

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Remote Meeting

Thursday, March 17, 2022

8:30 am – 10:00 am

Minutes

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Adam Harr	City of Portland	Norm Maze	Shalom House
Jim Devine	HVJ	Ben Martineau	HVJ
Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors	Dan Coyne	United Way
Terence Miller	Preble Street	Brian Townsend	Amistad
Amy Geren	Portland Downtown	Vickey Rand	CHOM
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland	Ben Strick	Spurwink
Bill Higgins	HA4All	Anne Marie Brown	United Way
Johnathan Sarbeck	District Attorney	Mary Davis	CoP
Sarah Michniewicz	BNA	Isabell McDevitt	Work Works America
Ginny Dill	Office of Behavioral Health	Cullen Ryan	CHOM
Amber Bowman	Cop FS	Anne Prinlge	
Mike	HVJ		

Meeting Summary

After the statistics, the group discussed the closure of the Days Inn and the Comfort in to sheltering about 300 single adults at the end of May. A location is needed to absorb those displaced. The City presented on the proposed budget for City ESG dollars, \$164,857. The City manager recommended fully funding the following CDBG projects: Preble Street food program, Amistad day program, and Catherine Morril Day Nursery. United Way was selected for two hubs: the Cumberland County and Mid-Coast Hubs and are recruiting coordinators now. Isabelle McDevitt presented to the ESAC executive committee on the Work Works model. Affordable housing caucus and behavioral health caucus working on the supplemental budget on housing and homelessness and we continue to monitor legislation that would make changes to single family zoning. MCoC is working on implementing Coordinated Entry.

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January Meeting Minutes

- Aaron moved to approve the January minutes, Brian second and the minutes were approved with none opposed.

February Statistics

- Through These Doors saw zero households experiencing homelessness for the first time.
 - This is typical for survivors of domestic violence.
- **Hotel Update and Discussion**
 - The owner of the Days Inn and Comfort Inn decided to not renew their contract with MaineHousing due the calls for service jeopardizing their business license.
 - Ends May 31st.
 - Businesses around the hotels are having issues.
 - Around 300 individuals will be displaced.
 - City HHS has met weekly with the Deputy Commissioner since the announcement with service providers joining.
 - Finding alternatives and increasing services.
 - Amistad and Preble Street using RRH for the displaced individuals.
 - Presented to the Southern Maine Landlord Association.
 - Some increases activity around this outreach.
- **ESG Presentation**
 - Mary Davis of Housing and Community Development presented on the proposed budget for Emergency Solutions Grand funds the City receives.
 - Exactly the same as last year.
 - \$164,857
 - Brought to ESAC annually.
 - First public hearing Monday night 3/11/22.
 - Second public meeting is April 11th when the Council will debate and take public comment on this budget and the consolidated plan.
 - Cullen moved to approve the budget, Ben Strick seconded and the ESG budget was approved unanimously.
- **Update on local ARPA funding directions and opportunities**
 - Three pronged funding approach.
 - City Manager made recommendations for CDBG funding.
 - Full funding for Preble Street.
 - Emergency food
 - Full funding for Amistad day program
 - Extension and expansion of street outreach; the expansion will allow extension into evenings and weekends as well as the number of people engaged.

