

310 Division Street Community Liaison Committee (CLC)

MEETING MINUTES

Date: June 2, 2026

Time: 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Location: 600 William St, Cobourg – Boardroom

Attendees

Facilitators:

- Beth Bellaire, CLC Chair

Community Members:

- Daniel Gaito
- Catherine White
- Rob James
- Chloe Craig
- Liz Greaves
- Raeanne Deschamps
- Donna Pogue
- Erisa Katono
- Janice Byer, Cobourg Police Services (virtual)

County Representatives:

- Bill Smith

Delegates:

- Carolyn Rutherford, Community Health Centres of Northumberland, CLC Vice Chair
- Christian Harvey, Interim Executive Director, 310 Division Street

Guests:

- Dan Borowec, Northumberland County CAO

Regrets:

- Krystyne Gillespie
- Theresa Rickerby
- Rev. Ruth Wilkinson
- Shawn Senecal, NHH Community Mental Health Services

- Tracey Tink, DBIA
- Meaghan MacDonald, Board Chair, 310 Division Street
- Sheri Syer

Meeting called to Order

Meeting called to order by CLC Chair, Beth Bellaire at 5:00PM.

Acknowledgement

Selected CLC member provided a land acknowledgement.

Meeting Objectives & Agenda Overview

Updates from 310 Division Street – Christian Harvey

Updates from Northumberland County –Bill Smith

Subcommittee updates with key action items:

- Education & Awareness – Carolyn Rutherford
- Communications –Erisa Katono

May 5, 2026 Meeting Minutes approved.

Shelter Updates

Christian provided an update, see attached 310 Division Street report for May 2026.

- Every individual has their own mini fridge and a locker in their room, which has been great.
- **Neighbourhood Clean-Up:** A successful community clean-up event brought residents together and was well attended.
- **Community BBQ & Meal Program:** The community BBQ, initiated by a security guard and delivered in partnership with the Hope & Light Working Group, was very well received and will now be offered monthly. The new chef has been positively received and now provides dinner three evenings per week, complementing Hope & Light's meal program to ensure at least one meal is available each weekday (and sometimes two). Food is funded through Food 4 All and the Reaching Home grant, while United Way funds the chef position.
- **Mental Health Supports:** Transition House continues to experience challenges connecting residents with timely mental health services, despite ongoing efforts with NHHMHS, CMHA, Fourcast, and the Mental Health & Addictions Working Group. This is a system-wide issue affecting multiple organizations, not just Transition House.
 - CMHA has a mobile unit that visits communities at different days and times with brief intake case workers that operate the mobile unit. The catchment area is all of HKPR.
 - CMHA has reviewed its referral process being a quick turnaround so they are beginning there. It is still in the early stages of conversations. While no concrete solutions have been identified yet, organizations remain committed to strengthening collaboration.
- **Bed Holds During Treatment:** Transition House discussed the challenges of holding shelter beds for residents entering treatment or who become hospitalized. While beds may be held temporarily for individuals hospitalized until they have an idea of how long their stay will be, it is difficult to reserve spaces for extended treatment and/or hospital stays due to high occupancy and the need to provide equitable access to shelter. It is a difficult situation as they cannot provide preferential treatment to someone just because they are receiving services and hold a space for them while others are being denied shelter because of maximum capacity.
- **Pet Fostering:** Discussion took place regarding foster options for pets when shelter dog capacity is full. Transition House currently works with foster organizations

where appropriate, particularly during temporary situations such as hospital admissions, rather than requiring individuals to surrender pets to access shelter.

- **Smoking Area Relocation:** An experimental relocation of the smoking area has received positive feedback, with reduced noise and foot traffic reported.
- **Supportive Housing Challenges:** A significant barrier to transitioning residents out of shelter remains the lack of supportive housing. Some residents require ongoing high level supports such as long term care, while others are ready for independent living but still face limited housing availability. Partners noted that practical supports (e.g., assistance with cleaning, household supplies, appointments, and home visits) can improve housing stability and confidence. Organizations including Fourcast, CMHA, NHH, and 1 King Street provide varying levels of community support, but the shortage of appropriate housing continues to limit successful transitions.
 - Fourcast provides support like community connecting – managing medical appointments, cleaning, etc. and have potential for a caseload of 15, but they don't have the housing for the people to live.
 - CMHA can provide drop in support too, but they also don't have housing locally – maybe one unit.
 - NHH has cleaning and hoarding support and does home visits.

Northumberland County Updates

- **Warming Room:** The wrap-up report will be presented to Committee tomorrow and is available online. The warming room was considered a great success, providing a safe, warm, and dry space with light refreshments, though it highlighted the need for expanded services.
- **2026–2027 Warming Room Plans:** A report recommends purchasing a modular unit to be located in the former Golden Plough Lodge parking lot to provide overnight sleeping space. The proposal includes funding for the unit and staffing, with the goal of establishing a more permanent solution by the 2027–2028 season. Planning is underway with Cobourg's Building and By-law departments. This proposal is focused on warming – not cooling – as it is intended for use during the 2026-2027 winter season with a more permanent solution for the next cooling season that would accommodate both warming and cooling needs.

- **Housing and Homelessness Plan:** The annual review of the County's 10-year Housing and Homelessness Plan will also be presented at the upcoming Committee meeting.
- **ID Wellness Clinics:** Three clinics are planned for this year—Port Hope (June 3), Grafton (September), and Cobourg (October). Due to strong attendance in previous years, the program has expanded to additional locations. Northumberland County staff will be on-site to provide information about available services and supports. Clinics are open to all community members, regardless of where they live in the County, they do not need to live in the town that the clinic is being held to attend.
- **Building Improvements:** New HVAC units have been installed, providing quieter, more efficient operation, improved safety, and reliable air conditioning.
- **Vacancy Update:** There is currently one vacant unit on the fourth floor transitional housing.
- **Accessibility Improvements:** A new accessible ramp will be added to the front entrance of 310 Division Street, complementing the existing rear ramp and improving building accessibility for a total of two ramps.

