

Town of Plymouth
80 Main Street
Terryville, Connecticut 06786

Human Services Commission
Telephone: (860)585-4001
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Human Services Commission Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2026

1. Call to Order & Note Fire Exits: Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin called the February 17, 2026, Human Services Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Mayor's conference room and noted the fire exits.

2. Attendance: PRESENT: Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin, Vice-Chairman Mark Malley, Commissioner Sarah Sandshaw and Commissioner Morgan Hoadley.
Excused Absent: Commissioner Lee Ulinskas

Also in attendance: Carin Grunwald and Helen Supskinkas from HRA and Councilwoman Sue Boilard.

3. Pledge of Allegiance:

Chairwoman Cathy Beaudoin led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Public Input: None

5. Acceptance of Minutes – January 20, 2026

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Mark Malley, seconded by Commissioner Sarah Sandshaw to accept the minutes of January 20, 2026. This motion was approved unanimously.

2026 FEB 19 PM 12:00
PLYMOUTH, CT
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
RECEIVED FOR RECORD
Sarah Sandshaw
TOWN CLERK

6. Communications/Correspondence: None

7. Human Services Report: See attached report for January 2026.

a. Oil discussion

Vice-Chairman Mark Malley went over the procedure regarding the Rotary fund. Human Services vets the people. Funds are used from other resources before Rotary is asked as they are the back up. The Commission will invite Renee from Thomaston Savings Bank to the March meeting so this can be discussed further.

Helen Supskinkas went over the Plymouth Human Services – Programmatic Impact Summary report. See attached.

Helen Supskinkas discussed an issue with a client that happened to Carin Grunwald this morning. The client missed her appointment on Thursday. She pulled into the parking lot and followed Carin into the building. She put her foot in the door so Carin could not get into her office. The client was very loud. She called Helen to complain and yell at her. The woman was

looking for someone to do yard work. Helen feels that town hall employees should just take a message and not give the clients any information as to when Carin will be in the office.

8. **New Business:** None

9. **Old Business:**
a. **Budget review**

Chairwoman Beaudoin went over the budget that was submitted.

10. **Monthly Financial Statement:**

Chairwoman Beaudoin does not have the monthly financial report. She sat with Mary Jane from the finance department in October. She is hoping to start meeting with her again to revisit getting the accounts balanced with the proper numbers.

11. **Chairwoman's Comments:** None

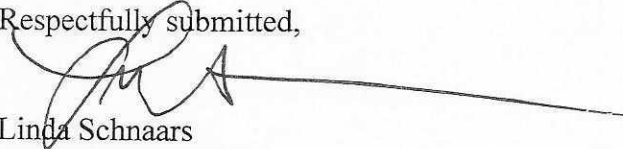
12. **Council Liaison's Comments:**

Sue Boilard stated she is very excited and is always available!

13. **Adjournment:**

There being no further business of the Human Services Commission, a motion was made by Commissioner Morgan Hoadley, seconded by Commissioner Sarah Sandshaw to adjourn. This motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Linda Schnaars
Recording Secretary



Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc.
Community Services Department
Plymouth Human Services Monthly Report
January 2026

Submitted by: Helen Supsinskas
Carin Grunwald

Reporting Period: January 1, 2026 – January 30, 2026

Services	Total Count
Phone Calls	230
Walk-ins	19
Appointments	21
Energy Assistance	41
Housing Inquiries	9
Medicare/Medicaid/Husky/Access Health	8
SNAP Apps/Renewal/Food Bank Referrals/Farmers Market Cards	14
Private Town Fund /Rotary Fuel Bank	0
Senior Services - Home Care, Renters Rebate, Elder/Disabled Tax Reduction, EPS, CHORE Services, Mobility	9
Information Services – Legal, Mental Health Counseling, Homelessness, Financial Services, Employment/Training, Veterans Services, Volunteering, Transportation	104

Donations Shared With Community:

A client who currently resides in a hotel expressed concerns about acquiring supplies needed to help maintain his bicycle, which is his main source of transportation. The case manager provided a \$50.00 Dollar General Gift card to purchase maintenance supplies.

Case manager also provided a \$50 Dollar General Gift card to a client who is currently unemployed and awaiting their Social Security Disability approval or denial.

3 Essential items bags were provided this month

One Client received \$1000.00 from the United Way's Rapid Response Fund. This money was used to help assist with their rent for one month.

Rotary Fuel Fund and Church Fund/Donations

Emergency Fuel Help Requests-

2 emergency request for assistance with energy related costs. Rotary Funds were utilized to pay a service invoice for a client whose furnace required cleaning due to repeated stalling. Rotary funds were also used to provide a partial payment for an outstanding oil bill that was generated just prior to HRA's deliverable fuel day of November 3, 2025.

