impact** on PIT Count operations
 - Law enforcement remains supportive
 - Issue tied to a **single individual raising complaints**

- Reassurance:
 - PIT Count will proceed normally
 - City is compliant and supportive

Additional Notes

- Approx. **27 homeless individuals** identified within Winter Haven city limits (discussion estimate)
- Emphasis on:
 - Ongoing **public education**
 - Need to address **misinformation and advocacy challenges**

- **Case Conferencing: Stay tuned after the meeting**

Motion from the Floor Adjournment – Denise Harrison; Deborah Cozzetti

Attendance: Bridget Engleman, HCPC; Jessica Henderson, HCPC; Cathy Golden, HCPC; Nessie Braun, HCPC; Brittany Preo, HCPC; Katrina Panzica, HCPC; Bren Sanders, HCPC; Luke Simmons, HCPC; Paiton Beckner, HCPC; Kacey Wood, George Harris Youth Shelter; MaryBeth Moore, Polk County; Terri Cram, ACTS; Donna Evanecky, PCSO; Mark Luba, TCHS; Steven Powers, TCHS; Nancy Hurley; Mike Smith, City of Lakeland; Jes Shapiro, Peace River Center Victim Services; Giffe' Gill, ACTS; Chris Dyer, Heartland for Children; Joe Vazquez, Lighthouse Ministries; June Robinson, Polk for Recovery; Cedric Cox, Sr., City of Winter Haven; Sandra Newson, Carrfour; Mike Carrano, The Cosmo Project; Daphene Roberts, One More Child; Lana Nolan, Catholic Charities; Michelle Czelusniak, The Wilson House; Nicole Redmond, Lake Wales Care center; Cheryl Meade, WRC; Andrea Anderson, Polk for Recovery; Deborah Cozzetti, Kim Chappell, Cindy Amiel- Talbot House; Maureen McIntire BayCare, Winter Haven Hospital, Center for Behavioral Health; Simone Evans Peace River Center; Jason Saffels, CFBHN; Belinda Davila, Talbot House; Donna Torr, ACTS; John Quirk III, SVDP CARES; Denise Harrison, TCHS; P.J. Brooks, CASL; Johnna Martinez, GiveWell Comm Fnd; Jose Chavarria, Carrfour; Kera Beard, Volunteers of America of Florida; Martha Murphy, Catholic Charities;