

Lake County Illinois

*Lake County Courthouse and Administrative Complex
18 N. County Street
Waukegan, IL 60085-4351*



Minutes Report - Draft

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

3:30 PM

Remote attendance is available via Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87075622970>

18 N County St, WAUKEGAN, IL

Housing and Community Development Commission

1. Roll Call

Chair Rose called the meeting to order at 3:40 PM.

Commissioner Altenberg and Knight attended via Zoom.

Guests: Lakisha Robinson, Barwell Tenant Organizer; MarKayla Moore, Persons with Lived Experience (PLE) Lake County Coalition for the Homeless (LCCH) Board of Director; Andrea Moore, Tenant Organizer/Persons with Lived Experience and Expertise (PLEE); Jennifer Banek, Lake County Coroner; Maria Nava, United Way of Lake County.

Guests via Zoom: Liz Herzberg, Lake County Health Department; Liz Nelson, Connections for the Homeless; Barbara Brown, Trinity AME Community Outreach Program; Vicky Tello, Nicasa Behavioral Health Services; Rhianna Bunch, Nicasa Behavioral Health Services; JoEllen Erdman, Zacharias Sexual Abuse Center; Brittany Serenbetz, Lake County Health Department; Gail Weil CYN Counseling Services; Liz Thompson, Ampact/Recovery Corps; Ezequiel García, community member; Christina Douglas, A Safe Place; Gregory Ticsay, Lake County Public Defender; Amanda Levinson, Arden Shores; Kyle Brenner, community member; Sara Hollis; Chawn White.

Staff: Dominic Strezo, Penni Raphaelson, Courtney Cymeran, Eric Tellez, Pam Jeffries, Michele Slav, Yazmin Albino, Eric Waggoner, RuthAnne Hall, Malin Gembra, and Danielle White

Present 11 - Kathleen O'Connor, Janet Swartz, Dan Venturi, Bethany Williams, Ray Rose, Michael Knight, Stephanie Victor, Gina Roberts, Sara Knizhnik, Mary Ross Cunningham and Marah Altenberg

Excused 6 - Billy McKinney, Anne Flanigan Bassi, Michael Meehan, Marc Jones, Mary Dominiak and Esiah Campos

2. Approval of Minutes

2.1 25-0363

Approval of Minutes February 19, 2025

Attachments: [2025-02-19 HCDC Draft Minutes.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Venturi, seconded by Commissioner Ross Cunningham, for the approval of minutes. The motion carried by the following voice vote:

Aye 11 - Commissioner O'Connor, Commissioner Swartz, Commissioner Venturi, Commissioner Williams, Chair Rose, Commissioner Knight, Commissioner Victor, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Knizhnik, Commissioner Ross Cunningham and Commissioner Altenberg

2.2 25-0373

Approval of Behavioral Health ARC Minutes February 25, 2025.

Attachments: [2025-02-25 Behavioral Health ARC Draft Minutes.pdf](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Venturi, seconded by Commissioner Ross Cunningham, for the approval of minutes. The motion carried by the following voice vote:

Aye 11 - Commissioner O'Connor, Commissioner Swartz, Commissioner Venturi, Commissioner Williams, Chair Rose, Commissioner Knight, Commissioner Victor, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Knizhnik, Commissioner Ross Cunningham and Commissioner Altenberg

3. Chair's Remarks

No Chair Remarks.

4. Public Comments (items not on the agenda)

Lakisha Robinson, a tenant organizer and member of the Lake County Coalition for the Homeless Board of Directors, provided public comment regarding the alleged misuse of Project Year 2021 (PY2021) HOME program grant funds allocated to Barwell Rehabilitation LLC. The commenter, a resident of Barwell Manor since 2012, expressed concerns over the lack of oversight by the City of Waukegan and the Waukegan Housing Authority in administering these funds, which were intended for a rental demonstration project. They cited non-compliance with HUD requirements, improper relocation practices, tenant mistreatment, and inadequate property management, leading to evictions, homelessness, and unsafe living conditions. The commenter called for an amendment to the Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) to reflect these issues.

MarKayla Moore, PLEE LCCH Board of Director, shared their personal experience with homelessness, stating that their entire family is currently unhoused. They expressed concerns about the mismanagement of homelessness services funded by the committee, particularly through non-governmental entities such as PADS of Lake County. The commenter, a first-generation college graduate, described difficulties in accessing appropriate supportive services, alleging that PADS of Lake County placed undue responsibility on them for their homelessness rather than providing meaningful assistance. They also reported being denied services connected to ESG funding and criticized the organization's case management approach. The commenter emphasized the need for more effective homelessness services and greater accountability in funding allocations.

