

COC September 2023 Minutes

09/05/2023

Members Present:

Bruce Spangler | A Place to Stay
Katelyn McGuire | TVCH
Nikki Lynn | TVCH
Hollie Adams | TORCH
Angela Stolpe | United Way of Blount County
Tiffany Higgenbotham | VA
Allie Cohn | Creating Homes Initiative – Ridgeview Behavioral Health
Tonya Polidoro | MATS
Taylor Pierce | MATS
Sascha Henderson | CHI 2.0 Regional Housing Facilitator – McNabb Center
Melina Politte | Haven House
Kennith Hawkins | Choice Health Network/Positive Living
Kimberly Terry | TVCH
Micah Barnwell | Cherokee Health Systems
Hollan Kasper | Oak Ridge Housing Authority
Shannon Dow | McNabb Center
Ticca Hartsfield | Haven House
Katie Williams | Legal Aid of Mid TN & The Cumberlandands
Mona Drummond | Haven House
Lisa Buhl | Volunteers of America
Sabrina Seamon | Clinch Powell
Bobby Eason | Foothills Community Development

Call to Order: Tonya Polidoro – Governing Council Chair

Called the meeting to order 10:00 a.m.

Welcome: Tonya Polidoro – Governing Council Chair

Good morning. Thank you, guys, for being here. We're happy to see you guys for another month. I missed the in person meeting, so I really thank Katelyn for taking that on.

Partner Spotlight: Creating Homes Initiative – Office on Housing and Homeless Services.

Allie Cohn
CHI Regional Housing Facilitator
Region 2
cohnab@ridgeview.com
865-399-3144

Sascha Henderson
CHI 2.0 Regional Housing Facilitator
Region 2
sascha.henderson@mcnabb.org
865-255-7001

My name is Allie Cohn, I am the regional housing facilitator for Region 2 which encompasses Knoxville and the 12 counties that Tennessee Valley inhabits. This also includes Scott, Roane and Morgan. I am based out of Ridgeview.

I am Sasha Henderson. I am the T2 regional housing facilitator here in Region 2. I am employed at the McNabb Center but also work all throughout the region with different partners.

Allie Cohn | Creating Homes Initiative – Ridgeview Behavioral Health:

Our initiative is based out of the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services and we are a part of homeless and housing services.

We are a part of the Creating Homes Initiative (CHI). This initiative was created over 20 years ago in response to the lack of safe, decent quality, permanent, and affordable housing options for persons with mental illness in Tennessee.

Sasha and I cover Region 2. There are 7 regions across the State. They are aligned with the planning and policy councils which Sasha will show you later. Our task is to collaborate strategically and assertively with partners to leverage and secure funds and other resources that will allow us to help create and preserve safe, quality, affordable and permanent housing options for Tennesseans that are experiencing mental health illness or co-occurring disorders.

CHI Beginnings:

Feb. 2000: The current Commissioner, Marie Williams is the person who originally started the Creating Homes Initiative which we lovingly refer to as she.

Sep. 2000: \$2.5 million seed funding included in state budget. That was when the first team of regional housing facilitators were hired.

CHI has consistently met expectations and even surpassed them over the past 20+ years. The initiative is regarded as a highly successful model for using regional facilitators as a tool to leverage multiple funding streams. As a collective, we have created much needed housing opportunities for the most marginalized individuals and families across Tennessee. You will lovingly hear this referred to as Commissioner Williams “baby”. It is a very successful program that is highly regarded in the State and has received funding every year from our governors. The model is regional housing facilitators like Sasha and myself are basically a tool for our communities. We provide free consultation services that help to leverage funding from multiple different sources. Through that leveraging and our consultation and support with agencies, we have been able to create housing opportunities for some of the most vulnerable and marginalized individuals and families across Tennessee.

