

Buncombe County NC - Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday 3/26/2025

Time: 3:30 to 5:30 pm

Location: Land of Sky Regional Council

339 New Leicester Hwy., Suite 140

Asheville, NC 28806

Invitees		
Dan Beerman	Suzanne Booth	Taylor Cox
Melissa Harmon	Eileen McMinn	Deborah Oldt
Susan Schiemer	Greg Zornes	
Alison Banzhoff	Billie Breeden	Zack Schmitt

Not in attendance: Dan Beerman

- I. Welcome
 - a. Approve or Revise Agenda
 - i. There were no additions or revisions to the Agenda.
 - ii. Motion made by Suzanne to approve the Agenda, seconded by Deborah. Motion carried.
 - b. Approve or Revise Meeting Minutes
 - i. There were no revisions to the Meeting Minutes.
 - ii. Motion made by Susan to approve the Meeting Minutes, seconded by Suzanne. Motion carried.

- II. Review of Funding Expenditure Reports
 - a. Units of Service – Reviewed
 - i. Council on Aging was recently monitored by Zack. The congregate nutrition program is working to get their spending back on track. COA is going to take units billed to ARPA funding and put them towards HCCBG funding. With ARPA funding, they are able to provide grab and go meals at the dining sites still working on clean up. Dining sites were hit badly due to the storm – Black Mountain had damage and Grove Street and Shiloh had lead in their pipes. Also, there was a change in managing the senior dining program as previous staff left and there is a new staff member managing the program.

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- ii. In-Home Aide Program (Level II) was impacted the storm. There were times that clients were not able to be served by aides, but the program is back on track. Level I was overspent so some of that money can be shifted to Level II.
- iii. United Community Development has not spent any funding. Dee Williams, President/CEO, told Zack there was one project completed but nothing has been entered into ARMS yet. Zack has been communicating with Dee. There will be a substantial amount of funding to relinquish.
- iv. MountainCare overspent funding in the transportation program but are underspent in the other programs. Billie and Zack received an email from Nicole Staton at Mountain Care. The current reimbursement rate for transportation is \$42 per trip. After MountainCare received the funding, Mountain Mobility increased the cost per trip to \$45. The \$42 rate sometimes covers the average net cost per trip, it often does not. MountainCare anticipates being overspent by \$12,000 - \$16,000. They would like to increase the reimbursement rate to \$45 per trip. Any increase in rate occurs in arrears so that any unit rate previously reimbursed will get an extra \$3.00 added to it. MountainCare would receive \$3498 if approved. The committee discussed this and decided it was necessary to look at next month's Units of Service report before making a final decision. A motion was made to acknowledge MountainCare's request to increase the per trip rate by \$3.00 and communicate to them that the committee would like to make a final decision at the next meeting. Motion was made by Susan, seconded by Greg. Motion was unanimous and the motion carried.
- v. Michael Barnett, Jewish Family Services reached out to Billie requesting additional funding if there is any money left over to be reallocated. Nicole, MountainCare and Debbie Sprouse, Meals on Wheels also requested additional funding.

b. Buncombe County Supplemental Aging Funds (BCSAF) – Reviewed

- i. No updates about whether UNETE will spend all of their allocation. Billie emailed the Executive Director, Norma Brown, but she was out of the office; Billie copied another staff member but hadn't heard back.
- ii. Working Wheels is on track to spend their total allocation and provide 16 car repairs (as written in the application) by the end of the fiscal year.
- iii. Blue Ridge Pride expects to spend their total allocation.

III. Report on Advocacy Efforts for BCSAF

- a. Susan recognized Suzanne, Eileen, and Melissa for their advocacy efforts. Suzanne made an attempt to contact the commissioners and the clerk of the

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board via email as well as made phone calls. Only once did she talk to someone in the clerk's office, but no one was available to take her call. It was disappointing that there was not a response.

- b. Susan made public comments at three commissioner meetings. Eileen and Melissa were there for support.
- c. Eileen attends democratic meetings. Commissioner Martin Moore spoke at the last meeting and mentioned that Buncombe County provides funds for aging in place.
- d. Alison advocated for BCSAF funding recently in a letter about the budget. Alison and Billie will be speaking at an HHS Board Meeting to one of the subcommittees that one of the commissioners sit on in a few days. One of the topics will be the impact on funded providers if the BSCAF funding is cut.
- e. Originally, March 20 was the date when the commissioners were going to make their decision, but they had a work session. The next budget work session is April 22. May 6 is the budget message during the commissioners meeting. May 20 will be a public hearing on the proposed budget. The FY26 budget will be approved on June 3.
- f. The \$500,000 for BCSAF funding was still in the Aging and Adult Services budget and had not been removed yet.

IV. HCCBG Funds Allocations

- a. Susan started the discussion by reading Dan's email (in brief): My focus is to fund the most vital services fully or as fully as possible. I believe that the most vital services are defined by the number of people served and the services capacity to keep people in their home/community. With those two measures I would start with fully funding: Transportation, In-Home Aide program, Home delivered meals, Congregate meals, Adult Day Care, and Information and Referral.
- b. Transportation (Mountain Mobility) will be funded due to prior commitments.
- c. The committee decided to fund Pisgah Legal Services at the minimum level required by HCCBG because they have the highest revenue stream and support from other entities.
- d. The committee agreed with Dan about the programs that were vital services.
- e. The committee wanted more information from the Center for Conscious Living and Dying regarding salaries. Salaries were a big part of the budget considering the number of volunteers who work there. Who are they paying and for what?
- f. Mobility Matters is not eligible for HCCBG funding under Housing and Home Improvement. They want to go into the homes and consult with individuals about home repairs to make the home safer and more accessible. This is not covered under Housing and Home Improvement, which is the actual project

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itself. Mobility Matters could apply for BCSAF funding should it become available.

- g. The committee wanted to know if HCCBG funding was the only source of funding for the Community Health Workers program.
 - h. The committee wanted more information from Council on Aging (COA) about the Information and Options counseling program, specifically what are the 10,000 points of contacts for (which services), if someone contacted 3 times would that count as 1 point of contact or 3 points of contact, what services does COA help the unique clients with, and how will COA collect measures that demonstrate the clients are better off.
 - i. Billie will contact the aforementioned applicants to answer the committee's questions.
 - j. Susan made a motion that the committee would base their allocations on \$1.7 million dollars.
 - k. Susan would like the funding recommendations from the committee members ahead of the next meeting on Wednesday, April 23 at Land of Sky Regional Council. The meeting will be for 2 hours.
 - l. To view the discussion, please go to <https://engage.buncombecounty.org/x1728>
- V. Determine Action Items and Next Steps
- a. Billie will follow up with MountainCare and applicants.
 - b. Committee members will work on funding recommendations and send their spreadsheets to Susan before the next meeting.