Andrea Moore, Tenant Organizer/PLEE, shared their ongoing experience with homelessness in Lake County since June 2021, noting previous involvement in tenant organizing at Barwell Manor and facing legal repercussions as a result. They described difficulties in accessing services from PADS of Lake County, alleging that the organization prioritizes data collection over providing meaningful assistance. After initially self-funding

temporary housing in late 2023, PADS agreed to cover hotel costs, but the commenter was later locked out in December 2024, losing their possessions and receiving no response from PADS. Despite legal assistance, they were unable to resolve the situation. The commenter emphasized the need for stronger oversight and accountability in the allocation of ESG, HOME, and CDBG funds, urging the commission to prioritize input from those directly affected by homelessness and ensure that funded organizations fulfill their obligations.

Commissioners discussed the concerns raised during public comment regarding PADS and oversight of funding allocations. They emphasized the commission's primary role is to ensure a strong fiduciary system is in place and consider revisiting oversight processes as needed.

5. Old Business

No Old Business.

6. New Business

6.1 25-0369

Presentation and Discussion - Program Year 2025 (PY25) Opioid Response and Video Gaming Revenue (VGR) Applications and Recommendations.

Dominic Strezo, Community Development Administrator, reviewed the funding sources and process for Video Gaming Revenue (VGR) and the Opioid Settlement Funds.

Courtney Cymerman, Grant Administrator, presented Video Gaming Revenue grant recommendations. Video Gaming Revenue applications were scored based on the following priorities: assessment, education, and outreach; clinical gambling addiction services; non-clinical gambling addiction services; and behavioral health services.

Penni Raphaelson, Grants Manager, presented recommendations for the Opioid Response Applications. The opioid settlement funds were partially allocated based on meeting the opioid response objectives of reducing fatal overdoses by 5% and non-fatal overdoses by 10% by April 2026 through strategies such as harm reduction, case management, system navigation, and recovery services.

6.2 25-0370

PUBLIC HEARING - Program Year 2025 (PY25) Opioid Response and Video Gaming Revenue (VGR) Funding Recommendations.

Andrea Moore, Tenant Organizer/PLEE, shared their perspective on the connection between substance abuse, homelessness, and underserved minority communities, based on their personal experiences. They emphasized the importance of strong oversight and compliance in the allocation of Program Year 2025 (PY25) Opioid Response and Video Gaming Revenue (VGR) funds to ensure they are used effectively. The commenter highlighted disparities in Illinois, noting that while African Americans make up 14% of the population, they represent 60% of those experiencing homelessness and substance abuse issues. They urged the committee to ensure that funded programs are

implemented in a non-discriminatory and barrier-free manner to better serve affected individuals.

6.3 25-0372

Joint resolution approving the Program Year 2025 (PY25) Video Gaming grant funding recommendations in the amount of \$800,000.

- Lake County annually acts on the Video Gaming Revenue (VGR) award recommendations that are developed based on the VGR policy. The policy outlines procedures for: capturing video gaming administration costs; evaluating and funding social programs, projects (excluding capital improvements), and/or services that benefit Lake County residents.
- In December 2024, Lake County Community Development received applications for VGR funds totaling \$970,100.
- On March 12, 2025, the Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC) approved funding recommendations detailed in the attached table, totaling \$800,000 for the following: 211 information and referral services \$125,000; gambling education and outreach \$100,000; gambling addiction services \$100,000; non-clinical gambling addiction services \$74,000; and behavioral health services \$401,000.

Attachments: [PY25 VGR Funding Recs](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Venturi, seconded by Commissioner Ross Cunningham, that this commission action item be approved. The motion carried by the following voice vote.

Aye 11 - Commissioner O'Connor, Commissioner Swartz, Commissioner Venturi, Commissioner Williams, Chair Rose, Commissioner Knight, Commissioner Victor, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Knizhnik, Commissioner Ross Cunningham and Commissioner Altenberg

6.4 25-0384

Joint resolution approving the Program Year 2025 (PY25) Lake County Opioid Settlement Funds (OSF) funding recommendations in the total amount of \$500,000.

- On November 12, 2024, the Lake County Board approved the 2025-2026 Opioid Response Funding Plan. The Funding Plan detailed the application process for an initial disbursement of OSF.
- In January 2025, Lake County Community Development received application requests for Opioid Settlement Funds totaling \$1,056,203.
- The Lake County Opioid Work Group reviewed applications, calculated a composite score for each application, and developed corresponding funding recommendations.
- On March 12, 2025, the Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC) approved OSF funding recommendations detailed in the attached table, totaling \$500,000.

Attachments: [PY25 OSF Funding Recs](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Venturi, seconded by Commissioner Ross Cunningham, that this resolution be approved. The motion carried by the following

voice vote.

Aye 11 - Commissioner O'Connor, Commissioner Swartz, Commissioner Venturi, Commissioner Williams, Chair Rose, Commissioner Knight, Commissioner Victor, Commissioner Roberts, Commissioner Knizhnik, Commissioner Ross Cunningham and Commissioner Altenberg

7. Staff Reports

Dominic Strezo reported positive news regarding a funding application submitted by Community Development for HVAC repairs in individual rental units in Lake County. The department was notified that it is a finalist for \$2 million in state PCEO funding. The funds will be used to support HVAC repairs for rental properties with up to six units.

8. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:34 PM.