Sascha Henderson | CHI 2.0 Regional Housing Facilitator – McNabb Center:

Marie Williams was so successful in 2020 CHI expanded to CHI 2.0 with the goal of developing new safe, quality, permanent, affordable housing options for Tennesseans with substance use disorder, primarily opioid use disorder, but any substance use disorder is an eligible project. When CHI 2.0 was first created, they were able to hire 7 CHI 2.0 Substance Use Regional Housing Facilitators throughout the state. Mainly, with that expansion, there is also an announcement of funding that organizations can apply for. So, there is another round of competitive grants that comes out annually. Organizations can apply for those, either for Infrastructure and/or Supportive Services.

The infrastructure is a one-time funding where they can either require new property, build from the ground up, or renovate a property that they already own. The Supportive Services can be anything from drug screens to helping with transportation or funding for a house manager. Any of those things that might be recurring funds year after year.

After the CHI 2 expansion, they expanded into CHI 3 in 2021. The goal of CHI 3 is:

- *Developing safe, quality, affordable permanent housing opportunities for Tennesseans experiencing mental illness and/or substance use disorder who re-enter the community from prison or jail, or who have a history of incarceration. (Re-entry focus).

- *Provide ongoing operations for newly created housing opportunities.

- *Provide support services to benefit residents of newly developed housing opportunities.

NOTE: There are no CHI 3.0 Regional Housing Facilitators – if interested in applying, please reach out to Allie Cohn or Sasch Henderson.

Allie Cohn | Creating Homes Initiative – Ridgeview Behavioral Health:

The department has three different grants opportunities:

- *Creating Affordable Housing (CAH)

- *Brick and mortar for new units-doesn't have to be a new building, it can be rehab but its specifically for units that have not previously been used for individuals with a mental health diagnosis or co-occurring disorder.

- *Mental health diagnosis or co-occurring disorder

- *Creating Homes Initiative 2.0 (CHI 2.0)

- *New construction, renovation, or acquisition

- *Recurring supportive services

- *Opioid Use Disorder or Substance Use Disorder

- *Creating Homes Initiative 3.0 (CHI 3.0)

- *New construction, renovation, or acquisition

- *Recurring supportive services

- *Individuals who have been justice involved

- *Current or prior history of incarceration

Sascha Henderson | CHI 2.0 Regional Housing Facilitator – McNabb Center:

CHI Statistics: Since 2000 more than 34,700 new or improved housing opportunities. More than \$1.2 billion leveraged from Federal, State, Local, Foundational, and other funding sources.

CHI Facilitators:

- *Hands on collaborators with grassroots community partners and task forces to stimulate the preservation, development, and enhancement of housing options.

- *Team of Facilitators have affordable housing development expertise.

- *Identify and recommend financing strategies and grants to provide support for the development of permanent housing options and associated support services.

- *Conduct assessments to identify current availability and unmet need for permanent housing and support services.

- *Grant writing and consulting

- *Consumer Housing Specialists

Allie Cohn | Creating Homes Initiative – Ridgeview Behavioral Health:

The list below will give you an idea of different partnerships that we, as chief facilitators, interface with when it comes to creating and developing these types of housing opportunities for

individuals across Tennessee who are experiencing mental health illness, co-occurring disorders, or substance use disorder and/or re-entry:

Federal Home Loan Banks
HUD/CoC
Tennessee Housing Development Agency
City/Local Governments
Community Housing Development Organizations
Public Housing Authorities
USDA
Tax credits
Private banks
Foundations
Habitat for Humanity
Private contributors
Churches
Property Owners (Equity, Mortgage)
Behavioral Health Service Providers
Substance Use Treatment & Recovery Service Providers

So now we are going to talk about some of the projects that have been funded and are now operating that came out of funding partnerships with the Creating Home Initiative.

The first one is Caswell Manor, which is a 48-unit permanent supportive housing development that was done through Volunteer Ministry Center. This included Federal, State, City, and private funds.

