

**Northwestern Continuum of Care
CoC Steering Committee Meeting
January 21st, 2025 – 10:00 AM
Meeting Log in Below**

- **Welcome & Agency Updates, Extreme Weather and Hurricane Response**
- **COC Planning**
 - **HMIS Reporting**
 - **Annual Point in Time County Planning/HIC Bed Count**
 - **HUD Focus Group and Hurricane related discussion**
 - **CoC Competition – Office Hours discussion on registration**
 - **Watauga Housing Council Update**
- **Governance Committee and NC HMIS updates**
 - **State and Federal Grant Updates**
 - **ESG Annual**
 - **Rapid Rehousing**
- **Other Business**
- **Upcoming Meetings and Dates:**
 - **NWCoC – Virtual Tuesday February 18, 2025 at 10am.** Below is the meeting link /call in information for Tuesday's meeting.

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Northwest Continuum of Care (NC 516)
Emergency Solutions Grant Committee Meeting
Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at 10:00am
Via Web Conference

- **Attendees:**

Tina B. Krause: Executive Director/CoC Lead, Hospitality House of Northwest, NC
Todd Carter: Chief Development Director, Hospitality House
Ethan Flynn: Director of Grant Funding, Hospitality House
Sonya Hamby: Local System Administrator, NC HMIS, Hospitality House
Graham Doege Osler: Rapid ReHousing and WeCan Coordinator, Hospitality House
Sean Morris: Coordinated Entry and Street Outreach Coordinator, Hospitality House
William Holley: Coordinated Entry and Street Outreach Coordinator, Hospitality House
Christiana Glenn Tugman: Compliance and Planning Specialist, Hospitality House
Lori Watts: Housing Specialist – Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), VAYA Health LME/MCO
Rachelle Ellis: Housing Specialist, Vaya Health LME/MCO
Emily Fortunato: Shelter Manager, OASIS, Inc.
Casey Maslow: Housing Manager, OASIS, Inc.
Brooke Whitman: Center Director, Daymark Recovery Services, Watauga County
Seth Horton: Coordinated Entry Specialist, Salisbury Veteran Administration Medical Center
Howard Anderson: Healthcare for Homeless Veterans Outreach - Asheville VA Medical Center
Kellie Reed Ashcraft: Executive Director, Watauga Housing Council

- **Welcome and Agency Updates**

- **Graham Doege-Osler:** RRH Coordinator for Hospitality House reported that on January 1, 2025, three households previously approved and five new households will be enrolled in RRH as the new ESG funding will begin. Review of the BNL for RRH participants for January enrollment was conducted at the December CE meeting. WeCan is being contacted by households that need assistance with heaters, hot water heaters, and propane tanks/oil tanks to replace heating sources damaged in flood. Will refer to WAMY when appropriate for assistance. Contact graham@hosphouse.org for information on RRH or the Wilkes Center.
- **Rachelle Ellis:** Housing Specialist, Vaya Health, reminds CoC members that the One-Time Assistance program is for contracted providers to refer members/recipients for help to initially obtain housing. The program provides a maximum of \$500 per household for either rent deposit, 1st month's rent, and/or utility deposits in VAYA's 32 service counties. The program cannot pay for past due rent (arrears), ongoing rent, or past due utilities. Referrals must come from community providers (Daymark Recovery, RHA, Mountain Health Solutions, Infinite Beginnings, Stepping Stone, Easter Seals, etc.) that are contract providers with VAYA. The phone lines provide opportunity to have issues staffed to provide better assistance. Information about the One-Time Assistance Program should be directed to: HousingSupport@vayahealth.com or Rachelle Ellis at Rachelle.Ellis@vayahealth.com or 828-225-2785 ext. 1262. The VAYA Housing Line- call for resources and to staff for housing needs at 828-225-2785 ext. 4560. Persons needing assistance to secure housing can call the line for help.
- **Emily Fortunato:** Reports she has taken the RRH Coordinator role at OASIS. [OASIS has closed on the new property for the Avery County emergency shelter](#). It may be a year before it is open as some work will be done and securing materials/labor is difficult due to hurricane. OASIS is working with NWRHA on the PSH units and are scheduled to break ground in January 2025. Casey Maslow is the new Housing Manager, and also joins us today. Casey can be reached at: cmaslow@oasisinc.org