Community Feedback & Group Education

Received two communications through the CLC email address.

Debrief from May 8 Come Together Northumberland Event

The event was well attended, with approximately 80 service providers participating in the morning session and around 60 community members attending the afternoon public session. A total of 40 organizations hosted information tables. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with most service providers expressing interest in participating again next year. The primary suggestion for improvement was to increase promotion and outreach to raise awareness of the event.

General Feedback, Questions, Concerns

A member had heard a concern in the community raised regarding incidents of theft from local businesses; however, it was noted that the individual involved in the theft from the business was not a resident of 310 Division Street. It is important to avoid stigmatizing people experiencing homelessness by assuming that individuals involved in theft are

unhoused and/or residents of Transition House. When responding to concerns about shoplifting, the appropriate course of action remains the same regardless of an individual's housing status: report the incident to the police and allow the matter to be addressed through the appropriate channels. If a shop owner asks what to do “when homeless people steal from me,” can empathize with the unfortunate situation however the response is the same as a theft committed by someone who is housed – to contact police and file a police report.

There was a question regarding sleeping in parks and whether that is illegal. Town of Cobourg parks close at 11:00PM so technically speaking it is breaking a by-law, but Cobourg Police would not be arresting individuals for this by-law infraction.

Communications Subcommittee Update

Erisa provided an update. It's been difficult for the committee to meet and it's been challenging to create new content. Some feedback has been that we aren't including perspectives and/or feedback from residents themselves. Idea to reflect on recent events to see if there is anything additional to share in longer form content for another bulletin.

Suggestions for content that arose during discussion:

- include update on the DBIA event
- hiring of chef and the cooking/meal program and skill building
- Christian has a resident that would be interested in providing feedback
- updates on the community BBQs
- reach out to the business that registered for DBIA event
- along with the email address for communications, have a QR code created to direct readers to an anonymous Microsoft Form, similar to the one used for the DBIA event, to allow another avenue for community members to share their experiences anonymously

Education & Awareness Subcommittee Update

Carolyn provided an update from the Education and Awareness subcommittee. The subcommittee continues to work on three main priorities; speaking engagements between Christian and community members; hosting the Day in the Life exercise; meeting with downtown businesses and neighbours of 310.

Priority 1: Speaking Engagements with Christian and local community member groups

- St. George's Men's Breakfast in Grafton Friday May 8th with Cathy
 - There were about 60 people in attendance and received feedback that it was excellent; people were riveted by the presentation. They also raised \$2000 for Transition House during that event. The group is also working on addressing rural homelessness. Christian also touched base on this as well and how rural homelessness looks very different than urban homelessness.
- May 20th – Rotary Sunrise
- May 25, 2026 – DBIA event (see more information below)
- May 29, 2026 – CHCN all staff presentation with Beth and Cathy and Northumberland County Outreach
 - About 45-50 people in attendance. Very well received and thoughtful questions asked; a lot of positive feedback regarding all three presentations.
 - CHCN staff are supporting clients on all sides of the fence, so to speak. They are supporting general community members who may have questions or concerns as well as the unhoused community.
 - Many comments about the impact of the musical chairs analogy and the Day in the Life exercise and how it was demonstrated in a way that makes it easier to communicate to others and explain homelessness in another concrete way, focusing on the lack of housing available rather than perceived individual poor-decision making or 'failures'

Upcoming speaking engagements include meeting with

- Boomers Club – Cobourg Library June 5th
- June 16th 11:30am - Port Hope Library & Port Hope Chamber of Commerce Lunch & Learn
- September 14th – University Women's Club

Priority 2: Poverty Simulation Event; "A Day in the Life"

- Beth and Cathy facilitated the exercise with CHCN staff last week. It went well and have hopes to include it in August at the next Community Matters event.

Priority 3: Meeting with downtown businesses and neighbours of 310.

On Monday May 25th, the subcommittee hosted the meeting with Christian, CLC members and the DBIA at Trinity United Church. One person pre-register in advance; however we didn't want to cancel the event with hopes that others would be planning to attend and

perhaps just forgot to register. The subcommittee continued to try to promote in the days leading up to the event and ultimately had four DBIA members and about 15 or 16 others in attendance ranging from Deputy Mayor Nicole Beatty, a Transition House board member, CLC members and Bill and Rebecca. There were some great discussions and conversations happening.

This was just the initial step, as we hope to hear from even more downtown business owners and employees, so the subcommittee plans to schedule additional ongoing discussions. If anyone hears any feedback about why DBIA members didn't attend the meeting, maybe they didn't know about it, the time or day of the week didn't work for them, etc. please let the subcommittee know. We'd love to have feedback to help guide our next steps for scheduling meetings and trying to engage more downtown business owners and employees in discussions.

The subcommittee also plans to organize a similar type of discussion for neighbours of 310 to engage them in conversations as well. These topics and next steps are on our next subcommittee meeting agenda for June 19th.

Unfinished Business

- Vacancy for delegate from Paramedics

Final Discussion & Next Steps

- Bill and Rebecca will reach out regarding a delegate from Paramedics.
- July meeting is cancelled. Many people are away so the committee will meet again on August 4, 2026.
- There are no confidential items.

Closing Remarks & Adjournment

Acknowledgement and thanks to all in attendance.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20pm.