



# Sonoma County Homeless Coalition Board

## Homeless Coalition Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

1:00 – 5:00 PM, Pacific Time – Meeting held via Zoom

Zoom Recording:

[https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/rec/share/C6la7wz548wJ1tQy\\_ch43B294\\_CY2FhopQUwApBhwYtEQ\\_uOaPlwllzjo7Zb\\_2Xs\\_nC3aUIVbipCEVtT6](https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/rec/share/C6la7wz548wJ1tQy_ch43B294_CY2FhopQUwApBhwYtEQ_uOaPlwllzjo7Zb_2Xs_nC3aUIVbipCEVtT6)

Passcode: 7e&M=7ap

### Welcome and Roll Call Introductions (00:07:00–00:17:43)

Jennielynn Holmes called the meeting to order at 1:01 pm, and thanked outgoing Homeless Coalition (HC) Board members (Ben Leroi, Una Glass, Salvina Norris, Dennis Pocekay, and Cheyenne McConnell). Two previous members were welcomed back as they rejoin the HC Board to begin new terms in 2025: Kevin McDonnell, and Rebekah Sammet.

Jennielynn Holmes also explained the Zoom rules regarding public comment and Brown Act guidelines.

Introductions were facilitated for each HC Board member during roll call.

**Present:** Jennielynn Holmes, Catholic Charities | Kevin McDonnell, City of Petaluma | Chris Coursey, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors | Martha Cheever, Community Development Commission | Jackie Elward, City of Rohnert Park | Dannielle Danforth, West County Community Services | Margaret Sluyk, Reach For Home | Chessy Etheridge, Lived Experience Advisory Board (LEAP) | Rebekah Sammet, LEAP Board | Chris Cabral, Committee on the Shelterless (COTS) | Kristi Lozinto, Member At-Large | Angelica Smith, Tribal Seat | Aaron Mello, LEAP Board

**Absent:** Stephen Zollman, City of Sebastopol | Ron Wellander, City of Sonoma |

A quorum was present.

As the Lead Agency, staff of the Sonoma County Department of Health Services (DHS) were also introduced for this initial meeting of the new year: Karissa White, James Alexander, Jennifer Solito, Michael Gause, Jynessa Lazzaroni, Thai Hilton, Andrew Akufo, Kim Holden

#### **1 - 4. Approval of Consent Calendar (00:17:45 – 00:19:33)**

- Jennielynn Holmes, CoC Board Chair, presented the consent calendar items:
  1. 1/22/25 meeting agenda
  2. 12/18/24 meeting minutes
  3. Summary of Follow-ups from Previous Meeting(s)
  4. Reports for Standing Committee Updates
- **Public Comment:** None
- **Motion:** Jackie Elward moves to approve the Consent Calendar.  
**Second:** Martha Cheever seconds the motion.  
**Abstentions:** One.  
**Objections:** None.  
**Motion passes.** The consent calendar is approved.

#### **5. Reports from Lead Agency Staff (00:19:34 – 00:29:13)**

- Introduction of New Staff Member: James Alexander and Karissa White introduced Jynessa Lazzaroni, new staff member with the DHS Homelessness Services Division. Jynessa will be working with Karissa in support of the Continuum of Care program and the Homeless Coalition. Each HC Board members will be receiving an email from Jynessa requesting they complete a Conflict-of-Interest form, due February 28, 2025.
- Appointed Licensed Health Care Organization Seat: Karissa White explained that the resignation of Ben Leroi from the Licensed Health Care Organization Seat leaves that position vacant, with one year remaining on the term. In accordance with the Charter, in the event of a vacancy the HC Board will appoint a successor to fill the position for the remainder of the term.

As an alternative to a direct appointment by this Board, discussion explored the option of adding this vacancy for open election in conjunction with anticipated upcoming elections to fill other vacant seats.

**Public Comment:** Gregory Fearon

**Motion:** Supervisor Coursey moves to notify the HC Board's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) partner agencies of the vacancy for the Licensed Health Care Organization seat to elicit their recommendations, followed by an appointment to the seat by the HC Board at the February, 2025 meeting.

**Second:** Jackie Elward seconds the motion.

**Abstentions or Objections:** None.

**Motion passes unanimously.**

## **6. Racial Equity (RE) Workgroup Update (00:29:16 – 01:47:18)**

- Karissa White described the RE Workgroup's efforts to develop a reporting process and protocol to address complaints of discriminatory acts. Their work revealed a primary need to identify an effective enforcement mechanism to hold agencies accountable and to enact consequences for discriminatory incidents that occur under an agency's purview, while also offering a means for amending the transgression or policy in alignment with a restorative justice approach.

