



# PPCoC Board Retreat Minutes

**Meeting Details:** Friday, August 23, 2024, from 8:30am-4:00pm at Greenway Flats

## Roll Call

Time: 8:30 am

**Board/Guests:** Anne Beer, \*Crystal Karr, Kristy Milligan, Shawna Rae Kemppainen, \*Paul Spencer, Jeff Cook, Allison Gross, Tandy Heath, Venita Pine, Becky Treece, Heather Ryan-Figueroa, Andy Barton, Velda Baker, Randi Davis, Stacie Kwitek, Erin McNab, Kira Zylstra (guest facilitator), Shawna Rae Kemppainen (contractor)

*\*Indicates ex-officio member*

**CHP Staff:** Amber Ptak, Mary Ellen Benson, Angela Roberts, Zephyr Smith, Jessica Davis

**Absent:** Kat Lilley, Haley Chapin (Sabbatical), Mary Beringer

## Current Business: Review/Discussion/Decision

**1. Welcome** 8:30-8:45am

**2. Overview of the Agenda and Objectives, Norms, and Housekeeping** 8:45-8:55am

*Jeff did a welcome and historical overview of Springs Mission Rescue and Greenway Flats.*

*Amber emphasized to the group that the retreat day will not include developing a strategy, making decisions on structure, diving into data weeds, or discuss governance. The intention was to develop a plan for the CoC to develop a new strategy and structure over the next 12-18 months.*

*Mary Ellen facilitated a conversation on Group Agreements for the retreat day.*

**3. Community Builder** 8:55-9:15am

*The board completed the creative community builder of Sketch Your Neighbor.*

**4. Reflections: Past, Present, Future** 9:15-10:30am

*Amber facilitated a discussion with Shawna on insights, opportunities, and other lessons that have emerged from their work over the last six months. These responses can be found in Appendix A of these minutes and a full detailed report of their work is expected soon – this report will be distributed to all board members via Basecamp.*

*Amber facilitated the same questions to the full board:*

a) In the last 12 months, what has caught your attention about the current state of the PPCoC?

*Responses included:*

- *There are few CEOs at the table, do we have the right players around the table? Discussion ensued about whether CEOs needed to be at this table and how current board members could create stronger connections with their CEOs to ensure discussions/updates are making their way throughout the organizations sitting at the board table.*
  - *The relationship with the CoC and the City is very strong and important.*
    - *How is information, storytelling and data being dispersed? How can we tell more proactive stories using HMIS data to drive the storytelling?*
  - *We are still missing key players around the table: faith community, education.*
  - *The lack of CHAP email not coming out regularly – we are missing important updates. New person starts 9/9, so these should pick back up then.*
  - *We need to center the shared vision.*
  - *There is a current lack of operational capacity- system wide, movement wide, and within the CoC.*
- b) Over the last year, what has emerged as key victories and/or wins for the PPCoC?
- *We currently have an engaged, present, and enthusiastic CoC board.*
  - *The PPCoC received increased funding.*
  - *There is a new alignment across projects (not just HUD programs).*
  - *Spending time to slow down and reflect on the strategy, vision, and voices.*
- c) Over the last year, what pain points and challenges have emerged? What is getting in the way of the PPCoC from doing its best work?
- *Who is controlling the narrative?*
  - *Capacity of the board members.*
  - *Not seeing the data or a lack of data.*
  - *Intentional communication between city managers, CEOs, managers to department staff.*
  - *Confusion as to who is the CoC, what is the CoC, the purpose of the CoC.*
- d) Given all you've heard, what insights or opportunities are emerging for the PPCoC?
- *Breaking down company/organization ego, looking at the whole picture of what is best for our community.*
  - *Wanting people who are doing the work at the table and board.*
  - *Expanding the table with intention, including those who will be productive for the CoC work.*
  - *Adjusting the strategic plan to adjust with the growing community- incorporating large corporations coming in. How can we think 10-20 years out?*

*The board answered the following question: In 10 years, what story do you want printed in the Gazette/Independent about the PPCoC? What is the headline and three to five elements of that story?*

*Kira synthesized and reported back with insights including vision and collective value, capacity and expertise in the community, radical collaboration and partnerships, and strengthening partnerships for the collective good.*

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| <b>5. Break</b>                   | 10:30-10:40am |
| <b>6. What's Possible? (Kira)</b> | 10:40-11:30am |

*Kira introduced Structure and Strategy for Effective Homeless Response, we must:*

