



Sonoma County Homeless Coalition Board

Homeless Coalition Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

1:00 – 4:30 PM, Pacific Time – Meeting held via Zoom

Zoom Recording:

https://sonomacounty.zoom.us/rec/share/biVj_RxdTPMmjjk8lk-Z2MbvqdKj2Z6hcD1yacHZHXZTYzSjINIWYyr43gCqxVfP.7F3IbXWHiZj9TGis?startTime=1772053107000

Passcode: &PDr#3aA

Welcome and Roll Call Introductions (00:02:13 – 00:09:42)

Chair Jennielynn Holmes called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM, and explained the Zoom rules regarding public comment and the Brown Act guidelines.

Chair Holmes introduced new Homeless Coalition Board member Cotati Mayor Sylvia Lemus, representing the cities of Rohnert Park and Cotati. Roll call introductions were made for each board member.

Present: Jennielynn Holmes, Catholic Charities | Caroline Bañuelos, City of Santa Rosa | Karen Nau, City of Petaluma | Sean Hamlin, proxy for Chris Coursey, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors | Martha Cheever, Community Development Commission | Stephen Zollman, City of Sebastopol | Dannielle Danforth, West County Community Services | Margaret Sluyk, Reach For Home | Chessy Etheridge, Adult Lived Experience Seat | Chris Cabral, Committee on the Shelterless (COTS) | Akash Kalia, At-large Seat | Ron Wellander, City of Sonoma | Rosie Traversi, Licensed Healthcare Organization Seat | Jessica Wolfe, Lived Experience Seat | Maria Rico, BIPOC Led/Serving Organization Seat | Ash Culver, Transitional-aged Youth Seat | Sylvia Lemus, Cities of Cotati/Rohnert Park

Absent: Chris Coursey, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors (sent proxy) | Angelica Smith, Tribal Seat

A quorum was present.

1 - 4. Approval of Consent Calendar (00:09:44 – 00:10:58)

- Chair Holmes presented the following consent calendar items for approval:

1. 3/25/26 meeting agenda
2. 2/25/26 meeting minutes
3. Summary of Follow-ups from the Previous Meeting(s)
4. Reports for Standing Committee Updates

Public Comment: None.

Motion: Martha Cheever moves to approve the Consent Calendar.

Second: Karen Nau seconds the motion.

Abstentions or Objections: None.

Motion passes. The consent calendar is approved.

5. Reports from Lead Agency Staff (00:11:00 – 00:29:26)

- **Department of Health Services (DHS) Director Updates:**
 - A study of the Department of Health Services conducted by consultant firm MRG has recently been completed. The resulting report includes a work plan for Homelessness Services which suggests direction and recommendations for the future. DHS Director Nolan Sullivan will present the findings of the study to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors (BOS) in the near future. The report is also planned to be shared with the Homeless Coalition (HC) Board at their March 25, 2026 meeting.
 - DHS Director Nolan Sullivan and a group of elected officials, including some HC Board members, have been meeting occasionally in an effort to become acquainted and to enhance engagement between cities and county. This ongoing dialogue serves to fill a need for executive level discussions about homelessness, particularly in identifying opportunities and best practices for partnership between cities, county, and the Continuum of Care (CoC). Joint Power Authority (JPA) models from other counties, notably Yolo and perhaps Solano, are beginning to be explored in consideration of governance options to foster collaboration and efficiencies.
 - Interviews for a Behavioral Health Deputy Division Director will begin on March 17, 2026. This position will guide the current DHS Homelessness Services Division as the division's transformation to become a section of the DHS Behavioral Health Division is implemented, and thereafter.
 - Director Sullivan presented and reviewed a slide depicting the 2025 Measure O Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) awards that were approved by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors in February 2026.

- **Coordinated Entry Advisory (CEA) Committee Open Applications & Selection Membership Ad Hoc Committee Formation:**

Jynessa Lazzaroni reported that applications opened on February 9, 2026 for elections to fill three (3) vacant seats on the Coordinated Entry Advisory (CEA) Committee. The application period will remain open for three (3) weeks, ending on Monday, March 2, 2026.

Staff request volunteers from the HC Board to form a Selection Membership Ad hoc Committee to review applications and subsequently advise the HC Board of their recommendations for three new members to join the CEA Committee.

