



## DOUGLAS COUNTY HOMELESS INITIATIVE

THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2025

### MINUTES

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Thursday, May 8, 2025

9:00 AM

BOCC Hearing Room,  
Conference Rooms A & B

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In - Person Attendees: Commissioner Abe Laydon, Allison Cutting, Andrea Barnum, Arin DeGruff, Brian Griggs, Caroline Frizell, Catherine Millis, Chris Eubanks, Dan Marlow, Donté Young, Erin White, Greg Matthews, Jamie Fisher, Jason Gray, Jay Carpenter, Jeff Garcia, Jennifer Eby, Kirsten Swanson, Kyle Villamor, Luke Ward, Maria Ciano, Melody D'Haillecourt, Mike Hill, Mike McIntosh, Mike Polhemus, Nick Adamson, Rand Clark, Ruby Richards, San Castillo, Sandy Holcomb, Scott Nelson, Steven Dodrill, Tiffany Marsitto

Online Participants: 35 (list is available upon request)

1. **Welcome & Introductions: Commissioner Laydon**

2. **Business Discussion:**

**Jennifer Eby, Director, Department of Community Services:** The following outcomes are presented to the Committee for discussion: increase safety by reducing the number of people sleeping in parking lots, increase giving to the Douglas Has HEART fund, reduce the number of people panhandling, and increase public awareness of Douglas Has HEART campaign.

**Rand Clark, Assistant Director, Department of Community Services:** Three concepts to focus on are how do we help those sleeping in cars? How do we help business owners and property managers? How do we help employees or day to day shoppers to equip them with better tools to access HEART?

**Tiffany Marsitto, Supervisor, Department of Community Services:** HEART is actively working with the Douglas County Economic Development Corporation (DCEDC), business operators, owners, the community, and those experiencing homelessness. HEART is dedicated to building relationships, educating the community, and providing those sleeping in their vehicles with safer options to help resolve their homelessness. Suggestions they received during a meeting with Ellie Reynolds, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DCEFC, was to have HEART attend the local Chambers round table meetings and attend their annual breakfast. This may help inform local business operators of the HEART program and to explain that HEART is not a punitive call but a resource tool which helps.

**Kirsten Swanson, Executive Director, Douglas County Community Foundation (DCCF):** DCCF manages the Douglas Has HEART fund and is the philanthropic arm for businesses in the community. DCCF is exploring a fundraising opportunity on Valentine's Day 2026 for HEART and additional opportunities to fund raise for DCCF funds on Colorado Gives

**Day which avoids direct competition with local nonprofits.**

**Ruby Richards, Director, Douglas County Human Services (DCHS):** Another fundraising option and business engagement opportunity is to request customers to round up their purchase to contribute to the HEART fund? Small businesses may be a better target for these types of donations.

**Caroline Frizell, Director, Communications and Public Affairs:** The business focus of the Handouts Don't Help campaign will be on the impact of Douglas Has HEART. This could include added transparency and reporting of how the funds are being utilized and to connect the community to testimonies. Will aim to present these website additions in mid-June to July.

**3. Executive Committee Update:**

**Jason Gray, Mayor of Castle Rock:** Castle Rock Police Department and HEART have secured a trespass letter from the Castle Rock Outlet Mall.

**Kirsten Swanson, Executive Director, Douglas County Community Foundation (DCCF):** The Douglas Has HEART Fund has accumulated to \$2,200.00.

**Maria Ciano, Executive Director, Douglas County Housing Partnership (DCHP):** DCHP will be launching Housing Navigators to assist our community partners. Unity on Park Street has been nominated for an Eagle Award. DCHP is working with the Denver Regional Council of Government (DRCOG) to share the results of the needs assessment, highlighting the need of affordable housing, especially for those under at or under \$27,000 average medium income (AMI) or 30% AMI.

**Kirk Wilson, Chief, Lone Tree Police Department (Online):** He has received positive feedback on the business posters.

**Abe Laydon, Commissioner, Douglas County:** Can we develop a text capability for the HEART line?

**Rand Clark, Assistant Director, Department of Community Services:** Of the 2,500 calls received over the last sixteen months to the HEART hotline, there have been less than 50 calls received between 6:00p.m. – 6:00a.m.

**Erin White, Executive Director, Manna Resource Center:** A success story for a family who was identified by HEART and assessed by Manna Resource Center for the GOALS program during the weekly case conferencing call. The family was moved into the GOALS program the following day and has just obtained a new, higher paying job. They will continue to receive supportive services while they address remaining obstacles to self-sufficiency.

**4. BNL Update:**

**Donté Young, HEART Navigator:** There are two main criteria to be placed on the Douglas County By Name List (BNL). The first criteria are to meet Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of literal homelessness. Meaning that the participant

spent the night in a place not meant for human habitation including outside or in a vehicle, living in a shelter or in transitional housing, or stayed in a hotel or motel paid for by a nonprofit or government agency. The second criteria are the participant must have been in Douglas County and received services from HEART or a local nonprofit agency. The BNL is meant to correlate with the Point In Time (PIT) data collected in January.

In the Winter Point in Time count of 2025, Douglas County showed 25 people sleeping in their cars, six people sleeping outside, and 12 people in shelter. The BNL becomes a way to have a monthly snapshot of those experiencing homelessness in the County. The April 25 BNL shows that 24 people were sleeping in their vehicles, four people sleeping outside, and 28 people in shelter. The BNL Family data shows that there were seven families in shelter, zero families sleeping outside, and two families sleeping in their vehicles.

Douglas County has reached the verification of Functional Zero for Veterans. Douglas County conducts weekly case conferencing for members on the BNL with a focus of Veterans, families, and singles. This is a time for collaboration with local nonprofits to address issues that our unhoused neighbors experience. The future goals and outcomes for the BNL include enhancing current BNL, enhancing collaboration with community partners, expanding resource knowledge, use the BNL for real time reporting, and to reach Functional Zero for families and singles.

5. **HEART:**

Tiffany Marsitto, Community Services Supervisor: April HEART activity summary includes 14 new clients enrolled in the HEART program, 169 total referrals, 24 clients exited the program with 8% going to permanent housing, and 29 business engagements. HEART activities that were completed for the month include a presentation to Highlands Behavioral Health, an Animal Welfare Association of Colorado presentation with Castle Rock Police Department and attending the Metro Denver Community of Care (COC) Convening. In April of 2025, there were 14 new enrollments to the HEART program, in March of 2025, there were 22 enrollments and in April of 2024, there were 24 enrollments. In April of 2025, there were 48 households that received one or more services in the HEART program.

HEART completed a total of 169 calls for service for the month of April 2025. The services provided by location included Highlands Ranch 35%, Castle Rock 23%, Parker 15%, Lone Tree 13%, Castle Pines 10%, and Englewood 4%. Exit outcomes for the 24 clients included 8% exited to permanent housing, 33% exited to temporary housing, 13% exited to shelter, 29% were no contact, and 17% wanted to remain homeless but out of County.

6. **Public Comment:**

Holly, School of Rock (Online), A local business owner who appreciates the work of HEART for the issues they have had with those who are experiencing homelessness over the last two years.

7. **Closing Comments: Commissioner Laydon**

*\*\*The Next Regular Meeting Will be Held on Thursday, June 12, 2025 @ 9:00 a.m.\*\**

*The Douglas County Homeless Initiative provides a collaborative meeting space for a diverse group of community partners to discuss issues related to homelessness. These meetings are not a forum for discussion of specific land use applications or development projects in individual jurisdictions. Please contact the relevant jurisdiction to inquire about how to participate in the public input process for specific projects.*