Coulee Collaborative to End Homelessness

*Collaborative, diverse, and compassionate individuals working to eliminate homelessness in La Crosse, Vernon, Monroe, and Crawford Counties.*

**Attendance**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Abagail | Jeffers | Couleecap |
| Anthony | Larson | Center for Veterans Issues |
| Barbara | Almond | Karuna Housing |
| Becky | Koske | Couleecap |
| Billie | Wise | Couleecap |
| Brian | Sampson | City of La Crosse |
| Cassandra | Robinson | MHS Health Wisconsin |
| Daniella | Nelles | Couleecap |
| Deanna | Kloster | UnitedHealthcare Community Plan |
| Ebony | Hyter | Quartz Benefits |
| Heidi | Svee | New Horizons Shelter and Outreach Centers |
| Isaac | Hoffman | La Crosse County LAFC |
| Jessica | Thill | Cia Siab, Inc. |
| Julie | McDermid | Karuna Housing |
| Kael | Clemmerson | New Beginnings Christian Fellowship |
| Karla\* | Hein | Catholic Charities of La Crosse |
| Katie | Spaeth | ICA Alliances |
| Kayla | Ryan | Salvation Army |
| Kevin\* | Burch | Catholic Charities of La Crosse |
| Kevin | Hundt | Coulee Tenants United |
| Kim | Cable | Couleecap |
| Le Anne | Martinez | Consumer Advisory Council |
| Lee | Walraven | Families First of Monroe County |
| Liz | Evans | Great Rivers United Way |
| Marissa | Miller | La Crosse County |
| Mary | Jacobson | Family & Children’s Center |
| Maurella | Cunningham | RHYMES |
| Meredith | McCoy | Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care |
| Michael | Fitzpatrick | Independent Living Resources |
| Mike | Basford | WI DOA Interagency Council on Homelessness |
| Molly | Betts | MHS Health Wisconsin |
| Nancy | Parcher | La Crosse YMCA |
| Randall | Brown | Consumer Advisory Council |
| Rosanne | Northwood | YWCA La Crosse |
| Sandy | Brekke | Gundersen Health System |
| Seth | Reynolds | Department of Veterans Affairs |
| Shannon | Parker | Catholic Charities of La Crosse |
| Tina | Tryggestad | Couleecap |
| Vie | Matty | Head Start |

**MEETING MINUTES**

**September 19, 2023**

Meeting was called to order at 2:32pm

Introductions and Housekeeping were done.

August Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve the August meeting minutes by Molly Betts, seconded by Julie McDermid. Motion passed to approve the August meeting minutes.

[Data Dashboard Update](https://public.tableau.com/views/August2023CouleeCOCHomelessDataDetails/Story1?:language=en-US&publish=yes&:display_count=n&:origin=viz_share_link) – Brian Sampson went over the monthly data dashboard. 230 singles and 54 families at the end of August. Recommended interventions: Rapid Re-Housing with Intensive Case Management and Permanent Supportive Housing are the highest categories of intervention recommended. Inflow/Outflow: 83 exited the system and 84 entered the system. Both entries and exits are trending upward. 30 who entered the system were new, 29 returning from housing. Exits to Other and Permanent Housing trending up. Inflow: returning from housing is increasing. Interventions reflect the recommended intervention based on assessment. Placement rates have been increasing. This trend only includes permanent placements. The “Other” category in the Outflow Destination Category is large, but a more detailed view can be found on the Outflow Destination Detail graph. Katie at ICA is looking into the details on the types of housing people are returning from and will report back next month. The numbers reported on the Dashboard are what is in Clarity on the first of the month. Those with licenses may find different numbers depending on when they pull reports.

Balance of State Update – Kristi is no longer able to attend our CCEH meetings. We still need the positions filled. Meredith provided an update on the CoC competition is nearing the end. Carrie hasn’t sent any updates recently. If something significant comes up, Meredith will send it to Liz for distribution to the group.

CoC Budget, CoC Dues, and Positions: The topics of CoC Budget and CoC Dues were items submitted to the CCEH Calendar to be discussed in September. Neither is due until November, but we would like to figure out what the conversation looks like and what needs to be communicated to the group for voting.