- Have clarity on the federal requirements and parameters that apply;
- Consider the formal and informal functions of the homeless response system;
- Understand the array of options that are possible;
- Clearly define the decision points and process for the next 12-18 months; and
- Define the roles and responsibilities necessary during this exploration and recommendations phase effectively maintain the current work and reach a clear vision for a new strategy and structure

Kira highlighted the following priorities:

- Understand and operationalize the federal requirements and priorities,
- Build strategic partnerships,
- Strengthen community awareness and understanding of homelessness,
- Understand overall funding investments in the geographic area,
- Make meaning of data and use of data to inform regional decision-making,
- Develop regional standards and guidelines,
- Provide training technical assistance and support for regional partners and service providers, and
- Ensure authentic collaboration and shared leadership with people who have lived experience of homelessness.

Kira expressed to the board about understanding the options for a new PPCoC strategy and structure. She describes the structures and distribution of roles including how HUD regulates WHAT must be carried out by the CoC but does not set requirements on WHO holds which roles. Kira presented to the group possible structures and distribution of roles of the key system functions and potential agencies/entities.

Kira detailed the exploration and recommendations to move and transition the work forward. She highlighted that it will be critical to clearly define roles and responsibilities of everyone involved.

**7. Our Next Guest (Needs No Introduction)**

11:30-12:00pm

Mayor Yemi visited the PPCoC board retreat.

**8. Lunch + Activity**

12:10-1:10pm

**9. Sensemaking: Where Do We Go From Here**

1:10- 2:45pm

Kira asked the board members to reflect on the morning session. Questions that were asked to the board include:

What questions do you have?

Responses: How do we hold each other accountable after today? How do county and city work together to align with the CoC? How could CoC potentially align with the ROAC? What is our role? (individual and a whole). When do we get started? What role does CHP want to play? What budget do we have as a CoC? It costs more to do CoC than what is brought in. What are the gaps and how do we fill them? How do we get community support? Are we restructuring before creating goals or after?

What challenges do you see that you haven't heard of yet?

Responses: City/County/CoC connection and alignment; how to address the stigma about homelessness.

What new ideas have come to mind?

*Responses: City/County/CoC connection and alignment; ready for the change and getting started; opportunity to bring in more money; hearing each other and thoughts; true collaboration; prioritize functions.*

What's most important to the success of this process?

*Responses: Buy-in with goals, external help, expanded table, trust within board and community, streamline processes, build relationships, having a united voice to the community, alignment and collaboration.*

*The board members shared insight from the breakout activity, highlights include understanding the board's day to day oversight; needing clarity on the new group; difference between addressing homelessness and addressing housing.*

**10. Break** 2:45-3:00pm

**11. Next Steps + Future Workplan** 3:00-3:30pm

*Kira facilitated a conversation on next steps, including defining the roles and responsibilities of four key groups (CoC Board, Executive Committee, CHP, and the new strategy/advisory group). The board decided on forming a new group with the focus of establishing a work plan, creating next steps, and doing research within the community and other similar communities. Kira highlighted to the board about clarifying one or two goals that the CoC is truly articulating, pushing out to the public and driving in the day-to-day work. The Executive Committee will be temporarily adding Jeff, Staci, Randi and Becky to work through roles and responsibilities of all four groups.*

**12. Other CoC Updates (PIT, City Strategic Plan, Other)** 3:30-3:50pm

*Amber covered the PIT Press Release will be coming out next week. Amber highlighted the City Strategic Planning Meetings from the public, business, and providers perspectives. Amber talked about the positive impact of the June CHAP meeting for increased communication and membership engagement and asked Allison from TESSA if TESSA would lead a DV-focused CE system – Allison will get back to Amber by early next week. Andy covered information from NOFO. Amber talked about CHP staffing, including hiring Zephyr to lead the HMIS team, a new Community Relations Coordinator to support Scott's vacancy starting on September 9<sup>th</sup>, and the potential hiring of a fourth HMIS team member.*

**13. Celebrate Our Work Together** 3:50-4:00pm

*Amber closed out the retreat by asking the board members to reflect on their initial response to "In 10 years, what story do you want printed in the Gazette/Independent about the PPCoC? What is the headline and three to five elements of that story?" There was a positive reflection from the board members to close out the meeting.*

**Next Meeting:** September 27th from 11:30-1:00pm at Community Health Partnership

## Appendix A:

### Homelessness landscape scan, Pikes Peak Continuum of Care

*During the August 23, 2024, Pikes Peak Continuum of Care board retreat, CEO of Community Health Partnership Amber Ptak and I engaged in a Q&A about the landscape scan of homelessness in El Paso County, CO. Some of the discussion's allotted time at the retreat was bumped for the fantastic purpose of hosting Colorado Springs Mayor Yemi Mobolade into other discussion.*

