



Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness

313 Luck Avenue, SW | Roanoke, Virginia 24016 | P: 540.343.4417 | F: 540.343.4416 |



Pursuant to the City of Roanoke Emergency Ordinance adopted by the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) Board on April 23, 2020 and 2020 Virginia General Assembly legislation H29 enacted April 24, 2020, the November meeting of the Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness will be held virtually via GoToMeeting on Friday, November 13, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

Under the current State of Emergency, and until further notice, it has been deemed unsafe to assemble a quorum of a public body in one place. All materials made available to the members will be made available to the public at the same time by posting on the RVARC website

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions – Paula Prince, BRICH Chair
2. Approval of Meeting Notes – October 2020
3. Domestic Violence Service Provider Update – Stacey Sheppard, TAP & Captain Jamie Clay, Salvation Army
4. Update on Isolation Facility and Hotel Work – Jeanne McCormack, ARCH
5. Housing Trust Fund Applications & Letters of Support – Jeanne McCormack, ARCH & Hope Browning, CCS
6. Roanoke City Schools Homeless Students Report – Malora Horn, RCPS
7. Community Outcomes Report – Ben Bristoll, CHRC
8. Other Business: Downtown Transportation Letter of Support, PIT Planning
9. Announcements
 - Virginia Governor’s Housing Conference: virtual, November 18-20. Registration available at: <https://www.vaghc.com/>
 - Homeless Memorial Services: virtual, December 21st at 11:00am; next regular meeting January 8, 2021
10. Adjourn

In accordance with adopted procedures, the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) Regional Planner III, Bryan Hill will provide public notice of this by posting it on the Commission’s website <https://rvarc.org/community/homelessness>. Matthew Crookshank, Blue Ridge Continuum of Care Coordinator, will be the host for the virtual meeting. Members of the Board and the public will be able to access this meeting through GoToMeeting, either by clicking on the web link below (preferable) or by dialing in using the phone number (for listen-only participation). Access information is as follows:

For computer, tablet or smartphone users:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/344145973>

For dial-in access only:

Phone: (571) 317-3122

Access Code: 344-145-973

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www.rvarc.org/homelessness
www.endhomelessnessblueridge.org



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Friday, October 9, 2020

ATTENDANCE	-	Amanda Sparks	X	Anne Marie Green	X	Joyce Earl	-	Kathleen Guilliams
P = Present	-	Angela Penn	-	Dani Poe	-	Jo Nelson	X	Captn Russell Clay
- = Absent	X	Annette Lewis	-	Dave Prosser	-	Judy Smith	-	Pamela Hall
	-	Lt. Pulley	-	David Bustamante	-	Judy Hough	X	Paula Prince
	X	Ben Bristoll	X	Dawn Riddle	X	Keith Holland	-	Sally Putnam
	X	Bill Duncan	X	Debbie Brown	X	Kristin Adkins	-	Sherry Stull
	-	Brian Geiser	-	Felicia Prescott	-	Leah Gibson	-	Sheryl Walters
	-	Bruce Phipps	X	Hope Browning	X	Lee Clark	X	Tanyia Jones
	X	Bryan Hill	X	Isabel Thornton	X	Leslie Leedy	-	Jensen Mellnick
	-	Carla Wallace	-	Jim Weber	X	Malora Horn	-	Helen Ferguson
	-	Chelsea Pardue	-	John Garland	X	Matt Crookshank	-	Reagan White
GUESTS	X	Jeanne McCormack, ARCH						

- **Welcome and Introductions – Paula Prince, BRICH Chair**

- Today’s meeting was virtual. The agenda and September minutes were distributed to BRICH members prior to meeting.
- Anne Marie Green motioned to approve the September BRICH minutes; Tanyia Jones seconded the motion.

