



OFFICE OF MAYOR DONNA DEEGAN

HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVES COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Friday, September 12, 2025

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Committee Members

PRESENT:

Shantel Davis, Chair
Christopher Crothers, Vice Chair
Jitan Kuverji, Secretary

Dr. Megan Allyse
Jolita Wainwright
John Trevathan

ABSENT:

Council Member Jimmy Peluso (Liaison)
Commander James Ricks (Liaison)

Capt. Jennifer Parramore (Liaison)
Rev. Katie Moorehead Carrol (Excused)

COJ Support Staff:

Kaylee Jones (HCDD)
Shannon MacGillis (OGC)

Guests Present:

John Wyche, Citizen
Peter Hicks, Youth Crisis Center
Darrell Dow, Trinity Rescue Mission
Brenda Boydsen, Salvation Army
Jeremiah Stokes, City Rescue Mission
Keith Biggers, Salvation Army

Chris Hagan, Southern Group
Farebe Abrar, First Coast News
Cory Haynes, JASMYN
Peter Stasi, City Rescue Mission
Dr. Tracye Polson, Mayor's Office

Meeting called to order by Shantel Davis, Chair, at 1:00 p.m.

I. Public Comments:

Ernest Smith Urban Core CPAC provided a public comment card (on file) and left the meeting before he could present his comments.

II. Youth Crisis Center (YCC):

Peter Hicks (YCC):

- Requested funding to add 4 beds to House of Hope, an emergency shelter for ages 18–24.
- Expansion would serve ~60 youth annually, though actual numbers vary by length of stay.
- Program currently \$187k short to open this year.



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- Security costs are ~\$120k annually (recurring expense); even maintaining 9 beds would require ~\$130k.
- Other grant requests are pending, but outcomes are uncertain.
- YCC is also launching The Mills Program, expected to create additional funding gaps.
- Reported 62 youth served last year with 9 beds; 62 served again as of July 1, 2025.
- YCC employs ~82 full-time staff and has a partnership with FSCJ.

Commission Questions & Comments:

- **John Trevathan:** Questioned why costs nearly double without a proportional increase in youth served. Expressed concern over expenses but acknowledged the importance of funding the security gap.
 - **Peter Hicks:** Noted additional costs like employees, security, etc.
- **Jitan Kuverji:** Asked about recurring costs, alternate funding sources, and requested demographic data on encampments (Kaylee Jones, staff, to provide).
- **Shantel Davis:** Asked why 4 beds were chosen for expansion (manageable increase, but greater need exists) and about program criteria for moving youth between placements
 - **Peter Hicks:** Confirmed that a process for identifying realistic expansion needs exists
- **Dr. Allyse:** Clarified funding needs: ~\$40k shortfall for security and ~\$147k for House of Hope. Noted distinction between emergency beds (short-term) and transitional services like YCC.
- **Jolita Wainwright:** Praised YCC for focusing on an underserved group; expressed support for funding.
- **Chris Crothers:** Suggested HIC frame the request to Council as filling operational gaps to maintain existing services rather than creating entirely new programs.

III. 1-Year Action Plan & Budget:

Recap & Funding Overview:

- **Chris Crothers:** Recapped the previous meeting: tentative funding earmarked for the Consultant, Sulzbacher (infrastructure/day program), Trinity (day program), City Rescue (day program), CHOP Program, and Youth Crisis Center's House of Hope.
- **Dr. Allyse:** Suggested adding The Mills to funding considerations. She flagged a \$65k shortfall for Trinity to maintain programming and \$229k needed to expand to 30 beds.

Need for Standards & Process:

- **Chris Crothers:** Stressed the importance of defending funding allocations before Council and anticipated pushback for "biggest bang for buck."
- **John Trevathan:** Recommended setting standards to guide recommendations.
- **Jitan Kuverji:** Proposed creating an application process for providers.



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- **Shannon MacGillis (OGC):** Supported creating a uniform rubric/metric for funding decisions, noting funds are not “use it or lose it.”
- **Shantel Davis:** Preferred a consistent, fair process before disbursing funds.
- **Chris Crothers:** Cautioned delays would widen service gaps.
- **Jolita Wainwright:** Argued that true equity isn’t possible given different provider populations and thought an application form would be duplicative.
- **John Trevathan and Shantel Davis:** Emphasized Council will require quantifiable data, not compassion appeals.
- **Jitan Kuverji:** Clarified that the process could be developed quickly and would not delay decisions.
- **Motion by Dr. Allyse:** Create a system to evaluate and recommend funding to Council, emphasizing return on taxpayer dollars.
 - Seconded by Jitan Kuverji.
 - Motion Approved (6-0 in favor).
- **Jitan Kuverji:** Volunteered to draft framework for evaluation system (rubric).

