Amarillo CoC (COCTX-611) Board Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2026
Salvation Army
400 S Harrison St
Amarillo, TX 79101
9:00 AM

The meeting was called to order at 9:14 AM by James Bellar.

Board Members Present: James Bellar, Lacey Epperson, Virginia Williams Trice, Rudy Montano, Steve Smart, Tex Ellis Jr, Audra Rea

Board Members Absent: Juan Maldonado, Michelle Shields

Guests Attending: Shaira Joyce – Lead Agency, Stefanie Rodarte-Suto- Lead Agency

Approval of Previous Minutes
The previous meeting minutes were reviewed.

- Steve made the motion to approve, and Tex seconded.
- Vote: All in favor, none opposed. The motion was approved.

Routine Agenda Items:
Shelter Committee Reports:
The committee has not yet met. An email was sent out by Justin to re-engage interest.

- Stefanie Rodarte-Suto shared that Michelle Shields had been out but planned to provide a proposed structure for the committee by the end of the week.
- The Board expressed interest in reviewing the proposed structure to ensure appropriate oversight and productivity.
- It was also noted that Justin has returned to the office to provide further follow-up.

Lived Experience (LEAS) Update:
Lacey Epperson provided updates.

- A recent meeting included a guest presenter, Lindsey Baker (Street Medics), who provided hygiene supplies and support.
- A peer support group has been meeting; two individuals reportedly entered rehab following participation.

- A need was identified for a private meeting space to allow for anonymity and more open participation.
- Continued collaboration was emphasized as essential to meeting individuals where they are and encouraging engagement.

Additional discussion points included:

- Interest in inviting a representative from TPC to present on the Diversion Center.
- A need for a contact from the Diversion Center.
- Ongoing efforts to bring more organizations into the Lived Experience space.
- Seth from Cenikor was mentioned as a potential presenter.

Community/Cleanup Initiative Discussion:
Discussion included concerns raised by individuals connected to The Hub and Transformation Park regarding trash and graffiti near the Rock Island Express Railroad bridge following Route 66-related events.

- Ideas included repainting the bridge to maintain a consistent appearance or exploring a mural project to deter graffiti.
- Outreach efforts may include contacting Shawn Kennedy at Caprock High School regarding student or community involvement.
- There was also mention of leveraging local festivals (e.g., Hoodoo Festival) to involve artists.
- A larger cleanup initiative was discussed, potentially spanning from 6th & Adams to 6th & Georgia, with an ambitious cleanup goal (noted as 250,000 bags).

Gap Analysis – No updates were reported at this time

New Business:
Collaborative Applicant Update

- Work is ongoing to finalize Point-in-Time (PIT) count data, with the goal of presenting to the Board at the April meeting (not for public release at that time).
- Coordination with HUD TA (Technical Assistance), including work on capacity building and governance alignment.
- A document has been developed and will be reviewed at the April meeting.
- Additional discussion included potential support for monitoring of the Collaborative Applicant.
- Coordinated Entry extension and system-building (including possible expansion beyond HMIS) are in progress, with updates expected in April.

NOFO (Funding) Update

- HUD requested a court decision to allow for a partial-year NOFO (Q3–Q4), which was denied.
- Reapplication will proceed for existing projects.
- The 2026 NOFO is anticipated around June.

- It was noted that having a fully staffed Board and Executive Committee will support future application efforts.

PIT Count Data Timeline Discussion
A question was raised regarding the time required to finalize PIT count data.

- It was explained that data must be collected from multiple agencies and shelters, verified, and cleaned to avoid duplication.
- Coordination with partners (e.g., VA) is required to confirm accuracy.
- The Housing Inventory Count is conducted concurrently, adding to the workload.

Board Applications

- A new application link was created and distributed, as the previous link was not accessible.
- Three applicants were identified:
    - Shane Jones – Bridging the Gap
    - Robert Burton – Faith City Mission
    - Blake Nicklaus – Bridging the Gap

Board members discussed attendance requirements and eligibility considerations. It was noted that applications could be tabled for further review if needed.
No formal motion was made at this time; discussion only.

Governance Discussion
Discussion continued regarding Board composition and governance updates:

- Proposed increase in Board size from 7 to 15 members to 9 to 17 members.
- Inclusion of specific roles (elected officials, business community, law enforcement) aligned with HUD recommendations.
- Clarification that inclusion of certain member types may impact HUD scoring rather than being strictly required.

There was discussion about:

- Adjusting language to reflect challenges in securing participation from elected officials and business representatives.
- Whether to adjust the total number of Board members (discussion suggested keeping current range).
- Differentiating required vs. “endeavor to include” member categories.
- Clarification was requested regarding conflict of interest language and quorum requirements.
- Further review of HUD CFR guidance was noted as needed.
- A motion to postpone the vote on the wording changes was discussed as was a motion to rescind the prior motion that approved the changes to the Governance Charter.

Steve Smart made a motion to table the item for the day; seconded by Rudy.

- Vote taken to table the item; motion carried.

Additional Tabled Discussion

- Scheduling of remaining Board Committee meetings was tabled.
- Executive Committee appointments were tabled.

The meeting was adjourned by James Bellar at 10 AM.