Another one is Dogwood Springs which was done through McNabb Center. It is housing for seniors. 50 new housing units. Some of those units are allocated specifically for individuals with a mental health or co-occurring disorder, and substance use disorder. This included CAH and CHI 2.0 funding and Leveraged funding from multiple funding streams into one project.

Sascha Henderson | CHI 2.0 Regional Housing Facilitator – McNabb Center:

Another project is The Cabin. This is in White Pine through 4th Judicial Recovery Services which serves Jefferson, Grainger, Cocke and Sevier counties. Purchased “The Cabin” in 2014, closed in 2020 due to Covid 19. They used CHI 3 funding to renovate the cabin. They had their ribbon cutting 2-3 months ago. 10 new units for women and their children.

Tonya Polidoro | MATS

Can anyone come to “The Cabin”?

Sascha Henderson | CHI 2.0 Regional Housing Facilitator – McNabb Center:

Their beds are just open for folks coming through their recovery courts. But we can always reach out and see.

The next one is The Lighthouse. This is a project through True Purpose Ministries-Madisonville. CHI 2.0 funds utilized for acquisition and renovations. 20 double occupancy rooms = 40 new units of housing for individuals and couples. They were able to hire a program director with funds for supportive services.

Newly Funded Projects in TVCH Counties:

- McNabb Center – Blount County Recovery Home – 10 new beds (CHI 2)
- McNabb Center – Claiborne County Recovery Home – 8 new beds (CHI 3)
- Recovery Trial – Sevier County – 2 new homes – 16 new beds (CHI 2&3)
- Safe Harbor of Jefferson County – 3 new homes – 48 new beds (CAH)

Within Region 2, there were an additional 7 projects in Knox County that were funded this past grant cycle. Funded organizations include Volunteers For Recovery, The McNabb Center, Susannah’s House, Angelic Ministries, The Steps House, and Knoxville Leadership Foundation – creating a total of 109 new beds in Knox County.

Katelyn McGuire | TVCH

For the recurring, like supportive services type funding, is that competitive each year? Or is that just a renewal?

Sascha Henderson | CHI 2.0 Regional Housing Facilitator – McNabb Center:

It’s not competitive. If you have been awarded it once, I believe the State sends out a statement of need. I’m not sure what the actual form is, but something saying “yes, we still need the funds”. Once you have been awarded, they typically give you the green light year after year.

Individual Agency News/Updates/Agency Successes:

Shannon Dow | McNabb Center

I just wanted to speak a little more about what Sascha spoke about in regards to us receiving the CHI 2.0 funding. We were able to acquire a facility or location that will house 10 available units with the possibility of expansion as the location does allow for other units to be added. We will have our ribbon cutting on the 14th of this month and on the 18th move our first participant into the house. It is a female, and this will house females who have co-occurring disorders, substance use disorder as well as mental health disorders, and they all do have a history of being incarcerated as well.

Katelyn McGuire | TVCH

TVCH has partnered with a couple of local restaurants to get food that would otherwise be thrown out. One of the restaurants is Cheddars. They are providing so much food that we have a surplus. We have about 200 pounds of sauces (think marinera) and baked potatoes. We are looking to pass it off to organizations. Please connect with us if anyone knows of local churches or organizations that make hot meals. Baked potatoes could be a quick and easy side to reheat. It is all frozen. We have connected with A Place To Stay and we will be providing sides for their sos day coming up. If you have any events coming up or know of any local agencies that have events where meals are being served, please contact us.