- **Howard Anderson:** Healthcare for Homeless Veterans Outreach, Asheville VA Medical Center (serving Yancey, Ashe, Avery, Watauga or Mitchell in the Northwest CoC) reports that the Veteran's Restoration Quarters (VRQ) in Asheville which has the transitional housing (SITH) program and PSH units was flooded in Helene, had significant damage, and cannot take anyone new right now. It may not be fully operational until October 2025. Please refer any Veterans seeking homeless assistance in this catchment area or those that have issues related to Helene.
- **Seth Horton:** Coordinated Entry Specialist, Salisbury Veteran Administration Medical Center Reports that the Salisbury VAMC covers Ashe, Alleghany, and Wilkes for the VAMC in the Northwest CoC. The VAMC will assist Veterans impacted by Hurricane Helene and those experiencing homelessness. Doing contract housing in the service areas outside of this CoC and surrounding counties as well. Please provide contact information for homeless Veterans from Northwest CoC for assistance needed if from those service areas. Email at: seth.horton@va.gov
- **Brooke Whitman:** Center Director, Daymark Recovery Services, Watauga County reports no new updates but reminds the CoC that Daymark Recovery text crisis support number is available at 828.348.0540. The Daymark phone number is 866.275.9552. Both lines are available 24/7 for those in need of crisis support. The Daymark crisis text line will help as cell/internet service is may not be available for some clients. Daymark can provide individual services during this difficult period as well as group counseling as always, but may set up a disaster recovery support group as well.
- **Tina Krause:** Executive Director at Hospitality House (HH) and CoC Lead reports that Hospitality House is currently working on repairs that occurred from Hurricane Helene at the facilities and in affected units leased for PSH clients. Golden Leaf awarded HH funds to assist in rental assistance and security deposit for those needing housing assistance. Recently hired Tom as a Housing Navigator for disaster recovery and in CE. Have Sean Morris and William Holley joining CoC meetings who work in Street Outreach and will also be helping in the PIT. Phil Dingus passed/PSH Coordinator passed away in November and a special Celebration of Life will be held tomorrow at 3:00 at Hospitality House. Everyone is welcome to come. Currently operating emergency overflow shelter off and on and offering safety plans to shelter persons in extreme weather.

- **CoC Planning**

- **HMIS Reporting:** The Longitudinal System Analysis (LSA) draft was uploaded into HDX2 and had no errors and a few red flags. The LSA is due January 9, 2025. Anticipate early submission. Sonya Hamby and Christiana Glenn Tugman are participating in the MCAH Learning Lab series on Equity and Data Analysis for the next 6 months. For the upcoming Housing Inventory Count (HIC), there are some pages that are in HMIS that will need to be verified or deleted. The HIC will be sent out and is due January 1, 2025. Bed/Units will need to be verified (total units, beds, etc.) by agencies and providers.
- **2025 PIT/HIC Planning:** The Point in Time (PIT) is snapshot of homelessness conducted for both sheltered and unsheltered homelessness annually across the country. The PIT/HIC will be conducted in the Northwest CoC on January 29, 2025. Rural areas Yancey, Mitchell and Alleghany will be engaged in advance of the count. A notice will be sent out to agencies to get full Housing Inventory (unit/bed) in advance of the PIT. HUD will provide guidance on how to count those in hotels that are affected by the hurricane. Street Outreach team will support the 2025 PIT planning and PIT count. Need to update contacts with all schools in the CoC. Kellie Reed Ashcraft also solicited for volunteers to help with the PIT. We need to count those assisted with FEMA Temporary Shelter Assistance (TSA) or other agencies who are paying for a hotel. If they are from the Northwest and had to relocate outside the CoC, the CoC where sheltered/hotels on night of the PIT needs to count the household. Surveys for Northwest may need to be modified to count county of origin for displaced persons. Ethan Flynn will be sending out an email once contact list is updated with more information. PIT count will include surveys being collected in the field and at crisis centers. The shelter counts and RRH will go through HMIS as well. Todd is working on a new PSA for the PIT and

has been doing outreach at different Rotary Clubs and County DHHS to get more participation across the CoC. OASIS did some outreach last year to small DV shelters by visiting My Sister's Place/Safe Place serving Yancey and have continued to do outreach. A Safe Home for Everyone (A.S.H.E.) has scattered site 2 two-bedroom unit they place persons in for limited time or hotel rooms. Will need to reach out to see if still open because of Helene. DANA is serving Alleghany and Wilkes but the shelter was empty last year during PIT but is fully staffed now- 48 hour to 2 week stays permitted. HH has expanded the SO Team so will work directly with SO Teams to expand PIT unsheltered coverage in the more rural areas of the CoC to get better unsheltered data.