Town Fund Request- 1 emergency town fund request. Town funds were utilized to provide a partial payment for an outstanding oil bill that was generated just prior to HRA's deliverable fuel day. The approved amount of \$303.00 assisted the Rotary funding to completely pay the clients outstanding invoice



Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc.
Community Services Department
Plymouth Human Services Monthly Report
January 2026
Submitted by: Helen Supsinskas
Carin Grunwald
Reporting Period: January 1, 2026 – January 30, 2026

Donations from the Community:

Utilizing funds provided by a grant from Thomaston Savings Bank, HRA supplied the Human services office with 60 gift cards at \$50 each for the Dollar General, and Adams supermarket. The cards will be used to supplement what the clients may already have in Food stamps or those still awaiting a decision to receive food stamps, along with essentials for those who can't afford anything extra beside living expenses.

Energy Assistance:

The Energy program is currently open. HRA is accepting appointments and applications. Clients also have the option to apply directly online. There were 41 Energy related appointments or inquiries this month. Clients must re-apply for Energy Assistance every year.

There were 6 requests for assistance with the WRAP program (water bill reduction) and or CL&P for (shut off notices, matching payment plans, and the newly restructured tier levels.)

VITA Tax Services:

Vita Tax services began on January 28, 2026 and continue every Wednesday from 9am-12pm through April 8, 2026. There were 95 inquiries about our Vita Tax service.

Community Outreach:

The case manager continues to provide the community with a range of informational resources. The most requested topics include: women's mental health, with an increase noted in military mental health and local food resources.

The Case Manager attended a meeting with Councilwoman Susan Boilard, Mayor Sekorski, and Donna Dognin of Veterans Affairs to discuss resources available to veterans here within our community. The discussion included an overview of existing services, eligibility requirements, and areas where additional outreach may be beneficial to better serve local veterans and their families.

Veterans Services:

Refereed to Veterans Affairs

Elder Services:

0 Farmers Market cards have been issued this month. 1 renters rebate requests and referrals to the tax department. 3 requests for senior housing assistance, 2 requests for Meals on Wheels. 3 requests for transportation.

Plymouth Human Services – Programmatic Impact Summary

Reporting Period: July 2024 – December 2025

Human Resources Agency of New Britain (HRA) – Community Services Department

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Plymouth Human Services site operates as a critical access point for low-income residents, seniors, individuals with disabilities, families with children, and individuals experiencing housing instability. Across the reporting period, the program consistently delivered high-volume, high-touch, front-line human services addressing energy and utility insecurity, food insecurity, housing instability, benefits access, senior supports, tax preparation, and crisis response.

Services are delivered through a hybrid model of walk-ins, appointments, and phone-based case management, supplemented by strong community partnerships and flexible emergency resources.

SCOPE AND SCALE OF SERVICES

Across the reporting period, Plymouth Human Services regularly handled:

- 120–240+ phone calls per month
- 7–33 walk-ins per month
- 10–48 scheduled appointments per month

Service demand remained strong year-round, with predictable seasonal increases during heating season, tax season, summer food access months, and the winter holidays.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Narrative documentation consistently reflects service to:

- Seniors on fixed incomes
- Families with children
- Single parents
- Individuals experiencing homelessness or living in vehicles/hotels
- Individuals with disabilities
- Low-wage working households
- Individuals awaiting or denied public benefits

- Veterans (via referral)

The frequency of seniors, homeless individuals, and families with children indicates overlapping vulnerability factors within the community.

CORE SERVICE AREAS

Energy & Utility Assistance

Energy Assistance inquiries ranged from single digits in off-season months to more than 100 per month during heating season. Support included applications, shut-off prevention, WRAP assistance, matching payment plans, and emergency fuel delivery.

Food Access & Nutrition

Monthly SNAP applications, renewals, food bank referrals, and Farmers Market card activity ranged from approximately 10–30 transactions. Emergency grocery gift cards were frequently issued to address immediate gaps.

Housing Stability

Monthly housing inquiries ranged from 3–16. ARPA-funded rental and mortgage assistance in March 2025 alone resulted in \$16,275.66 in approved stabilization assistance.

Benefits Access & Health Coverage

Ongoing assistance with Medicare, Medicaid, HUSKY, and Access Health CT ensured continuity of care.

Senior & Elder Services

Includes renters rebate assistance, Meals on Wheels referrals, transportation coordination, homecare referrals, CHOICES information, and Farmers Market nutrition cards.

