



COUNTY OF SOMERSET DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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NICCI SPINAZZOLA

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PETER NIEMIEC

Volunteer Services
LAURIE ROOME

Youth Services
LINDA M. PORCARO

July 10, 2025 Continuum of Care meeting minutes

The July 2025 meeting, which took place virtually, via a Zoom conference call, was called to order and began at 11:02 am. The minutes from the May meeting were reviewed and unanimously approved.

Kim mentioned that the Point in Time Count (PITC) data is due to be completed soon. The process of collecting the data, de-duplicating it, and report it takes time, but Monarch should have it done shortly.

Mollie Greene is the new Director of Human Services. She took a few minutes to introduce herself to the Committee.

A snapshot of data on housing was provided. Somerset County continues to be one of the most expensive counties in NJ in which to live. Some of the data includes: an annual salary of over \$113,000 is required to rent the average 2-BR apartment; since 2024, there has been a 20% increase in the homeless population; Black/African-Americans are far over-represented in the homeless population; the top 3 causes of homelessness are: mental illness, loss of job/income, and being asked to leave a shared residence.

The guest speaker was John Grebeck from SHIP (Samaritan Homeless Interim Program). Tom O’Leary, who has been the CEO/Executive Director since its inception, is turning over the reins to John. SHIP serves lunch Monday through Friday at the back of the building – it is usually a brown bag lunch, or a picnic on nice days. SHIP also partners with local churches and other organizations to serve lunch/dinner. Their hours are 8:30am – 2pm, Monday through Friday, although they are often open by 8am.

There’s a coffee room at the building where people can come and hang out – there are usually 5-10 people there on an average day. SHIP also has a shower for people to use. And there is a small clothing pantry – footwear is always in demand. (Gently used sneakers are acceptable.) SHIP has a mobile food truck to help people in the community, as well as a van, which goes to Freedom Trail on Wednesday afternoons, in partnership with Richard Hall, to provide resources and outreach to clients. They also hold an eye exam clinic on the first Thursday of each month, where they average 15-20 clients who get a free eye exam and, if needed, a voucher for a pair of prescription glasses. SHIP holds other health clinics in cooperation with the Somerset County Department of Health and Robert Wood Johnson Hospital.

SHIP has limited funds, although they pay for at least 100 nights a year in hotels (via vouchers) and have some rental assistance available. They do a gift card drive during the holidays to help people in need.

- Mission Statement -

The County of Somerset is committed to excellence and innovation in public service, promoting the well-being of all residents and communities by providing effective, efficient and responsive leadership.

Somerset County Is An Equal Opportunity Employer

There was an empty unit at Cornerstone in Branchburg that was filled by a client identified by the Zufall outreach team.

Kim Copeland asked for a Letter of Support for RPM Development. They are looking to develop a project on Route 22 in Green Brook. It will be a 33-acre property with 55 affordable units: 8 one-bedroom, 32 two-bedroom, 15 three-bedroom, 5 units set aside for people experiencing homelessness, and one unit for an on-site manager. She was asked if more units can be set aside for people experiencing homelessness - she will look into it. Most units will be lottery-based and the homeless units will be filled via the Coordinated Entry system. The tax credit application is due by the end of August and project is expected to take approximately 3 years. A Letter of Support was approved, conditional upon an MOU memorializing the provision of 5 units set aside for people experiencing homelessness.

Agency announcements will be sent via e-mail after the meeting and, as such, are incorporated as part of the minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 12:07 pm.

Attendees:

Kimberly Cowart	Kim Copeland
Jeremy Hirsch	Paul Grzella
Edward Prior	Steve Nagel
Alisha Earp	Ellen Carfaro
Tamika Levels-Hood	Kayla Ellis
Rheanah Johnson	Denise White
Jillian Lombardozzi	Elizabeth Burgenson
Jennifer Guyette	Lashonda Dumas
Jaelyn Robinson	Carolyn Solon
Joanne Hala	Ruby Arthur
Herardine Lacrete	Fresia Skoczypec
Dameon Stackhouse	Derek Smith
Kenya Lamarr	Cynthia Ramsey
Ana Diaz	Linda Rapacki
Christine Esposito	Gema Diaz
Leonor Salgado	Marion Cooper
Michelle Blanchfield	Victoria McSweeney
Charmaine McLawrence	Shelise Brodie
Officers Nikki and Vito (Somerville PD)	Mollie Greene
Victor Flores-Lopez	Stephanie Billitz
John Grebeck	Keisha Graham
Alyssa Martini	Jaaide Ramirez