Councilmember Zollman, Chris Cabral, and Rosie Traversi have volunteered to comprise the Ad hoc committee for application review.

Public Comment: None.

Further description is included within the packet of meeting materials, Item #5, pg. 10.

Informational item only; no action taken.

6. Lead Agency Evaluation Update (00:29:27 – 00:36:31)

- Jennielynn Holmes announced that the Lead Agency Evaluation Ad hoc Committee recently met with a United States Housing and Urban Development (HUD) technical assistant for guidance on finalizing a survey that has been in development. The purpose of the survey is to elicit public and stakeholder feedback for evaluation of the performance of Sonoma County as the Lead Agency. As there are no comparable endeavors within other Continuums of Care (CoC), Ad hoc members will be creating an original survey model that may subsequently also be utilized by other CoCs. There will be several components to the project, requiring a lengthier process than had been anticipated. The committee also plans to hold public input sessions with stakeholders. The original December 2025 draft timeline for completion of the evaluation has been necessarily delayed and is now proposed as June 2026. No dissent to the new timeline was expressed by board members.

Public Comment: None.

Further description is included within the packet of meeting materials, Item #6, pg. 12.

Informational item only; no action taken.

7. Rapid Rehousing (RRH) Hub and Spoke Consideration (00:36:38 – 01:12:15)

- Thai Hilton presented an overview of the Rapid Rehousing (RRH) program, which provides rental assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness for a period of up to two years. As directed by the HC Board in December 2025, the focus of the presentation was an analysis of the conceivable impact of implementing a “Hub and Spoke” model for

RRH funding, including evaluation of the related benefits, disadvantages, and alternative options to such a model.

Staff concluded that the hub and spoke model would not benefit administrative efficiencies for RRH. Alternatively, a single operator model may offer greater benefits.

The staff recommendation is for the HC Board to define the ultimate goal of further analysis and provide direction to the working group.

Chair Holmes exited the meeting for a short period. Vice-Chair Caroline Bañuelos presided over the remaining proceedings for this item.

Motion: Mayor Lemus moves that staff return to the RRH hub and spoke model and consider streamlining to one or two organizations, also looking at the vulnerability aspect, with consideration to which model might be more successful.

Second: Councilmember Zollman

Public Comment: Gregory Fearon

Objections/Abstentions: None.

Motion passes.

A full analysis for this item is included within the packet of meeting materials, Item #7, pgs. 13 - 15.

Chair Holmes returned to preside over the remainder of the meeting at the conclusion of this item.

8. 2026 Homeless Point in Time (PIT) Count Recap (01:12:17 – 01:15:21)

- Michael Gause reported that the 2026 Point in Time Count took place on January 30, 2026, from 5:00-10:00 am. Over one hundred and fifty (150) volunteers took part in the event. Preliminary results will likely be available in May 2026, with the full report expected to be released by September 2026.

Public Comment: None.

Informational item only, no action taken.

The Staff Report for this item is included in the packet of meeting materials, pg. 16.

9. 10-Minute Break: 2:15– 2:25 PM (01:15:26 – 01:27:08)

10. Word from the LEAP Board (01:27:09 – 01:42:55)

- Jessica Wolfe spoke about the vulnerabilities of individuals who are newly housed, and the importance of peer support in navigating housing successfully. Accessing CalAIM funding to increase peer support specialist certifications and positions within existing agencies may be a possibility.

Public Comment: Gregory Fearon

Informational item only, no action taken.

11. Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Development Data (01:42:58– 01:47:46)

- At the request of the HC Board, Thai Hilton made inquiries regarding the type of data utilized by affordable housing developers when deciding to develop a PSH project, and whether Coordinated Entry (CE) data was a factor in those decisions.

The inquiries revealed that there is no single data set relied upon by non-profit affordable housing providers, but rather, the availability of funding, along with the regulatory requirements of those funding sources, appear to be the determining factors for developers in pursuing a PSH project. The Coordinated Entry (CE) system is not involved until completed units are available and ready for referral.

Public Comment: Gregory Fearon

A summary for item #11 is included in the meeting materials packet, pg. 17.

Informational item only, no action taken.