VITA Tax Assistance

During tax season, monthly inquiries ranged from 60–100+, demonstrating strong reliance on free tax preparation services.

Emergency Material Assistance

Distribution of essential item bags, personal care kits, grocery gift cards, and holiday assistance to seniors, homeless individuals, and families.

Narrative Analysis of Programmatic Impact

OVERVIEW

Across the July 2024–December 2025 reporting period, Plymouth Human Services demonstrates sustained high-volume service delivery, with consistently strong utilization across phone, walk-in, appointment-based, and specialized service categories. The data reflect a community facing persistent economic instability, seasonal energy vulnerability, food insecurity, housing precarity, and growing reliance on benefits navigation and crisis intervention.

HIGH-VOLUME CONTACT & ACCESS DEMAND

Monthly phone call volume frequently exceeded 200 calls. This sustained volume reflects increasing reliance on Plymouth Human Services as a first point of contact for crisis navigation, benefits access, and stabilization.

Demand is structural and ongoing rather than episodic.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE AS A PRIMARY DRIVER

Energy Assistance is one of the highest service categories, with monthly inquiries reaching over 100 during heating season. Emergency fuel interventions demonstrate that standard benefits alone are insufficient for many households.

INFORMATION & REFERRAL SERVICES

Information Services regularly range from 60–110+ contacts per month. This reflects Plymouth Human Services functioning as a navigation hub for complex service systems.

FOOD ACCESS & SNAP ASSISTANCE

SNAP and food access supports remain persistent needs. Emergency grocery gift cards are frequently used to bridge benefit delays.

VITA TAX ASSISTANCE

Tax season produces some of the highest monthly inquiry counts, reaching over 100 inquiries in some months.

HOUSING INSTABILITY

Housing inquiries appear smaller numerically but represent high-acuity, time-intensive cases involving homelessness and eviction risk.

EMERGENCY MATERIAL ASSISTANCE

Material assistance acts as a stabilization tool preventing small crises from escalating.

OVERALL IMPACT

Plymouth Human Services functions as a community safety-net infrastructure node. The program prevents utility shutoffs, reduces hunger, stabilizes housing, supports seniors, and increases financial stability through sustained, accessible, high-impact services.

Plymouth Human Services

Programmatic Impact Summary

Reporting Period: July 2024 – December 2025

**Human Resources Agency of New Britain (HRA) – Community Services
Department**

I. Program Overview

The Plymouth Human Services site operates as a critical access point for low-income residents, seniors, individuals with disabilities, families with children, and individuals experiencing housing instability. Across the reporting period, the program consistently delivered high-volume, high-touch, front-line human services addressing:

- Energy and utility insecurity
- Food insecurity and nutrition access
- Housing instability and homelessness prevention
- Benefits access and navigation
- Senior supports and aging-in-place services
- Tax preparation and financial stabilization
- Crisis response and emergency material assistance

Services are delivered through a hybrid model of walk-ins, appointments, and phone-based case management, supplemented by strong community partnerships and flexible emergency resources.

II. Scope and Scale of Services

Across the reporting period, Plymouth Human Services regularly handled:

- **120–240+ phone calls per month**
- **7–33 walk-ins per month**
- **10–48 scheduled appointments per month**

In addition, each month included dozens of specialized service transactions across multiple categories, demonstrating sustained community reliance and consistent demand.

Service volume remained strong across seasons, with predictable increases during:

- Heating season (September–April)

- Tax season (January–April)
 - Summer food access months
 - Holiday periods
-

III. Populations Served (Demographic Snapshot)

While individual-level demographic data is not disaggregated in monthly reports, narrative descriptions consistently identify the following populations:

- Seniors on fixed incomes
- Households with children
- Single parents
- Individuals experiencing homelessness or living in vehicles/hotels
- Individuals with disabilities
- Elderly individuals over age 80–90
- Individuals awaiting or denied public benefits
- Low-wage working households
- Veterans (via referrals)

The repeated presence of seniors, homeless individuals, and families with children reflects a community with overlapping vulnerability factors.

IV. Core Service Areas & Impact

A. Energy & Utility Assistance

Energy Assistance inquiries ranged from **3 to 105 per month**, with highest volumes occurring during fall and winter months.

Support included:

- Energy Assistance applications
- Shut-off prevention
- Matching payment plans
- Water Rate Assistance Program (WRAP)
- Utility advocacy

In months when Energy Assistance was closed, staff continued handling WRAP and utility crisis interventions.