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- o Ramping up in the absence of significant day space.
 - Full funding for Catherine Morril Day Nursery.
 - **Update on Cumberland County Homeless Response Service Hub:** Introduction of Work Works opportunity for discussion
 - o United Way of Southern Maine selected for two hubs: the Cumberland County and Mid-Coast Hubs.
 - o Recruiting now.
 - Please reach out to be a part of the interview team.
 - o Community Solutions will onboard HUB coordinators from across the state.
 - o Hoping to hear back on Built for Zero application.
 - Application came from the Hub itself, a group of Cumberland county providers; the to-be-hired Hub coordinator would be the point person tasked with getting engagement from providers seeking to be involved. More providers are welcome to join.
 - o MaineHousing put out an RFP for housing navigators within the hubs; how does this work connect with the hub coordinators?
 - Will ask MaineHousing for clarity.
 - o Isabelle McDevitt presented to the ESAC executive committee on the Work Works model.
 - Employment based model that provides paid work that complements emergency shelter and RRH.
 - Group of stakeholders interested in exploring this opportunity, a feasibility study on adding to the existing strategy.
 - What is this option and what would it look like?
 - Exits for people ineligible for PSH.
 - The executive committee wanted to bring it to the full group as we could be well positioned for this.
 - The ask is to explore this option not implement it.
 - Will come to the full meeting in April.
 - Is there an emergency shelter solution geared towards the working homeless?
 - There is an affiliate network of shelter providers that have employment as an expressed part of the program design of have employers working with them for people to have income to afford housing.
 - o Questions about intake schedules not ideal for working people.
 - **Legislative Update**
 - o **Federal**
 - FEMA hotel funding through July first.
 - Sending a thank you letter to our federal delegation.
 - Movement on an omnibus spending package funded at 2022 levels.
 - HUD budget higher by \$4 billion.

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- New vouchers including for DV.
 - \$200 million for homelessness assistance which funds CoC.
- Build Back Better is completely stalled.
- Housing for All Act of 2022
 - National Housing trust would increase to \$45 billion up from \$1 billion.
- HR 6693 Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act
 - Change wait time to apply from 365 days down to 30 days.
 - Has a companion Bill in the Senate from Senator King.
- o **State**
 - Affordable housing caucus and behavioral health caucus working on the supplemental budget on housing and homelessness.
 - Push for intensive case management.
 - LD 1995 An Act To Make Supplemental Appropriations and Allocations for the Expenditures of State Government, General Fund and Other Funds and To Change Certain Provisions of the Law Necessary to the Proper Operations of State Government for the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2022 and June 30, 2023
 - LD1881
 - LD 1968 An Act To Expand Access to Mental Health and Crisis Care for Individuals in Jails and Individuals Experiencing Homelessness
 - With FUSE would create permanent supportive housing and emergency beds at residential treatment centers. Limited 30 day window for people getting placed out of jail.
 - People languishing in jail past their sentences due to lack of housing.
 - 1822 voted ought to pass. Helps with health insurance
 - 1848 ACT Team services passed. .
 - LD 1871
 - LD 1822 An Act To Improve Access to Behavioral Health Services by Limiting Cost Sharing by Insurers
 - voted ought to pass. Helps with health insurance
 - LD 1910 An Act To Improve Children's Mental Health by Requiring Insurance Coverage for Certain Mental Health Treatment
 - Voted ought to pass
 - LD 1961 An Act to Help Alleviate Maine's Housing Shortage and Change the Membership of the Maine State Housing Authority
 - LD 2003 An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Commission To Increase Housing Opportunities in Maine by Studying Zoning and Land Use Restrictions
 - Moved forward from the Labor & Housing Committee.

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- Would help Portland allow apartments in more of the City which is mostly zoned for single family homes.
 - Carry over bills are unlikely to move forward.
- **Other Business**
 - o HVJ Summer Solstice Vigil is June 21st at Tommy's Park in the Old Port 8:00 AM to 5: 00 PM.
 - Homelessness is an emergency in the winter and the summer.
 - o Lewiston City Council is exploring a moratorium on new shelter.
 - Adam moved that ESAC write a letter to City of Lewiston urging they proceed exploring homelessness on expediently. Terrence seconded and the motion passed with none opposed.
 - Sarah M. and her partner sent a letter prior to last night's meeting.
 - Cullen to draft a letter that will be approved by the tri chairs before sending.
- HVJ members want housing on undeveloped land.
- MCoC Update
 - o Meets today 1-3PM.
 - o Funding for programs across the state: awarded all of our current projects.
 - All renewals funded.
 - 4 of 7 new projects awarded funding.
 - 3 DV
 - 1 PSH
 - o Coordinated Entry
 - Working towards implementation.
 - Two four-hour session in the first week of April.
 - Friday April 8th training on learning from people with lived experience on racial disparity.
- Maine Unclaimed Property
 - o Is there any attempt for looking if people have unclaimed money on the table.
 - o Organizations can have unclaimed property
 - Amistad has unclaimed property.