



CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

May 13, 2026 at 4:00 PM

CitySpace: 100 5th St NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902

The Charlottesville City Council held a special meeting on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, to discuss the state of homelessness in the city and to hear an update on planning efforts for the 2000 Holiday Drive Low-barrier Shelter Project.

Mayor Juandiego Wade called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m., and Clerk of Council Kyna Thomas called the roll, noting that Mayor Juandiego Wade and Councilors Jen Fleisher, Michael Payne and Lloyd Snook were present. Vice Mayor Natalie Oschrin confirmed that she was in Minneapolis attending a conference, thus unable to be physically present.

On motion by Snook, seconded by Fleisher, Council voted 4-0 to authorize Vice Mayor Oschrin to participate in the meeting electronically via Zoom.

In addition to City Council and city staff, the following members from the Continuum of Care (CoC) participated in the discussion:

- Shayla Washington, Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless (BRACH) Executive Director
- Owen Brennan, The Haven Executive Director
- Cameron Moore, People and Congregations Engaged in Ministry (PACEM) Executive Director

Mayor Wade turned the meeting over to City Manager Samuel Sanders, Jr., who stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss next steps in addressing the state of homelessness in Charlottesville.

Members of City Council, city staff, and CoC partner organizations discussed planning and implementation issues related to the Holiday Drive. The discussion focused on identifying next steps necessary to move the project from conceptual planning toward implementation while balancing operational, financial, and community considerations.

Major Discussion Topics

1. Operational Planning and Organizational Coordination:

Representatives of the CoC stated that following the March 25 presentation, no formal implementation steps had yet been finalized because the earlier presentation was intended primarily as a visioning exercise. Participants discussed the need for a comprehensive operational plan for Holiday Drive, including: organizational responsibilities, co-location logistics, staffing needs, operational costs, budget projections; and funding responsibilities.

Council members and staff emphasized the importance of clearly separating existing organizational operating budgets and new operational costs specifically associated with Holiday Drive.

Discussion also included the difficulty of sustainably funding 24/7 staffing, expanded case management, and long-term shelter operations.

CoC representatives noted that ongoing restructuring and strategic planning among partner organizations must be clarified before major fundraising efforts can proceed.

2. Project Management and City Coordination

CoC representatives requested assignment of a dedicated city project manager or point person to oversee Holiday Drive implementation and coordination. City staff acknowledged the need to establish an internal project management structure and coordinate future communications and implementation activities.

3. Design Direction and Facility Planning

Participants discussed the need for City Council to provide clearer direction regarding preferred design options; acceptable project costs; and whether revised design parameters should be developed.

Council members expressed concern that prior presentations contained many conceptual ideas but lacked a finalized operational framework.

Discussion focused heavily on the impact of potentially eliminating the proposed clinic addition in order to reduce project costs. Participants noted that removing the clinic component could reduce shelter capacity from approximately 80 beds to approximately 70-72 beds; and eliminate dedicated clinic space.

CoC representatives explained that earlier versions of the design had already undergone significant reductions and that there was limited remaining flexibility within the project footprint.

Council members requested clearer identification of critical programming elements, preferred but nonessential features, and services that could potentially be provided through mobile or temporary alternatives.

4. Healthcare and Programming Alternatives

Discussion included alternatives to a permanent clinic addition, including: mobile healthcare services; temporary interior treatment areas; and shared flexible-use spaces.

Participants agreed additional coordination would be needed with healthcare partners to determine whether mobile healthcare services could adequately support shelter operations.

5. Interim Use of 2000 Holiday Drive

CoC representatives requested approval for interim use of the Holiday Drive facility for office space, administrative operations, temporary classes, and client programming.

Participants clarified that interim use discussions did not currently include operation of a designated campground, although future encampment-related discussions may occur separately.

City staff indicated that review by the building code official and fire marshal would be necessary before interim uses could proceed.

6. Community and Business Engagement

Participants discussed the importance of outreach to Holiday Drive businesses and neighboring stakeholders.

CoC representatives expressed willingness to either lead or collaborate with the City on engagement efforts.

City staff noted that businesses had previously been highly engaged during discussions regarding acquisition of the property and stated that additional communication and updates would be necessary before implementation activities proceed.

7. Alternative Space Solutions

Council members suggested exploring temporary or modular structures, such as trailer-style office or classroom units, as a lower-cost way to preserve programming and shelter space while minimizing new construction.

Participants agreed that additional brainstorming regarding flexible space solutions may be beneficial.

8. Long-term Strategic Planning

Mr. Sanders summarized broader strategic questions that remain unresolved, including:

- How providers will align operationally;
- How overnight sheltering could be activated;
- How budget requests will be structured;
- How encampments will be managed citywide; and
- How expanded outreach services will be operationalized.

Participants acknowledged that homelessness and sheltering needs are longstanding community challenges that will require sustained planning and collaboration.

Action Items and Next Steps

CoC / Partner Organizations

- Prepare a detailed operational plan for Holiday Drive, including staffing, organizational responsibilities, operational budgets, funding needs, and program structure.
- Continue collaborative strategic planning discussions among partner organizations.
- Provide additional clarity regarding critical versus optional programming elements.
- Coordinate with healthcare partners regarding clinic and mobile healthcare alternatives.

City Staff / Council

- Establish a project management structure or designate a Holiday Drive point person.
- Coordinate additional meetings with the architect regarding revised design impacts.
- Initiate code review discussions with the building code official and fire marshal regarding interim uses and revised designs.
- Continue discussions regarding business and community engagement strategies.

August 31 was discussed as the target date for development of an operational plan framework. Staff also emphasized urgency in advancing code review and design clarification discussions due to upcoming staff leave schedules.

Participants expressed continued support for advancing the 2000 Holiday Drive project while recognizing the complexity of coordinating multiple organizations; balancing budget limitations; managing community concerns; and developing sustainable long-term shelter operations. There was broad agreement that the project will require continued collaboration, phased decision-making, and ongoing refinement as implementation moves forward. To facilitate more frequent meetings, the CoC workgroup requested two meetings per month with the CoC representatives, a designated member of City staff as

well as a City Councilor. Councilor Fleisher agreed to be the City Council representative and to communicate workgroup takeaways with the rest of City Council.

On motion by Snook, seconded by Fleisher, Council by a vote of 5-0 adjourned the meeting at 6:09 p.m.

BY Order of City Council

BY Kyna Thomas, Clerk of Council

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