Emergency Fuel Interventions

Rotary Fuel Bank and private funds were repeatedly used to:

- Provide **100 gallons of heating oil** during crisis
- Assist households over-income or awaiting energy determinations
- Prevent loss of heat for elderly and medically vulnerable residents

Outcome:

Households avoided heat loss, utility shutoff, and unsafe living conditions during extreme weather.

B. Food Access & Nutrition Stability

Monthly activity consistently included:

- SNAP applications and renewals
- Food bank referrals
- Farmers Market nutrition cards (seasonal)
- Emergency grocery gift cards

Narratives document:

- Clients awaiting SNAP determinations
- Seniors needing supplemental food
- Families experiencing benefit delays
- Homeless individuals without cooking facilities

Outcome:

Residents obtained immediate food access while stabilizing longer-term benefits.

C. Housing Stability & Homelessness Prevention

Monthly housing inquiries ranged from **3–16 per month**.

Supports included:

- Housing navigation
- Emergency motel/hotel stabilization counseling
- Rental assistance screening
- ARPA-funded rental and mortgage assistance (March 2025)

In March 2025 alone:

- **6 ARPA applications approved**
- **\$16,275.66** in rental and mortgage assistance issued

Outcome:

Evictions prevented, mortgages stabilized, and housing loss delayed or avoided.

D. Benefits Access & Health Coverage

Regular assistance with:

- Medicare
- Medicaid
- HUSKY
- Access Health CT

This ensured residents maintained healthcare coverage while addressing other crises.

Outcome:

Continuity of healthcare access for vulnerable residents.

E. Senior & Elder Services

Recurring supports:

- Renters Rebate assistance
- Elder/Disabled tax relief
- Meals on Wheels referrals
- Transportation coordination
- Home care referrals
- CHOICES information
- Farmers Market nutrition cards

Farmers Market cards issued ranged from **0–15 per month** during season.

Outcome:

Seniors supported to remain housed, fed, and independent.

F. VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)

During tax season:

- Monthly inquiries ranged from **6 to 108+**
- Services offered weekly at Plymouth Town Hall

Outcome:

Low- and moderate-income residents accessed free, high-quality tax preparation, supporting refunds, compliance, and financial stability

Now a nice narrative analysis report, reflecting the highest service numbers.

Absolutely — here is a **polished Narrative Analysis Report** that centers the *highest service volumes*, what they signal about community need, and what they demonstrate about Plymouth Human Services’ impact and operational significance. This is written in an analytical, funder- and Board-appropriate tone, while remaining readable and mission-anchored.

Plymouth Human Services

Narrative Analysis of Programmatic Impact

Reporting Period: July 2024 – December 2025

Human Resources Agency of New Britain (HRA) – Community Services Department

Overview

Across the July 2024–December 2025 reporting period, Plymouth Human Services demonstrates sustained high-volume service delivery, with consistently strong utilization across phone, walk-in, appointment-based, and specialized service categories. The data reflect a community facing persistent economic instability, seasonal energy vulnerability, food insecurity, housing precarity, and growing reliance on benefits navigation and crisis intervention.

The highest service numbers across the period cluster in five primary domains:

1. **Phone-based assistance and triage**
2. **Energy and utility assistance**
3. **Information and referral services**
4. **SNAP/food access supports**
5. **VITA tax assistance during filing season**

Together, these high-volume categories illustrate Plymouth Human Services’ role as the town’s front door for stabilization, problem-solving, and access to safety-net resources.

High-Volume Contact & Access Demand

Monthly phone call volume regularly ranged from approximately **120 to nearly 250 calls**, with several months exceeding **200 calls**. This sustained call volume indicates that residents increasingly rely on Plymouth Human Services as their first point of contact when navigating crisis, benefits, and basic needs.

High phone volume serves as a proxy for:

- Households experiencing immediate financial distress
- Residents seeking clarification on complex systems (energy, SNAP, healthcare, housing)
- Clients returning for follow-up and ongoing case management
- Seniors and individuals with limited digital access who prefer phone contact

The consistently high number of phone calls, paired with steady walk-ins and appointments, reflects both accessibility of the program and community trust in staff expertise.

Interpretation:

Demand is not episodic or event-driven; it is structural and ongoing. Plymouth Human Services is functioning as a permanent stabilization hub rather than a short-term assistance site.

Energy Assistance as a Primary Driver of Need

Energy Assistance consistently emerges as one of the highest service categories across the period, with monthly inquiries ranging from single digits during off-season months to **70–105+ inquiries per month** during heating season.

