Chatham Savannah Authority for the Homeless

Annual Meeting

Savannah Technical College, Eckburg Auditorium

8:30AM- 10:00AM

Master of Ceremony: James Mitchell, CSAH Board of Directors

I. Welcoming remarks- James Mitchell, CSAH Executive Committee Member

II. Invocation - Rabbi Robert Haas (CSAH Board of Directors)

III. Call to order and Opening Remarks- Jimmy Smith, Board Chair, CSAH Board of Directors

- *Jimmy Smith welcomed everyone to the 2025 Annual Meeting.*
- *He expressed that he was honored to stand before such a distinguished group of professionals dedicated to advancing the mission and goals of CSAH.*
- *He stated that the past year has been one of remarkable progress and achievements and that we have faced challenges head-on and emerged stronger thanks to the unwavering commitment and hard work of each member of our community and that of the entire staff of CSAH.*
- *He explained the critical initiatives central to the mission of CSAH: HUD-designed Collaborative Applicant Work, Street Outreach and Housing Solutions and Initiatives.*
- *He encouraged everyone to engage actively and collaborate to join our efforts to create a better future for those in need.*

IV. Introduction of the Point in Time Count- Jennifer Davenport, Interagency Council on Homelessness Board of Directors, Board Chair

- *Jennifer Davenport introduced herself as the Chair of the Interagency Council on Homelessness.*

- *She explained that the ICH is not a direct service provider, but a planning and policy body designed to bring together stakeholders from every sector—government, nonprofit, business, healthcare, faith-based organizations and beyond—to develop a coordinated, systems-level response to homelessness in Chatham County.*
- *She further expressed that ICH sets the strategic direction but Chatham Savannah Authority is responsible for carrying out the duties required by federal law, such as collecting the data for the Point-in-Time Count.*
- *The PIT Count is a one-night snapshot of homelessness in our community in which volunteers span out across the county to interview every person experiencing homelessness on a specific evening in January.*
- *Davenport shared the results of the PIT Count and stated that although we have seen an increase in the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness, there are important signs of progress.*
    - *There is a decrease in the number of unsheltered individuals—those living in places not meant for human habitation.*
    - *There has also been a significant reduction in the number of encampments across Chatham County.*
        - *In 2023, there were over 80 encampments counted; this year that number dropped to 39.*
    - *There has also been an increase in the number of individuals using shelter beds.*
    - *11% of individuals counted in the PIT are chronically homeless.*
- *This is a vital tool for tracking trends, but the PIT Count only captures part of the story. The real depth of understanding comes from the year-round data gathered through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which is also collected by Chatham Savannah Authority for the Homeless.*

V. Point in Time Count Comprehensive overview- Jenn Dulong, CSAH Chief Executive Officer

NOTE: The results of the PIT Count are available on the CSAH website.

- *Jenn Dulong emphasized the importance of the numbers we were discussing, that each number represents a human life.*
- *She further explained the numbers from the PIT Count:*
    - *73% of those experiencing homelessness are sheltered while 27% are unsheltered*
    - *The total number of people recorded on the night of the PIT count was 628*
    - *Of that number, 368 were adults older than 25*
        - *19 were between the ages of 18-24*
        - *69 were children under the age of 17*
        - *26 of those adults reported that they were currently fleeing domestic abuse*
        - *35 participants reported that they were veterans*
        - *104 reported that they had substance use disorder*
        - *109 reported that they had a mental health disorder*
        - *195 of the participants were female*
        - *433 were male*
    - *Jenn Dulong further went on to explain that we are at a 100% utilization rate for permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing.*

VI. Chatham Savannah Authority for the Homeless Year in Review

- *Jenn Dulong explained the Rating and Ranking Committee of 2024 for the HUD CoC Competition Notice of Funding Opportunities*
    - *This year the total amount awarded was over $4 million/year.*
- *Jenn Dulong then talked about the street outreach team at CSAH. In 2024, the network of service providers served 7357 individuals experiencing homelessness or housing instability.*
    - *Of that number, CSAH's street outreach teams served 2667.*
    - *She also highlighted the launch of Project Hope Water—a result of a partnership with Chatham County and City of Savannah to create*

a mobile shower unit to bring out into the community to give shower services to people experiencing homelessness while also allowing members of CSAH's team to attempt to connect people to services in the community.

- *She also focused on CSAH's compassionate encampment engagement.*
- *Dulong also highlighted the work the outreach team does to coordinate services during inclement weather—whether extreme heat, cold or storms.*

- *Jenn Dulong also highlighted the housing initiatives handled by CSAH—The Cove at Dundee, the upcoming Dundee Cottages, and Project R.I.S.E..*
  - *She encouraged us to take a "Housing First" approach, as it has been proven to work, especially when looking at our Veteran's Tiny Home project—the Cove at Dundee.*

VII. Closing Remarks- Karen Guinn, Vice Chair, CSAH Board of Directors

- *Karen Guinn closed out the meeting and encouraged us to move forward with hope and compassion and to get others involved.*