Kim provided information on how important the delegate and BOS Board positions are. If we don’t have a delegate voted on by our CoC, we won’t have a vote at that meeting to cast a vote on behalf of our CoC. Kim recommends getting the delegate position approved ASAP and have an assigned backup delegate. We are also still missing a Board member. That person is involved in decision-making for the entire Balance of State. It’s important to have representation there to bring forward the local comments and concerns. It’s also a great learning opportunity. Time commitment is one board meeting a month – usually virtual. Also on a committee – usually meeting once a month. There is some work involved.

Anyone interested should contact Liz.

Point-In-Time Count Final Number and Process for Data Recording and Reporting: Becky Koske updated on the Point-In-Time count that happened in July. The final numbers: 116 individuals connected with or observed to be unsheltered that evening. Includes all 4 service counties. 89 people were in some sort of emergency shelter which includes emergency motel vouchers, DV shelter, etc. The data is from the street count and from Clarity. 29 individuals were also being served through housing projects. Data collection process: Becky collects data monthly on individuals sheltered. When people refer to the PIT count, they often talk about the street counts that happen in January and July. Those are the specific months that data is turned in, however each month there is a calculation of people using emergency shelter or housing projects. The 4th Wednesday of the month data is pulled for the HIC (Housing Inventory Chart). The PIT count includes the street count, data from homeless connect, and those in emergency shelters. All the organizations running those projects have to enter the data, then data is reviewed, and fixes need to be made before numbers are reported.

There may be differences in our dashboard data and the housing inventory chart due to not all organizations use Clarity for their project management database. There is also the unsheltered number to consider. Ideally you want Coordinated Entry to match the Point In Time to capture the data of those who are unsheltered, but it will never be perfect. It’s important to see the number of people being served in projects – the agencies are doing good work.

Action Plan Progress: Brian Sampson provided an update on the Action Plan Subcommittee. The DEI Goal is assessing disparities identified in Meredith’s presentation and working on training to address disparities. The committee has been looking at different trainings available and initiatives happening in the community. The committee will look at what they find and make a recommendation to the whole group in October for a vote. Randall added that conversations have been around resources that make sense and are sustainable. The committee meets on October 2. Please submit input on trainings for consideration prior to that meeting to any of the committee members: Brian, Randall, Ebony, Lee, Becky, or Molly.

Karuna Update – Julie McDermid introduced Barb Almond, the Karuna Supportive Housing Program Director. Karuna Housing is accepting applications to fill 10 permanent supportive housing slots before cold weather hits. They have secured two 6-bedroom 2-bathroom apartments for rooming house style living with 24-hour onsite support. Applications are being accepted through Sept 29. Community connection is at the core of the program. Residents are required to provide 20 hours of community service each month. They can do it on their own if they have a specific interest, but there are also other opportunities coordinated by Julie and Barb. Being part of the community as a whole is key to being successful. The minimum rent payment is $50 per month or 30% of adjusted gross income. Having no income will not bar someone from coming in. Folks will be provided assistance in finding income or they would consider providing additional community service. The target population is the chronically homeless population which has been growing. It is for single adults – no children are allowed on site. Those who have been through programming before and it didn’t work out for them may find success in this program. They would have personal space and community. The first three months are rent-free and is considered guest occupancy to ensure fit in the house. After three months, they sign a lease. There is no time limit to their stay. While there, residents can earn good rental history. The [Application](https://www.karunahousing.org/general-4) is on the website and is easy to fill out on a phone. Submitting an application is first step, then there is an interview to discuss what the house is like. [Karunahousing.org](https://www.karunahousing.org/) Each resident will have their own room. No roommates, just housemates. Applications will be evaluated for good fit in the program. They hope to have residents move in withing the first couple weeks of October. The application asks about criminal background, but that doesn’t disqualify a person. Residents are given information about their basic rights along with the lease. Karuna already has 25 applications. Don’t let that deter people from applying. They are willing to consider sober living environment or single-gender in each apartment depending on what applicants are looking for. Data will go into Clarity. They have been working with ICA on building their data collection and reporting system.