- **Homeless Data Integration Project Feedback**

- The CoC will have to approve participation in the state’s Homeless Data Integration Project.
- Areas of concern were:
 - Agencies not wanting to share data and the impact on funding
 - Andriea Ukrop needs to provide more detailed information on data sharing and privacy agreements
 - Privacy consideration with information going to the state
- The advisory committee is working on details of the privacy agreement. Ben Bristoll will discuss the final agreement with the CoC and the CoC will present a recommendation to BRICH.
- Tanyia Jones asked that the Veteran’s group receive the agreements as early as possible to allow for sufficient time to go through channels for approval.
- Sharing information with the state is great, but BRICH must ensure data is secure and private. There will be opt outs for individual agencies not wanting to participate.
- Client data will be in the state system but information will not be accessible to anyone outside of our CoC; only demographic information will be used for reports.

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- **Isolation Facility and Hotel Update – Jeanne McCormack, ARCH**
 - Canteen has been providing three meals per day and drinks to hotel clients. The change has reduced stress on Trust House staff trying to pack drinks and breakfast items.
 - Policies and procedures for hotel clients have been strengthened. Clients are given three chances to change bad behavior before given notice of being discharged from program.
 - Problematic behavior has gotten better recently. A good response system is in place, and case managers are alerted if there is a problem.
 - The two hotels are staying at full capacity. To date, there has been only 1 COVID-positive case in the community’s homeless population. This individual is currently in isolation at Trust House.
 - Trust House is trying to hire four P/T temporary employees to provide coverage at the hotels at all times. Temp agencies do not want to return calls when mentioning ‘working with homeless’. Express Pros temp agency assists the Rescue Mission on occasion and was suggested as a possible solution.
 - Matt Crookshank and Anne Marie Green met with Roanoke County Police Chief, Roanoke County Attorney and Assistant Attorney and Fire Marshall to discuss how to deal with hotel 9-1-1 calls. The meeting went well. The Police Chief prefers staff members be called to de-escalate situations versus using security guards. Staff are better trained to deal with the situation.
- **Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Update – Keith Holland, Rke City**
 - Round 1 of Roanoke City’s Cares Act funding (\$525,434) was allocated in April to ARCH for the hotel program.
 - Round 2 of Cares Act funding has allocated \$500,000 to six agencies with about \$300,000 still available: TAP Rent/Mortgage Program \$200,197, TAP DVS \$89,657, Rescue Mission \$120,146, Legal Aid \$25,000, Family Promise \$15,000, and CHRC \$50,000.
 - TAP Rent/Mortgage Program currently has state funding that can assist Alleghany County. When those funds are depleted, ESG funds will assist Roanoke residents only.
 - November 19 is the ESG annual meeting for FY2021-22 funding which is expected to be \$152,000. The second Monday in January will be the deadline for applications.
- **Transportation Center Discussion – Paula Prince, Chair**
 - It was suggested that the BRICH provide a letter to City Council and the Planning Commission supporting a downtown transportation hub location. Residents downtown don’t want homeless/low income persons hanging around.
 - Discussion was held supporting a downtown location regardless of where it is physically placed. If it was not downtown, it would be more difficult for the homeless population by creating extra bus changes.
 - Debbie Brown motioned to send a Letter of Support from the BRICH to the Planning Commission and City Council noting in order to serve the homeless population, the bus station

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needs to be centrally located in downtown for easy access to services. Annette Lewis seconded the motion. No one opposed - three BRICH members abstained from voting.

- **Roanoke City Schools Homeless Students Report – Malora Horn, RCPS**

- A September Homeless Student Report was distributed to members via email.
- Currently, there are 295 eligible students identified. With students going virtual, families are moving around more frequently.
- Roanoke City Schools is placing many wi-fi ‘hot spots’ around the area to assist students with internet access.
- Malora Horn anticipates students will have different needs than in the past due to virtual learning.

- **System Performance Report – Ben Bristol, CHRC**

The HUD year ended September 30, 2020. The performance report was reviewed.