CoC Data Report: Nikki Lynn – Director of Date Management TVCH:

	HUD UDE ONLY	Additional ONLY	HUD Verification ONLY	OVERALL
GRADE BASED ON COUNT FOR EACH ELEMENT:	B	B	B	B
	93.72%	93.03%	90.38%	92.86%

Data Element	Required for	Number of Applicable Entry Exits	Number of Non-Null Values	Percentage Complete
*HUD Universal Data Elements:				
Disabling Condition (Y/N)	All	211	197	93.36%
Length of Stay in Previous Place	Adults/HoH	183	80	43.72%
Relationship to Head of Household	All	211	197	93.36%
Additional Data Elements:				
Income Received (Y/N)	Adults/HoH	183	169	92.35%
Non-Cash Benefit Received (Y/N)	Adults/HoH	183	166	90.71%
Covered by Health Insurance (Y/N)	All	211	195	92.42%
HUD Verification: (Elements measure completeness at entry ONLY)				
Disability Type	All	211	180	85.31%
Income Source	Adults/HoH	183	166	90.71%
Non-Cash Source	Adults/HoH	183	168	91.80%
Health Insurance Type	All	211	188	89.10%

The thing we specifically need to look at is Disabling Condition: You can see the number of Applicable Entries is 211. 197 of those numbers were Non-Null. That means they have something in them. Which is good, but it is not 95%. 95% is the data quality threshold.

Length of Stay in Previous Place: We need that information because that determines chronic homelessness and determines eligibility for things like permanent support of housing.

Relationship to Head of Household: We understand that this is a little bit of an issue due to how you are entering families in. But hopefully, we can address that in the next month with the training that I am going to talk about.

Income Received: Make sure you are checking that box Yes or No.

Non-Cash Benefit Received: Yes or No

Covered by Health Insurance: Yes or No

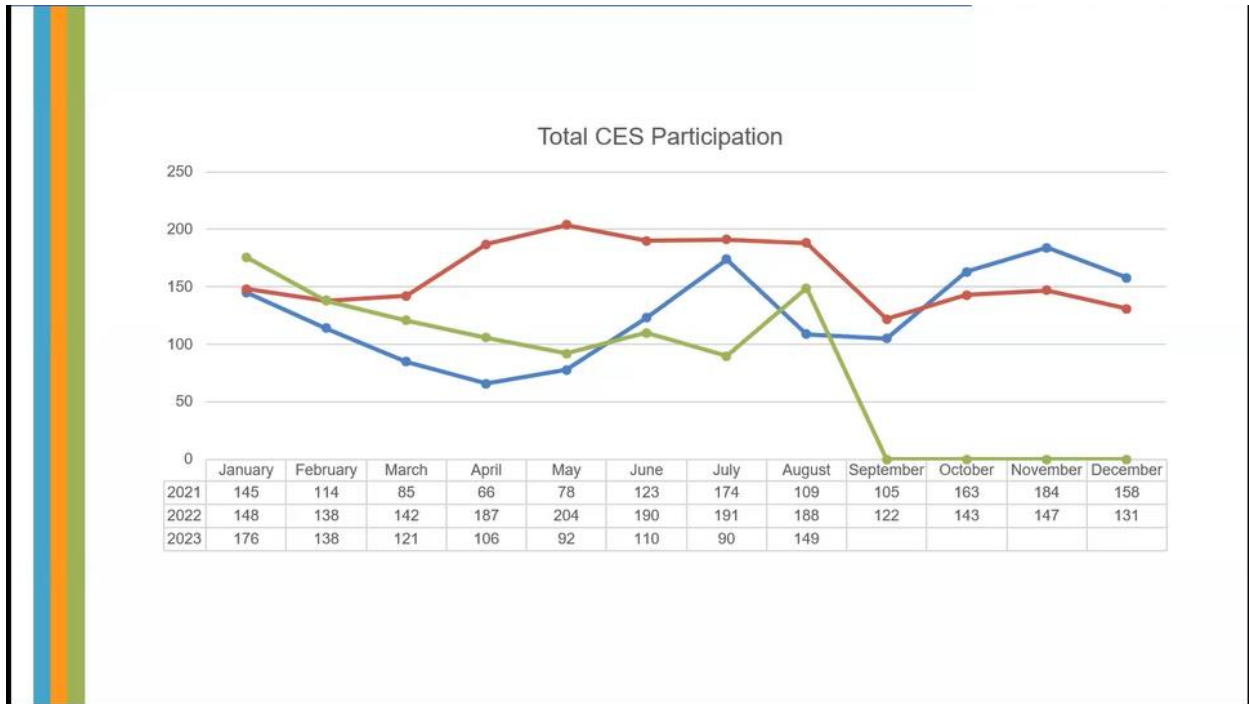
Those directly feed into the next section of HUD verification. It will ask you for any other program other than coordinated entry to break down the type of disability. That is going to help us determine whether people will qualify for programs.