Peak months show:

- Large surges in application assistance
- High volumes of shut-off prevention inquiries
- Regular WRAP (Water Rate Assistance Program) requests
- Escalating emergency fuel requests for households over-income, awaiting determinations, or already exhausted seasonal benefits

These patterns demonstrate:

- A high concentration of low-income households struggling with heating and utility costs

- A significant population living one crisis away from shut-off
- Increasing vulnerability among elderly households and fixed-income residents

Emergency fuel interventions—often providing 100 gallons of heating oil—underscore that standard energy benefits alone are insufficient for a subset of residents.

Interpretation:

Energy insecurity remains one of the most acute and predictable crises in Plymouth. The magnitude and consistency of energy-related contacts reflect both rising utility costs and limited household financial resilience.

Information & Referral Services as a High-Impact Backbone

Monthly counts for Information Services frequently range from **60 to over 110 contacts**, covering:

- Legal information
- Mental health resources
- Homelessness services
- Financial counseling
- Employment and training
- Veterans services
- Transportation
- Volunteering and civic engagement

This category's high volume indicates that Plymouth Human Services functions not only as a direct service provider, but also as a **navigation center** for complex, fragmented service systems.

High Information Services usage suggests:

- Clients present with multiple overlapping needs
- Residents require guidance to determine eligibility and next steps
- Many issues cannot be resolved through a single program and require coordinated referrals

Interpretation:

The program is absorbing the “system navigation burden” that would otherwise fall on vulnerable residents. This invisible labor is essential to preventing crises from worsening.

Food Access & SNAP Assistance as a Persistent Need

SNAP applications, renewals, food bank referrals, and Farmers Market card activity routinely fall between **10 and 30 transactions per month**, with additional emergency grocery gift card distribution layered on top.

Narrative descriptions repeatedly reference:

- Clients awaiting SNAP approval
- Seniors on fixed incomes
- Families with children experiencing benefit gaps
- Homeless individuals without consistent food access
- Households impacted by SNAP processing delays

Gift cards and essential food supports are frequently used as stopgap measures while formal benefits are pending.

Interpretation:

Food insecurity is chronic rather than episodic. The steady volume indicates that many households are structurally under-resourced, even when receiving public benefits.

VITA Tax Assistance as a Seasonal Surge Service

During tax season, VITA inquiries spike dramatically, ranging from **60 to more than 100 inquiries per month**.

This level of engagement demonstrates:

- High concentration of low- and moderate-income taxpayers
- Community reliance on free, trusted tax preparation
- Strong integration between Plymouth Human Services and HRA's broader financial stability strategy

Tax assistance contributes to:

- Access to refunds
- Claiming of credits
- Avoidance of predatory paid preparers
- Increased financial stability during early-year months

Interpretation:

VITA is not an ancillary service—it is a core financial stabilization intervention with measurable household-level impact.

Housing Instability: Smaller Numbers, High Severity

Housing inquiries generally range from **3–16 per month**, numerically smaller than other categories but consistently present.

Narratives show:

- Individuals living in cars
- Clients residing in hotels
- Households behind on rent or mortgage
- ARPA-funded rental and mortgage assistance preventing displacement

Housing inquiries represent high-acuity cases requiring intensive staff time and coordination.

Interpretation:

Housing instability is underrepresented by raw counts because each case is complex and time-intensive. Even small monthly numbers indicate substantial community risk.

Emergency Material Assistance as a Stabilization Tool

Across the period, Plymouth Human Services regularly distributes:

- Essential item bags
- Personal care kits
- Grocery gift cards
- Holiday assistance
- Clothing and household items

These interventions are repeatedly directed toward:

- Seniors
- Homeless individuals
- Single parents
- Individuals with no income
- Households affected by benefit delays

Interpretation:

Material assistance functions as a pressure-release valve, preventing minor financial gaps from cascading into larger crises.

Cross-Cutting Trends

Several consistent themes emerge from high-volume data:

- **Aging population vulnerability:** Frequent references to seniors, renters rebates, Meals on Wheels, and fixed-income hardship
 - **Rising cost of living pressure:** Energy, food, and utility needs increasing simultaneously
 - **Complex, layered needs:** Clients rarely present with a single issue
 - **High reliance on human interaction:** Phone and in-person contact remains essential
-

Overall Impact Statement

The highest service numbers demonstrate that Plymouth Human Services is not operating as a limited-access program—it is functioning as a **community safety-net infrastructure node**.

Through sustained high-volume engagement, the program:

- Prevents utility shutoffs and loss of heat
- Reduces hunger
- Stabilizes housing
- Maintains access to healthcare and benefits
- Increases financial stability through tax assistance
- Supports seniors aging safely in place

The data reflect a community under sustained economic stress and a program that is consistently meeting that stress with accessible, responsive, and high-impact services.