



**DRAFT**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE  
HOMELESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HAC)  
TOWER 101-101 NE 3<sup>RD</sup> AVENUE  
SUITE 1100 CONFERENCE ROOM  
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33301  
THURSDAY, APRIL 9, 2026 – 1:00 P.M.**

<b><u>Committee Members</u></b>	<b>Attendance</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Paula Yukna, Chair	P	13	1
Robin Martin, Vice Chair (arrived at 1:12 pm)	P	12	2
Ray Dettman	P	13	1
Michael O'Brien	A	12	2
Amy Schimelfenyg	P	13	1
Colby Williams	A	10	4

**Staff**

Marie Joseph, Homeless Initiatives Coordinator  
Carole Mitchell, Homeless Initiatives Program Manager  
Olivette Carter, Assistant Housing and Community Development (HCD) Manager  
Porshia Garcia, Community Services Department (CSD) Director (arrived at 2:34 pm)  
Jorg Hruschka, Chief Volunteer Services (arrived 1:12 – 1:20 pm)  
Katrina Johnson, Acting Assistant CSD Director

**Others**

Greg Hunt  
Chris Smith  
Tony Docal

**I. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Yukna called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

**II. Determination of Quorum**

Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

### **III. Public Sign-In**

### **IV. Approval of March 2026 Minutes**

**Motion** made by Mr. Dettman, seconded by Chair Yukna, to approve the minutes of the March 2026 meeting. In a voice vote, the motion passed.

### **V. Agenda Items**

#### **a. City Data and Program Updates:**

##### **i. FixIt FTL, HB 1365, and Homeless Concern Data**

Ms. Mitchell provided an overview of March 2026 statistics, reporting:

- 131 total homeless-related requests, with an average closure time of 29 hours for those specific to HB 1365
- An increase from the previous month, which had 76 homeless concerns, one homelessness outreach inquiry, and 18 concerns related to HB 1365
- A higher volume of concerns continues to come from Districts 2 and 4

The discussion focused on tracking increases in service requests, response times, and geographic trends, particularly as they relate to the implementation and impact of HB 1365.

##### **ii. Community Court Data & May 8<sup>th</sup> Employment Fair**

Ms. Mitchell provided an update on March Community Court activity, reporting 321 total visits, with the most common needs identified as shelter/housing, SNAP benefits, and substance abuse/mental health services. Mr. Dettman inquired about places where the unhoused can receive their mail. Ms. Mitchell confirmed this remains a need, noting that limited options currently exist. Staff will work to better capture this need when registering individuals during Community Court.

The Committee reviewed data provided on Notices to Appear (NTAs) with 968 issued in the first quarter and 981 in the second quarter, totaling 1,949. Mr. O'Brien and Ms. Joseph clarified the requirements for NTA graduation, with Ms. Mitchell noting that final determinations are made by the judge.

Ms. Mitchell also announced the upcoming Community Court Job Readiness and Employment Resource Fair on May 8, reporting a positive response from the community with 16 confirmed vendors to date and a goal of 20–30 total. Chair Yukna raised concerns regarding challenges individuals face without a permanent address, and Ms. Mitchell explained that the invitation to the fair was distributed to community service providers to

share with potentially eligible participants accordingly. Committee members were encouraged to attend the event and observe Community Court operations.

iii. Shared Housing

1. Standards of Care Guidance – HOSS-D/PONG

Ms. Mitchell reported that the Standards of Care guidance for shared housing (HOSS-D/PONG) has not yet been released but is expected to be available next month.

2. HomesUnited Ministries, Inc. – City Service Agreement

Ms. Mitchell reported that the City will move forward with a service agreement with HomesUnited Ministries, Inc., which is scheduled to be considered at the City Commission regular meeting on April 21 at 6:00 p.m.

iv. Safe Parking Program

1. LifeNet4Families Safe Parking Project Summary

Ms. Mitchell provided an overview of the LifeNet4Families Safe Parking Program, noting it is scheduled for the April 21 City Commission meeting. The program is designed to serve families with minor children, with the goal of assisting at least 20 families during the contract period. Requirements include vehicle registration, a valid driver's license, and insurance, with up to 120 days allowance to obtain these if needed. Staff are also exploring funding options to help participants meet insurance requirements.

Chair Yukna and Vice Chair Martin raised concerns regarding the lack of detailed data, including the number of individuals served nightly, overall capacity, length of stay, and measurable outcomes. Vice Chair Martin expressed frustration that the report provided by LifeNet4Families did not provide sufficient information to evaluate return on investment or program effectiveness, particularly given reports that only a small number of families are being served. He emphasized the need for clearer reporting and a stronger connection to the continuum of care, including wraparound services.

Mr. Dettman suggested deferring City Commission action until more complete data, including standards of care, is available. Ms. Schimelfenyng echoed concerns about the lack of outcome data. Ms. Mitchell responded that the program includes case management aimed at transitioning participants to stable housing and noted prior success with a state funded program.

Further discussion highlighted concerns about program barriers, eligibility requirements, and whether the program is reaching the most vulnerable populations. Vice Chair Martin reiterated the need for more detailed reporting and evaluation metrics, while Mr. O'Brien suggested reviewing best practices to improve service

delivery. Overall, the Committee expressed a desire for more comprehensive data and clearer performance measures before fully assessing or expanding the program.

Mr. Dettman and Chair Yukna initially made a motion to postpone the Safe Parking Program item on the City Commission agenda to allow the Committee more time to review program details. However, following discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

Mr. O'Brien expressed disagreement with moving forward, stating the Committee still did not have the full information package previously requested. Regarding HomesUnited Ministries, Inc., Vice Chair Martin raised continued concerns about the program's effectiveness and cost, noting questions about return on investment, reliance on funding sources, and the need for clearly defined standards of care. He also questioned whether the services had been competitively procured and emphasized the importance of having detailed data and written documentation to ensure the program is effective.