- **HUD CPD Regional Office Meeting:** Last week, Richard Thomason called leaders together for a special meeting to discuss shelter/unsheltered disaster areas. Hotel reliance in a tourist area not sustainable and shelter is available but many households do not want to leave their property. Temporary trailers are needed to assist so FEMA needs to get trailers on site. Changes to state building code recently may allow trailers/temporary units where previously not allowed. This Thursday at 2:00 there will also be a panel discussion speaking to HUD and FEMA on issues related to disaster recovery. The Town of Boone modified the UDO to allow for temporary trailers in the Town of Boone effective November 11, 2024. <https://www.ncosfm.gov/news/press-releases/2024/12/11/nc-office-state-fire-marshal-statement-regarding-temporary-housing-emergency-rule> Bradford Park and trailer park owners have not been contacted about placement of temporary units in those parks. Some electric service has been set up in vacant lots which may indicate trailers are coming.
- **Kellie Reed Ashcraft:** The Watauga Housing Council is **now meeting monthly rather than quarterly**. High Country Housing and FEMA representatives attended the last meeting. Working to set up a long-term recovery group (LTRG) and the President of the eastern LTRG has assisted. A local LTRG group has been formed and Executive Officers have been elected. The LGTR and Construction management group will start to work on developing long term solutions and gaining funding for housing, bridges, roads, etc. For the Watauga Council, the community engagement group is trying to do outreach to affected communities. The Housing Solutions committee is pursuing becoming a dealer for manufactured housing to get a significant discount on prefabricated homes. Watauga Housing Council should be a certified dealer for Clayton Homes to purchase these and develop affordable neighborhoods. Volunteers have been contacting hotels and trying to get information about how many persons are staying at hotels in the area- most have moved on or were asked to leave because of tourists/homecoming reservations in the area. Still working with volunteer Tiffany Williams and property owners to create a resource list for short term rentals. Persons that have been impacted by the hurricane from the hospitality industry/renters in the area may not necessarily be immediately FEMA qualified. A list of second homes/vacation rentals have been posted to match displaced persons to accommodations that are available for short/medium term housing. Visit the website for more information at Wataugahousing.org. Over 70 households have been identified and over a 100 have asked for assistance. Bradford Park needs support to rebuild after the hurricane devastated the park. Harvest House replaced a trailer for one of the families that lost their trailer and IJC also providing support. Red Cross went through in the first two weeks to also document damaged homes. Canvassing to get information on who is eligible for FEMA assistance/who is not. Will also submit application for HOME to the state specific for Ashes and Watauga- 3 grants (Boone and High Country Council of Governments) going in and hope is to get at least one. Tina Krause reports new contact with Red Cross has contacted her and will set up a meeting with her in the next week.
- **NC HMIS Governance Committee Update:** The Governance Committee met yesterday and most of the conversation surrounded the process/pitfalls/lessons learned of doing an RFP for a new HMIS software provider in another CoC. Thurston Alexander Smith who is providing TA to Wake and serves on the CoCs data committee provided an overview of the Wake's process in 2020 and the

issues they had/have with the transition of the HMIS in the Wake County CoC. Increased costs, inability to maintain historical case notes, services normally covered in previous implementation of NC HMIS are now al la carte and costly, training is video only unless pay for additional services. Implementations that choose to do an RFP should plan ahead, ask questions/learn from other CoCs who have moved before contracting with another vendor.

- **ESG Annual Award:** Received and executed contract for 2025. Funding is available on January 1, 2025. All awarded for the Northwest CoC is for RRH and HMIS. No Emergency Shelter funds were requested by the Northwest CoC as funding was limited.
- **Street Outreach new staff:** Now have two staff members as Hospitality House, Sean Morris and William Holly to build out the SO team.

- **Other Business:**

- **Back@HOME Helene:** Discussion regarding the Back@Home disaster recovery plan for hurricane Helene affected CoCs using the State's allocation of RUSH funds. Other CoCs experiences with this program model advocated by the State proved ineffective and was mismanaged in both Mathew, Florence, and the ESG-CV iteration. Northwest CoC did not participate during the ESG-CV program, retained funding for area providers, and successfully implemented and spent the ES, SO, Prevention and RRH during the pandemic. There was another hearing at the General Assembly yesterday regarding NCORR's mismanagement of hurricane funding and their 312 million dollar deficit for Florence and Mathew and 2 million a month in hotels for people still homeless after those hurricanes. The state has taken the RUSH funding allocated by HUD for WNC disaster declared areas and intends to launch this same model under NCORR. An opt out option was done during pandemic funding and is not an option as decision was made for NCORR to receive funding at the state level and launch the programs across the areas even if a provider has no presence in the CoC. At this time, plan is moving slowly and NCORR's has not signed required agreements to enter into NC HMIS, work with the CoC, participate in CE as required or have staff/sub-recipient provider in some of the affected areas like Northwest CoC. RUSH funding is supposed to be allocated to fund ESG activities (RRH, Prevention, SO and Emergency Shelter).

- **Upcoming Meetings and Dates:**

- Next scheduled meeting of the Northwest CoC- **January 21, 2024, at 10:00 am**
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