Income Sources and Non-Cash Sources give us a breakdown of where their incomes come from, how sustainable it is and what kind of benefits they are getting.

Health Insurance Type: What kind of resources can our programs help provide to fill in those gaps for our neighbors?

These pieces of data are very relevant to you all, but it's important to track them in HMIS because we have to have the numbers to back up our request for funding. The only way we

can produce that is by having it in HMIS and having it completed and accurate as possible. Nikki has really high standards, but 95 is what HUD wants.



You can see we had 149 coordinated entries this month. That is a drastic increase from last month. You can see the plateau and the peaks happen around the times that kids are out of school. That is something Andy (TORCH) and I would like to focus on.

CES by County for the Previous Month:

- Union 0
- Sevier 5
- Monroe 0
- Loudon 0
- Jefferson 6
- Hamblen 34
- Grainger 2
- Cocke 2
- Claiborne 0
- Campbell 0
- Blount 2
- Anderson 32

149 Coordinated Entry Program Intakes

655 Unduplicated Individuals served in August.

Help Line IVR System: 835 Help Line phone calls in August. Avg. 27 calls per day

<u>Name</u>	<u>Total Calls</u>	<u>Avg. Calls/Day</u>
ARCH	25	.81
Buffalo Valley	30	.97
Chattanooga	46	1.48
HART	28	.9
Knox	91	2.94
Memphis	7	.23
Nashville-Murfreesboro	20	.65
TN Homeless Solutions	17	.55
TVCH	344	11.10
No Answer	47	1.52

I do want to point out that we have a partner in our CoC called Live Free. They service folks that are coming out of incarceration and getting them into housing, so that might be a resource that we can spread some love to in Claiborne County to try to get some coordinated entry information into HMIS. If you have questions about that, feel free to reach out to myself or Kaitlyn and we can get you in touch with the individual.

Built for Zero Fall 2023 Learning Session Washington DC September 20th-22nd

We did have hotels allotted for our CoC. Those spots have been filled. The conference itself is free. You will need to arrange your flight or driving transportation there and hotel stay. If you have any questions, let me know. Built for Zero is a fantastic partner with our CoC and they are doing great work in coaching us.

Required!!!!

HMIS New Data Standards Training

Look for an email from Nikki with dates to register for by Friday.

We will be going through coordinated entry, how to put those in and what the new assessments for HUD programs, PSH, Street Outreach and Emergency Shelter.

Katelyn McGuire | TVCH 2023 NOFO Update

*NOFO, Notice and Timeline are available on the website below and were sent via CoC Email Listserv

*Applications Submitted:

5 Renewal Applications

1 CoC Bonus New Project Application

*Full Application to be posted to website for CoC review by September 24, 2023

* The TVCH website will be updated accordingly to reflect CoC Program Competition information. Please check regularly for updates.

<https://tvchomeless.org/continuum-of-care/cocnofo2023/>

Nikki Lynn | TVCH
HUD Housing Problem Solving Workshop

Katelyn, Macrea, Allie Cohn, Kimberly Terry and I attended the HUD Housing Problem Solving Workshop. It was a 12-week housing problem solving workshop where we attended a session with communities all across the country.

What is Housing Problem Solving?

A system-wide approach for people experiencing a housing crisis that involves strengths-based conversations to empower households and help them to remain in current housing or to identify alternative housing options to either avoid homelessness or to exit homelessness as quickly as possible.

