

Greater Richmond Continuum of Care (GRCoC) Board
Monday, June 9th 2025; 9:30am; Zoom

Board Members in Attendance: Jovan Burton, Fletcher Johnson, Clara Stokes, Adrienne Cole, Beth Vann-Turnbull, Jessica Sagara, Shawntee Wynn, Robert Baez, Brian Davis, Katie Chlan, Rob Rowley, Matt Leslie, Kathleen Kramer, Celeste Anderson, Sherrina Sewell

Homeward Staff in Attendance: Kelly King Horne and Jen Johnson

9:31am: The GRCoC Board was at quorum and began the meeting.

9:32am Mission Moment:

Kelly discussed two major pieces of legislation: the bill passed by the House and pending in the Senate, which could lead to Medicaid cuts affecting homeless assistance, and the President's proposed budget for Federal fiscal year 2026, which includes funding for homeless assistance programs. She explained the multi-step process for allocating federal funding to homeless assistance programs, noting that the community applied for funding in 2024, with contracts beginning in July, and uncertainty around funding for 2025 due to potential rule changes and HUD's reduced staff. Kelly highlighted the importance of the competition for funding, mentioning that the community increased its points by 20 in the last competition, resulting in bonus dollars, and discussed the proposed budget for 2026, which would not affect the community until 2027.

Kelly discussed the potential impact of budget cuts on HUD-funded programs, including a reduction in housing vouchers and a shift in focus towards shelter-based solutions. She highlighted concerns about the proposed elimination of the Continuum of Care program, which would transfer decision-making power to states and reduce local coordination efforts. Kelly also warned that these cuts could exacerbate homelessness as the economy likely enters a recession, particularly affecting vulnerable populations without adequate support services or affordable housing options.

Kelly explained the process for enacting the President's proposed budget, noting that while it indicates the direction, it requires action from key Congressional committees, which currently lack Virginia representation. She highlighted the importance of the Continuum of Care (COC) program and mentioned a group of peers from COC lead agencies advocating against its potential elimination. The group is engaging with Congressional staffers to raise awareness about the community infrastructure at risk and pushing for a stronger negotiating position before budget bills are written.

9:55am Welcome and Consent Agenda:

Jovan welcomed members and motioned to approve the consent agenda. A motion was given by Brian Davis, and a second was given by Beth Vann-Turnbull.

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9:56am GRCoC Business

- The board approved the HCIS application for the City of Richmond, which had been previously out of compliance with data security requirements. A motion was given by Beth Vann-Turnbull and a second was given by Fletcher Johnson.
- They also approved updates to the HCIS grievance policy, which outlines procedures for handling grievances related to the homeless services database. A motion was given by Jessica Sagara and a second was given by Clara Stokes.
- The board filled three vacancies, approving Octavia King from the Salvation Army, Reverend Gwen from St. Paul's Episcopal Church, and Reggie Gordon, the President and CEO of the Richmond Memorial Health Foundation, to serve as vice chair. A motion was given by Clara Stokes, and a second was given by Robert Baez.
- Jen provided an update on Homeward's collaboration with the Knowledge Advisory Group to align emergency shelter policies and processes across the coordinated entry system. The team developed a new document outlining shelter bans and exit policies, which will be reviewed by the System Policy and Process Committee. Jovan asked about enforcement of these policies, to which Jen clarified that they are intended as best practices and guidelines rather than enforceable rules. Kelly emphasized the collaborative spirit of shelter providers working together to improve their systems, while Beth highlighted the intensive process involved in achieving alignment.

10:06am Discussion:

- Kelly announcing plans for the upcoming annual report, which will be released in October, and inviting input from attendees.
- The meeting discussed the situation in Ashland regarding its unsheltered population, particularly a group living in an environmentally sensitive creek. Kelly explained that the town recently passed an anti-camping ordinance and is working with a task force, including Dr. Patricia Cook, to address the issue. Daily Planet's outreach team has been actively engaging with the unsheltered individuals, while concerns were raised about the potential criminalization of homelessness and the impact of private funding for hotel stays. Jovan emphasized the importance of regional collaboration and offered support from the COC to guide Ashland in navigating this situation.

10:21am Updates:

The meeting covered several upcoming dates and events. The next general meeting is scheduled for August 19th, with the point-in-time count set for July 23rd and 24th. The next

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Board meeting is planned for September 8th. Kelly discussed plans for an annual summit, tentatively scheduled for October 8th or 9th, with a focus on finding an affordable location that can accommodate 150-200 people.

10:26am Adjournment

Next Board Meeting: 9/8/2025

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