



City of Fort Bragg

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Meeting Minutes Community Meetings

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

6:00 PM

Town Hall 363 N. Main Street

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Chair Police Chief Swift opened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present are Chair Police Chief Eric Swift, Supervisor Bernie Norvell, Supervisor Ted Williams, Mayor Jason Godeke, Cassandra Robbers, Father Rob Torcynski, Pastor Randy Knutson, Rachelle Sutherland, Bernadette Rafanan.

Absent are Deputy District Attorney Eloise Kelsey, Dr. Barbara Killian, Enriqueta Villalpando.

- 1A. [26-63](#) Approve Minutes from Prop 47 Local Advisory Committee Meetings on March 18, 2025 and September 17, 2025

Randy Knutson motions with an amendment, Supervisor Ted Williams seconds the motion. Minutes are approved as amended.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

3. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

- 3A. [25-260](#) Receive Update on Grant Progress

Updates on the Care Response Unit's Prop 47 Program:

Social Service Liaison Mellisa Johnson and Captain Thomas O'Neal presented for the Care Response Unit.

The Social Services Liaison presented a program update covering its progress over the past fifteen months. She provided information on the outreach work conducted by the Care Response Unit (CRU) in Mendocino at one of the churches in partnership with Mendocino Coast Hospitality Center (MCHC). The Liaison discussed individuals' hesitancy to engage with CRU and MCHC, largely due to unwillingness to travel to Fort Bragg for services or a general disinterest in engaging in services.

The Liaison also reviewed statistics and data regarding client engagement with CRU and MCHC and clarified the distinction between stabilization beds and transitional beds.

CRU pays for 6 beds at Hospitality Center Transitional Housing(HCTH), but has struggled to fill

all 6 beds as people are hesitant to join the program with its current parameters. There are currently 2 out of the 6 beds filled.

CRU staff continued the discussion, explaining that when the program first launched, it was structured as a work-based initiative. Since then, adjustments have been made to better support individuals who are unable to work due to disability or who require additional time to stabilize following sobriety or release from incarceration.

CRU staff further explained that mental health remains an ongoing barrier for many individuals seeking employment, housing, or services. As a result, the program has been modified to provide more individualized case management for participants facing ongoing challenges.

CRU highlighted five success stories from the past year, featuring participants who have either graduated from the program or made significant progress since enrolling.

Open Discussion / Questions from the Committee:

A committee member asked whether individuals who are not ready to enter the program or seek employment while participating are simply not ready, and whether CRU may be pushing too much too soon. CRU responded that it depends on the individual, as some participants struggle with Substance Use Disorder (SUD), others with mental health challenges, and many with a combination of both. CRU also noted that some individuals pursue Social Security benefits, as that pathway may feel more attainable to them.

A committee member asked County law enforcement what has made their department successful in connecting with individuals in Mendocino. County law enforcement responded that while they would not characterize their efforts as highly successful, they have found that implementing increased compassion and maintaining more regular contact has helped build rapport and trust within the community.

A committee member asked whether deputies and police officers experience similar challenges with individuals who are unwilling to engage with services. CRU responded that some individuals are unwilling to engage not only with law enforcement, but with any type of service provider, and there have been instances where individuals refuse medical services and homeless services as well.

A committee member asked what percentage of individuals participating in the program have only mental health challenges without SUD. CRU responded that additional data would need to be obtained from MCHC, and emphasized that it is important to consider the impact of early-life trauma and experiences that occur while living unsheltered when evaluating those distinctions.

A committee member asked where the nearest rehabilitation facility is. CRU responded that the closest option is located in Ukiah. However, CRU noted that, when appropriate, utilizing facilities farther from an individual's home community can be beneficial, as increased distance may reduce environmental triggers and the likelihood of leaving treatment prematurely or returning to substance use.

A committee member asked how the different types of beds are utilized and why beds may remain vacant if individuals need them. CRU responded that bed utilization policies can be discussed and adjusted as appropriate; however, while CRU aims to ensure access, beds must also be preserved for their intended purposes, including stabilization and transition.

The committee expressed concern that there are empty beds at Hospitality Center Transitional Housing that are not being utilized when Prop 47 program enrollment is low, and asked how those beds could be made available in the event of an emergency involving someone not participating in the Prop 47 program. CRU responded that this is open for discussion and collaboration, and that if Hospitality House or the Center has an emergency need, unused beds could be made available at that time to ensure resources are utilized effectively while still maintaining the integrity of the program.

The discussion then shifted to the Extreme Weather Shelter (EWS), including CRU's history of operating the program and the submission of the Homeless and Housing Assistance Program (HHAP) grant proposal. The conversation also covered how the EWS program functions, outlining its operational parameters and the client intake process, and reasons for some people's hesitancy to utilize the EWS program.

Closing remarks included a discussion of what the committee would like to review at the next meeting, including requested data and potential program adjustments. CRU reminded the committee that adjusting the program based on committee feedback was part of the grant program. CRU also asked that the committee review the published Grand Jury Report to view the data that was submitted already.

A committee member requested that options be presented outlining how the program could be adjusted to remove employment requirements for certain individuals and what those changes might look like. CRU agreed to outline a pilot program to bring back to the next LAC meeting on how the adjustments would work, and if anyone is willing to accept the program with the new, lessened requirements.

A committee member would also like to see numbers on how many clients or potential clients are in the County and not in Fort Bragg.

A committee member also wanted to know how many individuals have been turned away or denied space at HCHT because of the fact Hospitality Center was unable to use the empty CRU beds.

The meeting concluded with a discussion of the distinction between transitional homelessness and chronic homelessness, and the importance of addressing each differently based on individual needs and circumstances.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Police Chief Swift ended the meeting at 7:12 PM.