HPS at the Program Level

BEFORE	NOW
Are you willing to enter shelter or receive a motel voucher?	What can we do to keep you from becoming or remaining homeless?
What programs are you eligible to enter and who has a bed?	What would resolve your current housing crisis?
Assessment/eligibility	Brain Storming and structured problem solving conversation about household situation and resources.
Intake or put on waitlist	Support crisis resolution to avoid shelter entry. Allow for client centered empowerment.

Lessons learned from workshop:

- *Goals to make equity-centered education available to CoC members
- *Goals to evaluate and improve Coordinated Entry processes to ensure equity, inclusion, and person-centric policies
- *Goals to incorporate more individuals with lived expertise to bring valuable perspective and input to conversations around CoC systems.

If you have folks that have successfully exited your program and are stable and would be interested in participating as part of the CoC; remember that those membership fees are waived and we would love to have them on board to give us the community as a whole some perspective on the programs that we are offering and the help we are offering.

Katelyn McGuire | TVCH
Member Suggestions for 2024 CoC Trainings

As we near the end of 2023, we are looking ahead to 2024.

Suggestions are welcomed for suggested trainings that the CoC can offer to CoC members.

Examples of trainings could include additional HMIS training, Equity training, and more.

If there are any trainings that you believe other CoC members could benefit from already happening in your community, please forward information to Katelyn McGuire at kmcguire@tvceh.org to distribute information to all CoC members. This information will likely be sent out at the beginning of the month with the CoC meeting agenda.

Please discuss desired trainings withing your organization and submit suggestions to Katelyn McGuire at kmcguire@tvceh.org.

Also, at the beginning of each of our meetings we have Partner Spotlight. If you are interested in being a Partner Spotlight, please reach out to us. Those Partner Spotlights are typically 10 to 15 minutes, talking and detailing about what you do as an organization, what type of work you do in the community, where you could use support from the CoC and how you support the CoC.

If you believe anyone would benefit from coming to these meetings, feel free to invite them. This is an open meeting. It's open to the public. You do not have to be a paid member to attend. You just have to be a paid member in order to vote on policy and procedures, and things like that.

CoC Committee Updates:

HMIS & Data Management – Andy O'Quinn andy.oquinn@oakridgetorch.org

Coordinated Entry Committee – Aaron Davies/Tiffany Higginbotham
aaron.davies@mcnabb.org

Shannon Dow | McNabb Center

Aaron wasn't able to attend the meeting today but he wanted me to inform the group that the Coordinated Entry Committee is awaiting coordinated entry standards from HUD. Once this is received, they will meet at the end of October.

Tiffany Higginbotham | VA

Aaron has given his resignation for this committee, so I am going to be the new lead of this committee. We would love to have anyone that is interested in participating and helping us out to make sure the CoC is following those HUD standards, but also just improving our coordinate entry efforts and helping the most vulnerable neighbors get housing.

PIT/HIC Committee – Nikki Lynn nlynn@tvceh.org

The PIT/HIC Committee will be meeting on September 13 2023 at 1:00 pm. It will be a Google meet Link. It's available on our CoC calendar.

Rank & Review Committee – Allie Cohn cohnab@ridgeview.com

The Rank & Review Committee did meet on Friday where we held interviews with applicants and reviewed project applications. We are planning to meet again this week to make sure we have our rankings in order before we send out anything publicly for the CoC to post on the website.

Homeless Awareness & Advocacy Committee – Katelyn McGuire kmcguire@tvceh.org

The Homeless Awareness & Advocacy Committee is meeting September 12 2023 at 2:00 pm. That will be a virtual meeting. If anyone is interested in learning more about this committee and becoming a part of it please feel free to reach out to me.

Tonya Polidoro | MATS

Nikki, how many agencies enter data into HMIS?

Nikki Lynn | TVCH

Right now we have 4-5 and that is not nearly enough to cover our CoC. In fact, we have counties that are not represented at all.

