



General Membership Meeting Minutes  
May 28, 2026

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Luke Niday, who welcomed members and guests. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss strategies for addressing homelessness within the community, strengthening collaboration among organizations and agencies, and continuing efforts to build a stronger community response to homelessness. Members were reminded that every voice is important as the Task Force continues implementing its new charter and expanding membership.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Members and guests introduced themselves and their organizations.

Attendees included:

- Randy Barnes – Aiken Task Force
- Nicole Gentry
- Kelly Walker
- Brenda Wilson – Bridge Horizon

Additional members and guests were present but not individually recorded.

**Shelter and Dementia Concerns**

Discussion centered on a recent meeting with Jeff regarding a shelter resident experiencing dementia.

**Topics discussed included:**

- Appropriate placement options for individuals experiencing dementia.
- Challenges faced when individuals are unable to remain in emergency shelter settings.
- The need for additional community resources and placement options for homeless individuals experiencing cognitive decline or significant mental health concerns.
- Opportunities for improved coordination among service providers to better support vulnerable populations.

**Committee Reports – Street Outreach**

Street Outreach Chair Shawn Rhodes provided an update on outreach activities and committee priorities.



### *Data Collection and Coordination*

The committee identified the need for improved data collection and reporting processes. Members discussed opportunities for enhanced coordination and information sharing with the Richmond County Sheriff's Office.

### *Outreach Statistics*

The following statistics were reported:

- 486 homeless-related arrests during the previous 18 months.
- 47 identified homeless encampment locations.
- 311 homeless activity service reports.
- 1,017 positive outreach encounters.

### *Discussion*

Members discussed:

- Common reasons for arrests, including trespassing, outstanding warrants, and shoplifting.
- Questions regarding the types of warrants most frequently encountered.
- Whether alternative approaches should be considered when mental health issues contribute to criminal justice involvement.
- Transportation challenges, including limitations associated with public defender transportation support.

## **Community Updates – Augusta 311**

Kelly Walker provided an update regarding Augusta 311 services and community resource coordination.

### *Identified Service Gaps*

Several service gaps were discussed, including:

- Transportation assistance.
- Communication among service providers.
- Increased collaboration between agencies.

### *Website Concerns*

Members discussed concerns regarding the City of Augusta website, noting that it has not been significantly updated in approximately seven years.

Challenges identified included difficulty locating:

- Employment opportunities.



- Community resources.
- Supportive services.
- Transportation information.

Additional discussion included Augusta Transit ADA transportation routes and accessibility considerations.

## **Governance Committee Update**

Danielle Shelton provided an update regarding Governance Committee activities.

Discussion included:

- Committee operations scheduled to begin in February.
- Updates regarding committee responsibilities and activities.
- Proposed charter revisions.
- The importance of member participation in voting processes.

Luke Niday emphasized the importance of voting participation and member engagement as the Task Force continues implementing governance improvements.

## **Community Priorities and Data Systems**

Members discussed ongoing efforts to strengthen data collection and system coordination.

Key topics included:

- Ms. Demis providing additional information at a future meeting.
- Georgia HMIS integration efforts.
- Development of a closed-loop referral system.
- Read-only access capabilities.
- Connectivity with the U-Data database.

## **Training Updates**

Members were informed that applicant training sessions will be incorporated into future reporting and program development efforts.

### **Point-in-Time Count Update**

The 2026 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count was reported at **357 individuals experiencing homelessness**.



#### Additional Announcements

Bethany Trapp announced plans to attend the June 10 meeting and participate in continued collaborative efforts.

#### **Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. Members were encouraged to continue collaboration, community engagement, and efforts to improve services for individuals experiencing homelessness.