Ms. Mitchell explained that both HomesUnited and LifeNet previously presented to the Committee and that staff are working to carry out the direction provided, noting that similar programs operate on a per person/per night reimbursement model. Ms. Schimelfenyng acknowledged the 70.73% housing success information provided for HomesUnited but noted that the timeframe for outcomes (3.5 months) was still limited.

Overall, the discussion reflected ongoing concerns about data, program structure, and accountability, with members emphasizing the need for more detailed reporting and clarity before feeling fully confident in the program.

## 2. LifeNet4Families – City Service Agreement

The discussion regarding the LifeNet4Families City Service Agreement was incorporated into the broader Safe Parking Program discussion and was not addressed separately.

### v. Broward Partnership (CHAC) – Proposed Shelter Bed Expansion FY27

Ms. Mitchell reported on a proposed plan to expand access to shelter beds as part of a future decision package. Vice Chair Martin noted the current cap of 200 beds at Broward Partnership and Ms. Mitchell acknowledged that discussions are underway at a higher level to potentially increase that limit. Vice Chair Martin suggested that the City consider amending the ordinance to allow capacity based on fire code and building limitations, with prior discussions referencing a potential increase to 300 beds. Vice Chair Martin requested that this item remain on future agendas for continued updates, and Ms. Mitchell agreed.

vi. Rotary Connection Bus – CDBG Applicant & FY27 Projections

Ms. Mitchell reported that an application has been submitted for FY27 CDBG funding to support the Rotary Connection Bus program.

vii. HAC Team – Amendment to Existing Resolution

Ms. Mitchell reported that the requested amendment to the existing resolution regarding HAC terms is scheduled for consideration at the City Commission meeting on May 5.

viii. Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery

Ms. Carter reported that the program is moving forward, pending approval of a purchase order to begin the first phase, with work underway in coordination with contractor IEM and a projected start in late May. Vice Chair Martin noted ongoing discussions regarding potential housing strategies, including the purchase and renovation of buildings. Ms. Carter confirmed that these options remain under consideration, with approximately \$18 million allocated for affordable housing initiatives.

**b. Homeless Advisory Committee:**

i. Proposed: Strategic Plan to Address Homelessness

Ms. Mitchell noted that Rachel Williams was unable to attend and requested feedback from the Committee on the development of a strategic plan to address homelessness, referencing the Homeless Advisory Committee's original purpose established in 2023. Mr. Dettman and Chair Yukna agreed that the Committee should move forward as a group in providing input, while Ms. Mitchell clarified that the City does not have an existing plan in place.

Mr. O'Brien emphasized the need for accurate and comprehensive data, noting that current dashboard figures may not fully reflect the work being done, particularly by police, and may not be sufficient to evaluate return on investment. He stressed the importance of both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Ms. Schimelfenyng echoed concerns regarding the need for accurate counts of the homeless population.

Vice Chair Martin referenced Broward County's 2025 point-in-time count and suggested using the County's plan as a baseline for comparison with the City's efforts. Additional discussion included reviewing strategies from other municipalities, such as the City of Hollywood. Chair Yukna concluded by emphasizing the Committee's role in providing clear advisory recommendations to the City Commission on the creation and implementation of a strategic plan.

ii. Open Discussion

None.

**VI. Public Input**

Mr. Chris Smith, a commercial property owner along US1 and surrounding areas, expressed significant concerns regarding the increasing impact of homelessness on his properties. He reported spending substantial amounts—approximately \$150,000 annually on security—due to issues such as individuals sleeping on-site, safety concerns for tenants, and damage to facilities. He described inconsistent responses when contacting non-emergency police services and shared specific incidents that raised concerns about response times and handling of situations. Mr. Smith noted that conditions appear to be worsening and some unhoused individuals are becoming more aggressive, impacting tenants' sense of safety. While he stated he finds the FixIt FTL app helpful, he also expressed concern about potential retaliation when reporting issues.

Vice Chair Martin thanked Mr. Smith for his comments and encouraged him to connect with his commissioner or a Police Department supervisor. Mr. Dettman noted the high volume of calls handled by the Police Department and explained the role of the HOT Team, encouraging direct contact with a supervisor for assistance. Mr. O'Brien recommended utilizing the FixIt FTL system for reporting concerns and commented on the broader impact these issues have on the City's image. Staff also offered to connect Mr. Smith with the HOT Team for additional support.

Mr. Greg Hunt commented that he could have participated in the job fair if earlier requests had been addressed and shared a recent personal safety concern involving an encounter with a homeless individual. He also noted that, in his view, there appear to be available shelter beds, referencing an empty dorm at the Homeless Assistance Center (HAC).

Vice Chair Martin clarified that the situation is more complex, explaining that while the HAC may show unused space at times, it operates under a cap of 200 individuals with approximately 160 beds, and availability fluctuates based on population mix and ongoing renovations that temporarily reduce capacity. He added that, on paper, the facility is considered full, which is part of the reason discussions are underway to amend the ordinance governing capacity.

Vice Chair Martin emphasized the need to establish a timeline for developing the strategic plan, suggesting the Committee use Broward County's plan and data as a foundation to build a more coordinated system. Ms. Mitchell proposed that Mr. Martin share the Point-in-Time (PIT) count data with her so it can be distributed to the full Committee. Vice Chair

Martin also requested additional details on the City's existing plan, while Chair Yukna asked for historical data on homeless population trends over the past several years to better inform planning efforts.

## **VII. Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MAY 14, 2026, AT 1:00 P.M.**

[Minutes prepared by J. Burnham, Prototype, Inc.]