*Post retreat, I revisited the questions. This document is the opportunity for the CHP team and PPCoC board of directors to glean initial insights. The format is written in first person as if Amber and I are having that full Q&A conversation. It may seem an unusual format, however, I hope it allows a glimpse into this work from an informal perspective.*

*A report with survey information, interview comments, research data and a formal summary is also being prepared.*

*Thanks!*

*Shawna Rae Kemppainen*

*8/27/24*

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**1. Describe your work over the last six months: what was the charge, how did you implement your process?**

- a) The aim of this work is to help the PPCoC and CHP gain perspective on how our community's current strategies, resources, services, and structures are working together on the challenge of ending homelessness in El Paso County.
- b) My intention is that the research provides both a close-up and zoomed-out view point supports this group to develop insights for future smart, deep planning on the next level strategy and structure for this CoC.
- c) From a process perspective ...
  1. We started with inquiry areas identified by board and CHP leadership.
  2. Did both qualitative and quantitative research. Time with CHP team on CoC ops, bigger org overall work approach, beginning with spending time with CHP's team on CoC operations as well as learning how the bigger organization worked across the board and how that related to the CoC program.
  3. Participated in board meetings, staff meetings.
  4. Created a questionnaire to guide conversations with nonprofit organizations, government staff; additional learning conversations. (Had 50%+ survey response rate; 13 interviews)
  5. Reviewed other homelessness and CoC operations, including 3 related to Colorado and Colorado Springs.

6. *Initial work to gather data on homelessness expanded providing support time for the Point In Time and Systems Performance Measures.*

**2. In the last six months, what has caught your attention about the current state of the PPCoC?**

- a) Both in community and within the board and CHP, the most exciting thing emerging is a deep clarity that this community is done settling for the status quo regarding how we address homelessness.

That doesn't always appear in a neat tone, but hunger for something different across constituencies is one of the best opportunities – but it carries risk if attention is not paid. (People not informed about complexities begin solutioning in competing resource space; the balance of seizing opportunity while also doing things thoughtfully is challenging)

1. Internally, this group is doing okay in the big squeeze space of paying attention to the future and taking care of the now. Of creating the conditions to dig deep planning key transitions while also making improvements in the current situation.
2. The PPCoC board is paying attention to and learning from the CHP team, building its capacity to think in a fresh way. The strategic systems work of CHP as well as their commitment to the PPCoC is an incredible benefit to the community.

**3. During your last six months of interviews, conversations, surveys, and observations, what has emerged as key victories and/or wins for the PPCoC?**

- a) The PPCoC brings federal resources into our community which otherwise would not be here. Not only for housing and support helping people move out of homelessness, but for community planning and coordination.

\$2.8 million this year otherwise would have been in local competition for government and philanthropic funds.

More supportive housing is going up, and the City and County see that as an important part of the affordable housing mix.

- b) The board is engaged in learning and thinking at a new level with support from CHP leaders. The chance to pause and consider beliefs and assumptions about the ways the CoC operates is helping members to more deeply connect and consider the future.

- c) CHP's team committed to the PPCoC's success. Observations:

1. High-quality data, and good relationship with HUD representatives;
2. Staying on top of new training and participating in statewide improvement teams such as COHMIS;
3. Leading the local improvement team working to prevent and end veteran homelessness;
4. Being supportive of and working with the youth homeless service organization to support an emerging Youth Advisory Board that would increase inclusion of people with lived experience;
5. Continued engagement with Community Solutions Built for Zero population data on youth and veterans.

d) This year caps off the PPCoC's second strategic plan since 2018. For the first time, it utilized evidence-based systems performance measures to review trends on a regular basis. While the measures used are not comprehensive for considering whole community context, building the habit of performance review and reflection is a positive step forward. There is community-wide interest in this type of information, and it provides the opportunity to shape narrative.

1. Four 2023 systems performance measure outcomes:

- a) 91% success rate for people who exit homelessness to permanent housing or who remained stably housed in permanent housing;
- b) 11.5% of people who exited homelessness entered some type of permanent housing (382 people), the lowest percentage since 2020;
- c) 128-day average wait time for moving people out of homelessness into permanent housing;
- d) 2,565 people were identified as being in homelessness for the first time representing a 5-year low in the PPCoC and a drop of 21% since 2020.