Provider Updates:

- **Chris Crothers:** Questioned providers in the audience about what happens with their organization on Oct. 1 if HIC makes no recommendations for funding by that date.
 - **Major Keith (Salvation Army):** Stated they will continue services with JFRD partnership but stressed need for funding; ~\$460k included in draft budget.
 - **Paul Stasi (City Rescue Mission):** Stated they will stay open Oct. 1 but relies on City funding to continue.
 - **Darrell Dow (Trinity Rescue):** Stated that current operations are sustainable under flat funding, but expansion requires more resources.

Urgent Funding Priorities Identified:

- **Dr. Allyse:** Outlined \$1,345,166 in urgent needs:
 - Consultant (\$296,000), Sulzbacher: emergency beds (\$439,810), City Rescue: daytime programming (\$129,356), Trinity expansion: staffing (\$120,000) and daytime services (360,000).
- **Chris Crothers:** Discussed the line-item parity, stating that there’s a \$3.93 gap per bed across providers, with the idea to bring everyone up to the same amount. This is a \$104k total cost.
- **Shannon MacGillis :** Reminded Council budget adoption ends Sept. 23; legislation can’t be filed until Oct. 8.



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- **Chris Crothers:** Proposed funding to expand the CHOP Program to the dollar amount that would remain in the HIC budget, but noting that this does not provide the total amount of funding requested.
- **Dr. Allyse:** Proposed funding a hybrid proposal for the House of Hope Program.

Over-Budget Concerns & Debate

- **Shantel Davis:** Asked about the process if over budget.
- **Shannon MacGillis :** Stated that HIC may also identify non-City funding sources.
- **Chris Crothers:** Noted that Council is unlikely to support over-budget requests.
- **Dr. Allyse:** Suggested acknowledging partial funding.
- **John Trevathan:** Suggested proportional reductions across all proposals.
 - **Chris Crothers:** Disagreed, citing priorities.

Funding Package:

- **Dr. Allyse:** Should we vote on the full funding package, on individual line items or the entire budget package?
 - **Shantel Davis:** How did we determine the numbers we are putting forth? Based on their requests, or based on any criteria?
 - **Dr. Allyse:** Based on their requests.
 - **Chris Crothers:** Recommends voting as a package.
 - **Shantel Davis:** I agree.
- **Dr. Allyse:** Motions to recommend the \$2,073,390 package from Homelessness Initiatives Trust Fund to the Council as shown in the table below.
 - Seconded by Shantel Davis.
 - Motion approved (6-0 in favor).
- **John Trevathan:** Asked how this aligns with the rubric discussion.
- **Shannon MacGillis :** Rubric will apply future decisions; this can be viewed as an emergency request.
- **Chris Crothers:** Volunteered to vet proposals against rubric before Council submission.



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Funding Package	
Organization	\$ Amount
Trinity Rescue Mission	\$63,160.00
City Rescue Mission (2024/2025)	\$37,324.00
City Rescue Mission Expansion	\$129,356.00
Sulzbacher Downtown Shelter Expansion	\$439,810.00
Trinity Rescue Mission (Capital)	\$120,000.00
Trinity Rescue Mission (Operations)	\$360,000.00
Youth Crisis Center Security	\$40,000.00
Touchstone Village	\$10,894.00
The Mills	\$74,942.00
House of Hope	\$122,640.00
CHOP	\$379,264.00
Consulting Services	\$296,000.00
Total:	\$2,073,390.00

IV. Unfinished Business

No unfinished business stated.

V. New Business

- **Jitan Kuverji:** Raised concerns about growing encampments along Jacksonville's waterways. He referenced a similar situation in California that became a significant issue and urged the Commission to be proactive in preventing it locally. He suggested inviting a representative from the waterways department to present at a future HIC meeting.
 - **Chris Crothers:** Agreed and noted this could also present an opportunity to identify potential funding sources to address the issue.

Meeting adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

Upcoming meetings:

Monday, October 13, 2025 – Board Meeting from 9:00 – 10:30 a.m. on the 8th floor.

Homelessness Initiatives Commission
Meeting Minutes for 12 September 2025

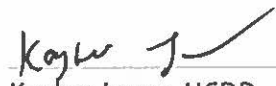


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CERTIFICATION

**Homelessness Initiatives Commission
Special Meeting 12 September 2025**

Recorded, Transcribed and Submitted by:



Kaylee Jones, HCDD
Homelessness Initiatives Commission

Approved by:



Jitan Kuverji, Secretary
Homelessness Initiatives Commission