12. Exploring In-Person Meeting Options (1:47:48 – 01:56:20)

- At the January 2026 HC Board meeting, members expressed interest in holding occasional in-person meetings, as well as in either adjusting the frequency of meetings to occur every other month, or retaining meetings on a monthly basis but to shorten the length of each to two (2) hours. For example, moving more items to the consent calendar could help to shorten the length of meetings.

The staff recommendation is to approve holding a minimum of two (2) in-person meetings per year, and to continue monthly meetings in a shortened, two-hour format. Ideally, a hybrid option to allow for virtual attendance would be offered for any in-person meetings, although technological challenges may arise that would need to be addressed. Additionally, staff would need to explore suitable locations for holding the in-person meetings.

Public Comment: None.

Motion: Rosie Traversie moves to have staff explore holding two (2) in-person meetings per year, continuing on a monthly basis but with a shortened two-hour format.

Second: Councilmember Zollman seconds the motion.

Objections/Abstentions: None.

Motion passes.

Additional information is available in the staff report for item #12, pgs. 18-19, in the packet of meeting materials.

13. 2026 Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Eval. Workgroup Selection (01:56:23 – 02:01:48)

- The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is expected to release a CoC Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) no later than June, 2026. In preparation for the release of the NOFO, staff recommends that the HC Board approve the formation of a CoC Program Evaluation Workgroup to conduct the review and evaluation of renewal and new project applications for the 2026 HUD CoC program competition. The workgroup would also provide their funding recommendations to the HC Board for final approval.

Councilmember Zollman and Jessica Wolfe volunteer to serve on such a committee.

Public Comment: None.

Motion: Councilman Zollman moves to approve the formation of a 2026 CoC Program Evaluation Workgroup.

Second: Martha Cheever seconds the motion.

Objections/Abstentions: None.

Motion passes.

Additional information regarding item #13 is available in the associated staff report, pgs. 20-21, in the packet of meeting materials.

14. Review Agenda for March & Future Coalition Board Meetings (02:01:51 – 02:03:51)

- Chair Holmes displayed the draft agenda for the March 25, 2026 HC Board meeting, and explained that this meeting may not conform to the the newly approved two-hour timeframe, due to the anticipated length of an agenda item for the review of the Homeless Services Report from the MRG consultant group.

Councilmember Zollman requests that DHS Director Sullivan provide the HC Board with a condensed version of his Measure O “Roadshow” presentation.

Councilmember Zollman requests an agenda item to address funding for peer support specialists.

Public Comment: None.

15. Board Member Questions and Comments (02:03:56– 02:10:36)

- Martha Cheever informed the HC Board of a new mixed-family status rule proposed by HUD in the Federal Register on February 20, 2026. There is a sixty-day public comment period.
- Michael Gause thanked Thai Hilton, Coordinated Entry Coordinator, and acknowledged his many accomplishments and countless contributions to DHS and the CoC. Thai will be taking a job with another County department, and will be leaving the Homelessness Services Division as of March 31, 2026.
- Chris Cabral mentioned that Medi-Cal rules for eligibility and maintaining enrollment will soon be changing and invites providers to join together to discuss developing a unified system for adapting to the upcoming changes.
- DHS Director Sullivan encourages the suggestion from Chris Cabral that providers get together in preparation for these changes. Some of the new Medi-Cal rules are ambiguous and haven't yet been clarified by the state or federal government. Medi-Cal and eligibility are administered through the Sonoma County Human Services Department (HSD) and their agency is also striving to navigate the eligibility rules.
 - Director Nolan plans to approach Partnership Health Plan (PHP) to request that funding or support be provided to create a community resource base for greater insight and clarification of the new rules.
 - An HR- 1 county work-study session will be presented in the near future to discuss the imminent impacts to programs such as Medi-Cal and Cal-Fresh. Director Nolan will provide the session date to the HC Board once it is determined.
- Maria Rico reports that there is funding available for Transitional Age Youth (TAY) for short-term rental assistance and wrap-around services for those registered with a federally recognized tribe.
- **Public Comment:** None.

16. Public Comment on Items not on the Agenda (02:10:37 – 02:10:53)

- None.

Adjournment: 3:09 PM (02:10:54 – 02:11:14)