Homeless Person’s Memorial Update: Reach out to Abbi Jeffers by Friday, Sept. 22 if you wish to be part of that team: abagail.jeffers@couleecap.org.

City/County Plan Update – Isaac Hoffman shared an update on the process. Hopefully most folks have received email communication on the process and next steps. They have been working on a facilitation plan and identifying a process for gathering input and compiling a plan. No actual planning has happened yet. They are putting some core work groups together. Getting an idea of who wants to be involved: those who want to provide information, who want to be part of planning, who wants to just be kept in the loop. Let [Brian](mailto:sampsonb@cityoflacrosse.org?subject=City/County%20Plan) or [Isaac](mailto:ihoffman@lacrossecounty.org?subject=City/County%20Plan) know if you want to be kept informed. They are trying to provide multiple ways for folks to participate and give input. This process is for long-term planning, not for addressing immediate needs.

The Total Navigation Team (TNT) is at the REACH Center every Tuesday from 10am-2pm. Nancy Parcher is on the team. Several families have come in each week. Singles can get help too. Mostly, folks are getting connected to case managers. Folks are also offered food resources and connection to other resources. They are trying the current schedule for a month. It is a large time commitment and they will reassess team availability at the end of the month.

Emergency Event Sheltering – Brian Sampson met with the Emergency Managers for the City of La Crosse and County of La Crosse on plans for spaces where people can stay warm when the weather gets really cold. Brian is working on a plan for spaces and operations of indoor places for people to stay warm. Brian expects it to look a lot like last year’s plan – just not at the Southside Community Center.

[Poverty Matters Conference](https://povertymatters.events/) is next week, Wednesday and Thursday. Wiscap website has information. Registration is still on the site.

Agency Updates:

Kim Cable: Chanin Kelly-Rae is a consultant hired by La Crosse County to evaluate and provide consultation to the county on Diversity Equity and Inclusion. She has been setting up listening sessions around the community to get feedback. There will be a listening session next Wednesday, 5-7pm at REACH. Would really like to hear from folks experiencing homelessness. Kim sent fliers to case managers last week. Need to register to attend – limited to 25, but only 3 are signed up as of now. For those who complete the full session, will receive $10 gift card. Pizza and beverages will be provided. Can email Kim with questions. Kim.cable@couleecap.org

New Horizons/YWCA: [Dare to Self Care](https://www.facebook.com/events/798911481938380) Event is Sunday, Oct. 15th, noon - 5 pm at The Main. Free. Focus is DV Awareness and lifting up women- BIPOC- and LGBTQ-owned businesses.

Maurella is the new executive director of RHYMES. They have moved to a new location in La Crosse. The phone number is the same. They are currently serving in drop-in capacity. RHYMES 608-406-2992 Crisis Phone/Text: 608-406-2993.

Mike Basford: State of WI Interagency Council on Homelessness: DHS hard at work applying for 1915i Medicaid waiver that will allow agencies to bill Medicaid for housing supportive services for those experiencing homelessness with substance use disorder and mental illness. The application has been sent in to the federal government and they expect approval by the end of the year. Expect to be able to bill in early 2024. DHS has a couple webinars this month for anyone interested in learning how to participate in this program and enroll. Tomorrow at 10a and Wednesday at 1pm. Discussion on launching HOME ARPA Program giving people the opportunity to develop low-income housing. The City of La Crosse has it’s own funding so won’t be eligible for that funding, but anything else outside of city boundaries should be eligible. Application will be available soon. Mike will be presenting at Poverty Matters on the Wi Data Project.

Le Anne Project Homeless Connect: Jennifer from the office at English Lutheran emailed. She was happy to have the event there. They were excited about all the vendors and what the event was about. Le Anne expressed how grateful and thankful the group was for the church hosting the event. Molly added that a representative from HUD attended and was impressed by the event and everything offered.

Motion to adjourn: Randall, Second – Molly. Approved. Meeting adjourned 3:50pm.

Next Meeting: October 17, 2023

Minutes Submitted by Liz Evans 9/20/2023

\*Minutes Amended to add Kevin Burch and Karla Hein