



Central MS CoC Membership Meeting Minutes

DATE: April 17, 2025
TIME: 10:00 am
FACILITATOR: Melvin Stamps

Roll Call

Members participated in roll call via sign-in sheet and chat.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the January meeting were approved.

Guest Speaker

Christina Bach, Interim Director for Catholic Charities — Christina Bach introduced herself and shared her background. She provided an overview of Catholic Charities' mission and programs and introduced her staff who were present at the meeting. She explained that, through their Kinship Navigator program, Catholic Charities can provide assistance with rent, repairs, and legal matters for those caring for family without receiving Child Protective Services assistance. Tony Tate is the director for the Disaster Response program and the Coordinator for the Central Kinship program. Catholic Charities is looking for a new director for the Born Free New Beginnings program which strives to help babies not be drug addicted at birth and provide sober living to mothers prior to and after birth. Zuleania Travis, the shelter director at Jackson Victim Services, explained that they provide emergency shelter and transitional housing for 30-45 individuals. The Jackson Victim Services only serves those abused by their intimate partner or spouse. For domestic violence victims fleeing from out of state, Jackson Victim Services must receive a referral from the out of state domestic violence shelter in order to serve them. In Mississippi, once you cross state lines, domestic violence victims are considered as "homeless" and cannot be served under domestic violence programs. The PowerPoint presentation will be emailed after the meeting.

CoC Match Requirements

Melvin Stamps explained the purpose of CoC programs and what match is and why it's needed. Match for CoC grants is typically 25%, either cash or in-kind. Match is needed to show the community is invested in the homeless response system.

Reports from Standing Committees

Reports from the committees were emailed prior to the meeting.

Strategic Planning/Housing subcommittee — Michelle Shelton answered questions regarding the landlord referral program.



Central MS CoC Membership Meeting Minutes

2025 Unofficial PIT Count Results

Melvin Stamps expressed that the 2025 PIT Count was the best one yet and the importance of an accurate Count. Mr. Stamps explained that four information sessions were held at New Jerusalem Church prior to the Count and the PIT Count was featured in various forms of the media, including the Clarion Ledger, Mississippi Today, other news stations and on the radio. He noted that the CoC saw an increase in those identified as experiencing homelessness in Vicksburg. Earnest Mack shared an **unofficial** unsheltered Count: 127 individuals, including 7 in Warren County, 2 in Rankin County, 111 in Hinds County, 5 in Copiah County, and 2 in Madison county. A comparison of the 2025 PIT Count to previous years will be prepared once the Count has been finalized. The sheltered count is not yet available. It was noted that, while many people were found at Sheppard's Gym, not all were experiencing homelessness.

Mississippi Home Corp 2025 Con Plan

Melvin Stamps provided an overview of the Mississippi Home Corporation's 2025 Con Plan and explained how to submit comments and express concerns. Go to <https://www.mshomecorp.com/2025-2029-consolidated-plan-draft-available-for-public-input/> for more information.

Federal Budget Cuts & Impact on CoC Programs

Melvin Stamps explained how budget cuts may affect CoC and other local programs. Mr. Stamps answered questions. A member suggested that letters be sent to local government officials. Melvin Stamps noted that he had previously sent letters to some officials. **A motion was made and approved to send a letter to the governor informing him of the effects of budget cuts on the local homeless response system.**

Approval of Revision of CoC Bylaws

Michelle Shelton explained that a copy of the bylaws was emailed with the board's recommended edits prior to the meeting. The membership discussed any concerns regarding each of the three recommended edits then voted on each change individually. The following is a summary of the changes. Please see the approved bylaws for the complete wording.

- 1) Participation in PIT Count required for good standing — approved unanimously. Melvin Stamps expressed the importance of this requirement and explained how he would address any violations.
- 2) Local government liaisons can be replaced if no longer able to serve on the CoC Board (previously only if no longer in position) — approved unanimously.
- 3) Reduced number of Board members needed for quorum from majority to 20% or at least 3 board members — approved by majority, 1 opposed.

House Bill 1197 & 1203

Melvin Stamps expressed concerns regarding the implementation of these house bills noting the pros and cons of each house bill (HB). HB1197 has been signed by the governor and goes into effect on July 1st. HB1203 has not yet been signed by the governor. The membership was allowed to express their concerns and comments regarding the bills and what the CoC could do. The CoC will create an informational flyer to



Central MS CoC Membership Meeting Minutes

pass out to unhoused individuals to ensure awareness of what's coming. It was emphasized that the unhoused are a part of the public. Members expressed concerns especially regarding having enough shelter space and those who cannot handle congregate shelter. Freddric Brandon informed members that individuals convicted of violations for these laws can work off their sentence at Stewpot Community Services. Michael Thomas explained that, when Florida enacted similar laws, the state provided \$10 million to local CoCs for housing.

It was decided that a letter would be sent to the governor to express concerns regarding the upcoming signing of the bill. The CoC Board will work towards holding a news conference regarding the negative impact these bills will have on the community. Central MS CoC will coordinate with the other two CoCs however possible.

Statewide Community Resource Event & Employment Expo

Michelle Shelton reminded everyone of the upcoming event, Empowered to Achieve Mississippi. She answered any questions members had.

HMIS Admin / Data Analyst Report

Mary Elbert informed attendees that "Let's Talk About It" will be held next week regarding changes. She noted that data element changes will soon be in place due to the new Administration. All end users should attend the meeting. Updates will be provided as they become available.

Coordinated Entry Report

Shalisa Gaines provided an overview of the accomplishments made by Coordinated Entry (CE). The following data was provided: 111 entered into CE (57 male; 54 female; 1 transgender); of the 111 entered into CE, 27 were assessed, prioritized, and referred (14 accepted into housing program, 7 rejected); 90 were incarcerated, self-resolved, or unknown. She noted the counties from where the client originated. Mrs. Gaines explained that case managers are present at The Bridge every Monday which has improved follow-up and expedited the connection with housing resources. A detailed report can be emailed.

Director of Planning Report

Melvin Stamps, for the PD report, shared the CoC's system performance measures for 2023 and 2024. The CoC saw improvement in most areas. He emphasized that to improve the CoC needed to focus on improving data quality, increasing system-level coordination, making use of the system performance report, and training staff on how to improve in the system performance measures. The full PowerPoint presentation will be provided via email, so all members can review it in detail. Mr. Stamps invited members to email him any suggestions or comments on how the CoC can continue to improve. He answered any questions members had.

Treasurer's Report

The End of Year report was shared via email prior to the meeting. The 1st quarter report will be emailed once available.



Central MS CoC Membership Meeting Minutes

Open Forum/Announcements

Jan Hillegas encouraged attendees to participate more in the meetings and invited everyone to the Capitol on Saturday, April 19, 2025 at 1 pm for a rally to express concerns regarding the current Administration.

Next Meeting

The next membership meeting will be held on the third Thursday in July.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.