Closing: Tonya Polidoro – Governing Council Chair

Tonya closed the meeting at 11:00 am
Some chose to stay for the Discussion/Questions.

Discussion/Questions

Oftentimes, there is stigma and assumptions made about those who receive homeless services from organizations that can cause conflict within communities. Has your program or organizations received pushback in your community for providing homeless services? If so, how did you address this?

Shannon Dow | McNabb Center

I can speak a little bit about Blount County. In Blount County there is a stigma, but it has come a long way in the past 10 years. Before it was like “that’s just a couple of people, that’s not really a problem here”, because it doesn’t look the same as it would in an urban community. So, helping people to understand what homelessness looks like in rural counties has been something we have had to educate the community on as well as understanding. Oftentimes people will say “there are lots of jobs that are hiring now. Why can’t someone get a job and therefore get housing?”. That has been something we have heard for several years. So, helping people to understand what it is like to live in poverty and homelessness, what that entails, and what navigating the varying systems that someone would have to come out of homeless is what we have had to do. I would say in Blount County we have come a long way. We have a group of volunteers who specifically focus on outreach to address homelessness to people who don’t quite understand the needs and how someone can find themselves in homelessness.

Nikki Lynn | TVCH

I was just going to mention in my personal experience right now and in Knox County at least, having governments understand and realize just how close anyone can be homeless. They think if you have got a job, then you don’t have to worry about it. They think that the cost of housing isn’t an issue because it’s keeping up with the market. The pushback that I am seeing is a lot from community governments not advocating as well as they should. I think a lot of that is because they don’t have that understanding of how easy it is to

1. to become homeless
2. most people in the United States are 2 months at most away from being homeless or one emergency over \$500 away from being in a very precarious situation.

It is definitely a lot of couch surfing, precariously housed and that is something that HUD does not consider technically street homeless. So changing that perspective is very difficult, especially with local governments.

Tiffany Higgenbotham | VA

I think homelessness has a PR problem. There has been research about homelessness. It was in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey in Texas. It was Sean Griffith who worked for the City of Knoxville. He found out the city ended up housing 100s of people after Hurricane Harvey in a very short amount of time. It was attributed to the perception was changed because before they viewed the people that were experiencing homelessness as stereotypical homeless persons. And then after Hurricane Harvey, they viewed them as neighbors and their friends. I think that if we can change that perception and specifically to veterans. I've heard veterans experiencing homelessness used politically for positive and for negative. I've heard "homelessness amongst veterans has reduced about 55% since 2010" which is absolutely true. And then I've heard some people say, "well, there are still 33,000 homeless veterans in this country. Isn't that horrible?" It is simply a PR problem. So how can we address that? It is worth a good brainstorming.

Katelyn McGuire | TVCH

That is what I am really hoping that the Homeless Advocacy and Awareness Committee can work on doing. Coming up with those ideas and brainstorming and inviting people to the table who have that expertise as well as outreach.

Tonya Polidoro – MATS

With our Hamblen County Government, there has been some pushback with MATS in the past and with the soup kitchen down the street. Sometimes in the beginning, it was hard to get a little bit of an ear. But I just worked really hard to have one on one conversations and that has really done a lot in changing people's perceptions. In Hamblen County, for the majority of them, they don't want to see handouts. What do I mean by handouts? They are more supportive of agencies that are working to fix the problem, not just put a band aid on the problem. Trying to work to teach people how to be self-sufficient rather than how to continue to be reliant upon the system. That is really what MATS is about. We are working hard to help them overcome barriers. Anyone, it doesn't matter. If they land here, we are trying to help figure out what are the barriers. So now I have gotten really positive feedback from a lot of people here and in our county government office.

The next meeting is:

October 3, 2023, at 10:00 am.
Virtual

Dates for the upcoming COC meeting

November 7, 2023, In person

December 2023 – No Meeting