The RE Workgroup recommends implementation of third-party oversight, with a neutral organization selected to investigate complaints to ensure impartiality and fairness to both those who have experienced injustices as well as to providers who may have made mistakes.

Questions arose concerning the nature of the Homeless Coalition Board's engagement or authority, how an investigative component might be organized, legal considerations, and the vehicle by which funding might be obtained and integrated into this process.

**Public Comment:** Gregory Fearon, Kim Clement

As a first step, there is some agreement among Board members that accountability might be established through the addition of explicit language to upcoming contracts, beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025. Clear expectations would be specified in prohibiting agencies from engaging in discriminatory practices or otherwise harmful actions that result in negative impacts to clients. A corrective action plan could be implemented and monitored when violations occur, with noncompliance penalized by a loss of funding. Any potential changes to contracts would be vetted by County Counsel and reviewed by DHS Contracts and Board Items Development (CBID). All clients and contractors would be made aware that a reporting process exists. Conversation about this proposal will continue at future HC Board meetings.

**No motion at this time.**

## **7. Service Provide Roundtable (SPR) Update (01:47:24 – 01:53:38)**

- **Measure O NOFA** – The SPR would like an update about when Measure O funding decisions can be expected. In response, Supervisor Coursey indicates that recommendations are expected to come to the Board of Supervisors in February or March.
- **Strategic Plan** – The SPR would like an update on the Strategic Plan at the February HC Board meeting. In response, staff indicates that the Strategic Plan Priority Updates for Year 3 will be placed on the February 2025 HC Board agenda.
- **Public Comment:** None.

- **Coordination of SPR Updates** – There is agreement at today’s HC Board meeting that future SPR Updates to the HC Board will be coordinated by the SPR. A change in the frequency of SPR Updates is suggested, or perhaps incorporating them into the HC Quarterly Membership Meetings. The SPR will discuss this proposal at their next meeting.

**Please note: Item # 9, Ten-Minute Break, was taken out of order and occurred prior to Item #8, MOU.**

**9. Ten- Minute Break 2:48 PM – 3:00 PM (01:53 40 – 02:06:01)**

**8. MOU Between SoCo Homeless Coalition and Lead Agency (02:06:20 – 02:19:16)**

- James Alexander and Michael Gause commented that the Lead Agency is working to provide additional information regarding the MOU as requested by the HC Board, and that revisions are pending County Counsel review. The process was delayed somewhat by holidays but an update will be forthcoming at an upcoming HC Board meeting once the internal processes are complete.
- **Public Comment:** None.

**10. Word from the LEAP Board (02:09:18 – 02:14:13)**

- Aaron Mello offered encouragement to providers in working with clients and provided perspective on how to help clients retain their Section 8 housing. Rebekah Sammet reported that “Need a Hand of Hope” has been running two warming stations over the past few weeks, with support from Sonoma Applied Village Services (SAVS).
- **Public Comment:** None.

**11. Board Chair and Vice Chair Election (2:14:45 – 02:24:40)**

- Araceli Rivera referenced the charter to explain the election procedure and facilitated nominations for 2025 HC Board Chair.

**Motion:** Martha Cheever nominates Jennielynn Holmes. Kevin McDonnell seconds the nomination. Jennielynn Holmes accepts the nomination.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Roll-Call Vote:** Motion passes with two abstentions.

- Araceli Rivera opened nominations for HC Board Vice-Chair.

**Motion:** Supervisor Coursey nominates Kevin McDonnell for Vice-Chair. Jennielynn Holmes seconds the nomination. Kevin McDonnell accepts the nomination.

**Public Comment:** None.

**Roll Call Vote:** Motion passes with one abstention.

**12. Review Agenda for February Coalition Board Meeting (02:24:43 – 02:28:03)**

- James Alexander reviewed the agenda for the February 26, 2025 HC Board meeting and asked the Board if any changes or additions were needed. A request was made to include a placeholder for a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) update, as well as for an upcoming Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) application update.
- **Public Comment:** None.

**13. Board Member Questions and Comments (02:28:04 – 02:34:58)**

- Michael Gause –
  - Measure O funding recommendations (intended awards, not final) are now posted on the County website and potential awardees have been notified.
  - The Point in Time (PIT) Homeless Count will take place on Friday, January 31<sup>st</sup>. Those interested in volunteering should contact Karissa White.
- Jennielynn Holmes –
  - Catholic Charities' immigration team is available to speak to service provider teams to provide educations about individual rights for clients and workers, and best practices when working in the field. A video series is also in development, with completion expected in February 2025. Interested agencies should contact Jennielynn.
- **Public Comment:** None.

**14. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda (02:35:00 – 02:37:21)**

- Gregory Fearon

**Adjournment: 3:30 PM (02:37:23 – 02:38:18)**