	<u>YTD 2019</u>	<u>YTD 2020</u>
Avg length of stay	79 days	115 days
Total Sheltered Homeless Persons	2,121	1,454
First-Time Homelessness Persons who entered ES, SH, or TH during the period	2,340	1,596
Persons who exited program(s)	2,072	1,318
Persons prevented from becoming Homeless through financial assistance	1,002	860
Persons placed in permanent housing Through Rapid Rehousing programs	344	303
Persons provided permanent Supportive housing services	225	185
Single-Day count of homeless school- Aged children	Sept 30 19	Sept 30 13

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- **Other Business**

- The Virginia Governor's Housing Conference will be virtual on November 18-20. Registration is currently open and scholarships are available.
- TAP and the Salem VA Medical Center will host the annual STAND DOWN on November 9th at the Salem Civic Center. There will be no vendors and Covid19 protocol will be followed. Bus transportation for veterans will be available at hotels and other service provider locations. Flu shots will also be available.
- CCS is looking at HMIS software change. New software will have more features and more user friendly. A demonstration will be held in the future as progress develops.

- **Adjourn - The next meeting of the BRICH will be November 13, 2020.**

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October 23, 2020

Dr. Paula Prince, Jefferson College of Health
Sciences, Chair

Annette Lewis, Total Action for Progress

Bill Duncan, Blue Ridge Independent Living
Center

Brian Geiser, Roanoke City Sheriff's
Department

Jennings Tardy, City of Roanoke Police
Department

Matt Crookshank, City of Roanoke

Anne Marie Green, Council of Community
Services

Dave Prosser, Freedom First Credit Union

David Bustamante, Roanoke Redevelopment
and Housing Authority

Dawn Riddle, Alleghany County/Covington
Social Services

Judy Hough, City of Salem

Dr. Judy Cusumano, Jefferson College of
Health Sciences

Malora Horn, Roanoke City Public Schools

Bryan Hill, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional
Commission

Brittany Huffer, Blue Ridge Behavioral Health
Care

Tanyia Jones, Salem VA Medical Center

Carly Villarreal, Carilion Clinic

Debbie Brown, Greene Memorial UMC

Isabel Thornton, Restoration Housing

Keith Holland, City of Roanoke HUD
Community Resources Division

Pam Hall, Lewis Gale Hospital Alleghany

Members of the Roanoke City Planning Commission and Members of Roanoke City Council,

I am writing today on behalf of the Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness (BRICH) to voice our support of the new municipal transportation facility being located in downtown Roanoke. The BRICH facilitates and coordinates our region's efforts to prevent, treat, and end homelessness and serves as the governing board for the Blue Ridge Continuum of Care (CoC) planning process. The BRICH includes the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke; the cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem, and the towns of Clifton Forge and Vinton. The BRICH is composed of members from the general public, local governments, mental health agencies, state and federal programs, non-profit organizations, businesses, and colleges and universities throughout the Roanoke region.

A bus station centrally located in downtown Roanoke best supports the needs of individuals experiencing and at risk of homelessness in our region. Nearly 60% of individuals without housing on any given night in our community rely on public transportation as their primary means of accessing critical resources. Many others walk to agencies and service providers located in and near downtown.

These resources in the downtown community provide a critical support network for our consumers and include emergency shelters, food pantries and meal sites, medical care facilities, public benefit offices, mental health support organizations, and others. Having the transportation hub at a downtown location reduces the number of transfers individuals have to make in accessing these resources and makes navigating the complex transportation system much less burdensome.

Locating the new facility at a site outside of a centralized downtown location would make our work much more difficult. It would also place additional stress on our un-housed neighbors who are already struggling to meet even their most basic needs.

We hope you will join us in ensuring the needs of all of our community members are met, especially the most vulnerable, and support the new transportation facility in being located in downtown Roanoke.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula L. Prince".

Paula L. Prince PhD

Chair, Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness

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