**4. During your interviews, conversations, surveys, and observations over the last six months, what pain points and challenges have emerged? What is getting in the way of the PPCoC from doing its best work?**

- a) Our own stories often get in the way of doing our best work. The PPCoC has the opportunity to consider a new way of describing itself, and building that muscle within the board and CHP staff first will begin to shift the narrative. Can this group shift from comments such as "HUD rules are such a pain," "HUD does not prioritize families" to an emphasis that HUD is a \$3 million a year partner helping the CoC to empower local organizations and community planning to prevent and end homelessness.
- b) This short point is deserving of a full report, which CHP's unique position could leverage if it is prioritized. Representation of diverse community needs to be addressed at every level of the PPCoC. Disparities for BIPOC and LGBTIQ+ people are expressed in homelessness data nationally and locally.
- c) While pausing to consider strategy and structure, the group is somewhat stalled in the middle of an important bridge. At the beginning, there were good individual programs that agreed to work more collaboratively. Now, there are some great individual programs and good community partnerships. There is positive energy aimed at building an effective, sustainable region-wide response to prevent and end homelessness. This is evidenced by comments and questions from board members and local government officials, and CHP is driving the inquiry in a thoughtful way. However, consider key efforts that could move the group toward the end of the bridge even while it does not know what comes after landing.
- d) There is a gap of keeping up with community organizations changing programs, how to access them, finding resources for clients. Several service providers mentioned the PPLD resource guide as useful as well as 211, but neither system is adequate in timeliness.

- e) Ninety percent of organizations in the nonprofit survey expressed that if we do not change the way we are responding and planning as a community, homelessness is going to get worse. Cited were conditions such as economic dynamics and low wages for people experiencing homelessness who gain jobs; low wages for staff positions and not enough staff; increasing stress of supporting clients the right and best way individually during a time when homelessness is a community focus but lacking education on the issue.
- f) There is a convening and advocacy gap for the PPCoC, whether it plays a central convening role or engages as a collective with a broader network. Providers are used to speaking to issues in community and media. However, there is a stated gap in planning how to advocate on issues, bring more people together, create a central voice on the issue of homelessness. One example is the cited need for deeper supportive housing interventions for people with mental health concerns or substance misuse who are not actively in recovery. This could be an issue that elevates housing needs within cross-system networks for hospitals or the education system in a way that gleans investment across the board.
- g) A common theme is the level of frustration regarding timely and transparent communications about data on homelessness. A descriptive statement was “the CoC is slipping.” PPCoC has been noticed in positive ways for being at the forefront of high-quality data collection and analysis. It was a Colorado early adaptor in the nationally funded Community Solutions “Built for Zero” model. However, utilizing information such as that in item 3 (d) could support a shift away from viewing homelessness as a personal flaw and point out the systemic issues.
- h) While the HMIS has high quality data, there are challenges in gaining participation in HMIS and engagement in Coordinated Entry. A stated gap was the staffing capacity issue in doing outreach with a clear value proposition. However, this also seems a potential fit for board member engagement. CHP continues to examine and address the capacity question regarding CoC operations.
  1. The CE lead staff identified 29 agencies with current or pending access to HMIS, and said 18 regularly attended CE. Ruther documentation notes that 4 of the 18 do not attend CE regularly.)
  2. Ithaka Housing, Partners In Housing, Mary’s Home at Dream Centers, and Family Life Services are currently not engaging in the CoC system. In conversations with the Family Solutions Collaborative, these organizations and dozens of others are participating in a monthly case conferencing focused on serving families with children. It is unknown whether families supported are also families who have utilized projects within HMIS.

**5. What insights are beginning to emerge for you as they relate to a future structure and strategy for the PPCoC?**

Our current reality is ripe for transformation. Working to prevent and end homeless is becoming a higher priority for communities in El Paso County, and especially Colorado Springs. NIMBYISM related to housing and fear of people experiencing homelessness is increasing among residents and businesses.

The expansion of affordable housing, temporary transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing has engaged regional, state and national resources. Local governments and philanthropists want to build capacity in



the nonprofit sector to elevate solutions. Homeless service providers want to make more of an impact to improve the health and housing stability of people at the cusp of or experiencing homelessness.

This is the time to uproot scarcity-driven mindsets, elevate efforts to engage across key systems as well as under-included community, learn from the factors which previously undercut sustained high-level collaborations, and, finally, commit to doing whatever it takes to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.

The new structure can shift what we call the continuum of care into a continuum of health and housing. Imagine that rooted in human development, underpinned by strong **systems performance, and uplifted with powerful stories of people, place and purpose.**