



Council on Housing Stability  
**September 20, 2024**  
**10:00 AM – 11:30 AM**

MINUTES

**Members in Attendance:**

Mile Whitner  
Sean Toomey  
Andrew Dorsett  
George Copadis  
Katy Esterly Martey  
Katja Fox  
Latonya Muccioli  
Maria Devlin  
Anne Duncan Cooley  
Mayor Paul Callaghan  
Noah Hodgetts  
Maggie Pritchard

Patricia Tilley  
Christina Dotson  
Drew Holmes  
Rob Dapice  
Melissa Hatfield  
Matthew McCall  
Robert Mack  
Elissa Margolin  
Sue Fulton  
Eric Adams  
George Hansel  
Gene Patnode

**1. Approval of minutes from June 26, 2024, CHS meeting minutes – Melissa Hatfield, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Homeless Services, Department of Health and Human Services**

Melissa Hatfield welcomed all Council members. The Council on Housing Stability's June 26, 2024 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Questions or comments were welcomed.

**2. The NH Homeless and Housing Stabilization Services Training and Resources Library -**

Kirsten Barton, Housing Specialist, CDFA

- Kirsten provided the Council with background and an overview of the Training Library.
- Please reference the presentation [here](#)
- Promotional toolkits for distribution is available [here](#)

**3. NH Current State of Homelessness Roundtable -** Todd Marsh, President, New Hampshire Local Welfare Administrators Association; Maria Devlin, President and Chief Executive Officer, Families in Transition and Christina Dotson, State Homeless Education Consultant, New Hampshire Department of Education

**Todd Marsh**

- Different municipalities are approaching this differently.
- The welfare dept. is in the loop when conversations regarding encampments are transpiring
- Typically, complaints are driven by a business or property owner in Rochester
- Try to give a two-week warning spearheaded by an outreach worker.
- Providing services, especially wrap-around services.
- Focus on SUD - people need a place to go after clearing the encampment.
- Winter sheltering planning needs to start in July - not October.
- It is vital to have Municipal Welfare input.
- Todd has advocated for a spectrum of sheltering.
- City of Rochester: Provided \$310K to Hope for Now. Sheltered families from Rochester, Somersworth.

**Maria Devlin**

- FIT has 48 beds for families and 138 beds for adults
- Families are not likely to camp with other individuals.
- With sweeps - there is an increased demand for shelter beds.
- Shelters are full.
- The need exceeds the supply.
- Staff are turning people away - which will continue throughout the winter.
- Sweeping makes it challenging.
- Sidewalks become another encampment.
- FIT is required to provide bathroom facilities - but has exceeded capacity.
- Service animals are accepted - pets are not.

- Significant others - don't want to be separated in a sheltered environment- bunk beds are challenging - more space in a tent
- Biggest issue: When camps are swept, you lose people, which is tough for consistency.
- Medication is left behind, which is a big strain on the Medicaid program
- All state shelters are low-barrier shelters.

If they are coming out of treatment, the first 24-48 hours are critical to navigating a relapse. We need more options for post-hospital/respite care. People need an address to return to.

- [McClure Miller Respite House](#) Medically fragile and elderly

### **Christina Dotson**

- More and more families are doubling up.
- Families stay longer in compromised situations because of loyalty to a town.
- Increase in "camper living." Campgrounds are closing in two weeks - people are scrambling.
- People live in cars because they don't want to give up family pets.
- Increased purchase of sheds - without heat - set up in backyards.
- Space, heat, wifi are limited.
- Communication with parents is a struggle - pay-by-minute phones.
- Lack of privacy and space is a problem when students try to do homework.
- Students are stuck in the situation they are in.
- No cooking - it is expensive to be homeless.
- Stability is the basis for success

### **Nicole Johnson**

- Consistency is lost when encampments are swept.

### **4. Pathways to Removing Obstacles to Housing (PRO Housing) Update** - Katherine Easterly Martey, Executive Director, Community Development Finance Authority

#### [PRO - housing - grant opportunity](#)

- Removing barriers to housing stability.
- Applying for \$5 million in three areas of work: Reducing local and state regulatory barriers so more affordable housing can be built.
  1. Education and Training
  2. Policy
  3. Implementation

1. **Housing Academy:** This program engages local municipal officials and provides them with support, education, and training to apply to their community. The challenge is for municipalities to understand what is in front of them.
2. Create a **small-scale developer training academy.** The greatest opportunity is small buildings.
3. Equitable access to housing- **Fair Housing Council**
4. **Workforce Housing Coalitions** (3) in the state. Proven to be effective at supporting housing. Want more funding to create more of those.
5. **Converting single-family homes** - try to convert SFH into multi-family units

6. **NH Housing Toolbox** - change local ordinances to be more pro-housing.
7. **Septic Requirements:** Reduce barriers to construction
8. **ADUs:** Competition for ADU design in Keene. There is financing from Dover that allows you to build an ADU
9. **[Housing Champion Bill](#):** The rules were approved. Houses become designated champions and receive funding. We are looking to release the application in the next few weeks.

#### **5. COC Update - Melissa Hatfield, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Homeless Services**

- HUD released a new funding opportunity.
- Applicants can apply for up to \$5 million to build or acquire permanent supportive housing.
- HUD is prioritizing states that are rural and low-population areas = NH
- Manchester/FIT has a piece of land available, so they propose developing two separate buildings.

#### **6. New Hampshire Housing Rob Dapice/Dee Pouliot Update**

- NHHFA issues  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the state's vouchers.
- The cost of supporting tenants has increased
- There are currently ~ 12,000 people on the waiting list - typically pull 900-1000 off annually.
- HUD is working with NH Housing to prevent a shortfall in funding, preventing NHH from pulling people off the list through this calendar year.
- NH Housing can give certain applicants priority. People who are rent-burdened or at risk for homelessness currently have an estimated wait time of 6-8 years for a voucher, but due to program funding and low attrition, they could wait a decade.
- NH Housing has a priority preference for applicants eligible for a Medicaid waiver program under 1915i. The estimated wait time has increased from 6 months to 1-2 years.
- 300 people currently on the waiting list who are 1915i.
- Considering capping that preference at 50 - those not selected might have to wait 2-3 years.
- NHH does not know where people are coming from.
- With 12,000 on the waiting list - the 1915ic have a priority preference. Other preferences include applicants who are homeless, rent-burdened, victims of domestic violence and veterans.
- This preference was adopted in 1995 - these policies and preferences must be examined.
- We need more vouchers and funding
- Our section 8 vouchers are 4,000.
- Without a housing subsidy - we are stuck.

#### **7. Adjournment**