

EMERGENCY SHELTER ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

Remote Meeting

Thursday, May 18, 2023
8:30 AM

AGENDA

1. Welcome & Introductions - Dan Coyne Facilitating

- a. Adam Harr, Executive Assistant is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Remote Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee
Time: May 18, 2023 08:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/85993826520?pwd=MGwyM2V2QUN2UUVFdWhqNE5uS3FaUT09>

Meeting ID: 859 9382 6520

Passcode: 711942

One tap mobile

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Find your local number: <https://portlandmaine-gov.zoom.us/j/ky22vRT3p>

- b. Approval of Minutes (5 Minutes)
- 2. **Monthly Shelter Bed Usage Statistics**
 - a. April, 2023 Statistics (20 Minutes)
- 3. **Encampments and Unsheltered Homelessness (25 Minutes)**
- 4. **Region 1 Update - Jenny Stasio (10 Minutes)**
- 5. **Cumberland County Service Hub update – United Way (5 minutes)**
- 6. **Federal, State and Local Legislation - Cullen Ryan, Others (15 Minutes)**
 - a. \$12 Million for Shelter Funding in Governors Revised General Package
- 7. **Other Items, Updates, and Announcements – (10 minutes)**

Next Meeting

June 15, 2023

Time: 8:30 AM - 10: 00 AM

Location:One City Center

If you should have any questions, please contact:

Aaron Geyer
Health & Human Services Department
Social Services Division
(207) 482-5131
aeg@portlandmaine.gov

Adam Harr
Health & Human Services Department
Social Services Division
(207) 482-5144
ash@portlandmaine.gov

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Remote Meeting

Thursday, April 26, 2023

8:30 am – 10:00 am

Minutes

Name	Organization
Taylor Cray	Preble Street
Dan Coyne	UWSM
Ben Martineau	HVJ
Terrence Miller	Preble Street
Donna Alger	Bangor Friends for Affordable Housing
Rick Lemeur	HVJ
Joe McNally	Milestone Recover
Matt Brown	Hope Squad
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland
Devon Stockmayer	Preble Street
Braelen Doyle	PATH
Michelle Lachance	Preble Street
Michael Fletcher	Preble Street
Maddy Lavanchie	Preble Street
Chelsea McLain	PATH
Kerri Barton	Portland Public Health
Rachel Ohm	Portland Press Herald
Allison Crocker	Riverton Resident
Jenn Truddel-butler	Preble Street

Name	Organization
Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors
Sarah Michniewicz	BNA
Bill Higgins	HA4All
Mufalo Chitam	MIRC
Clare Woodman	Resident
Adam Harr	City of Portland
Pastor Jeff	Grace Street Ministry
Mary Cook	PATH/TOA
Ben Strick	Spurwink
Chris Moynihan	Greater Portland Peer Services
Vickey Merrill	CHOM
Ben Skillings	Greater Portland Peer Services
Amelia Smith	SoPo PD
Leah Bruns	PHA
Ari Snider	Maine Public Radio
Ryan Murphy	PATH
Dani Laliberte	PATH
Hannah Johnson	Preble Street
Meredith Pesce	Amistad

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Kristen	MMC	Amanda Richer	Focus on Rights
Haley DeLuca Lowell	Preble Street	Peggy Lynch	Preble Street
Owen		Cheryl Harkins	HVJ
Jon Bradley			

Meeting Summary

The meeting started with a statement from the statewide homeless council. Providers explained that responding to the needs of asylum seekers with the homelessness system isn't meeting their needs effectively and has supplanted resources, exacerbating unsheltered homelessness; a simultaneous effort focusing on the needs of asylum seekers and that of homelessness is needed. The unanimous consensus was that the City of Portland should not clear encampments; ESAC moved to urge the City to place a 30 day moratorium on clearing encampments, giving two weeks for community partners coordinate a service response (City of Portland abstained).

Encampments and Hotel Closures

- Region 1 Homeless Council
 - “We understand the difficult situation that the City of Portland is in right now but believe sweeping and clearing out the encampment will have unintended consequences, and in the long run will only exacerbate the problem the City of Portland is trying to solve. We feel alternative solutions need to be found that include additional resources; that the community ought to be involved in advocating alongside the City of Portland. The ultimate goal should be that no one is experiencing unsheltered homelessness, but that can't happen overnight. We need additional resources to work to solve this crisis together.”
- The City of Portland has been in an unprecedented position when it comes to address homelessness in the city, unsheltered and sheltered. Everyone has been at capacity for far too long.
- The increase in the asylum seeker population has had some unintended consequences when being addressed through the lens of homeless which has exacerbated the encampments issue. A simultaneous, two-pronged approach is needed:
 - Address asylum seekers' needs
 - Homeless Services system in the city of Portland.
- Asylum seekers are not a traditional homeless population.
- Sanctioning encampments could be detrimental but sweeping encampments will only further the issue.
- No one agency can solve unsheltered homelessness.
- Clearing encampments is not a solution.

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- The City cites health and safety hazards for clearing the Bayside Trail Encampment.
- Has there been an effort or attempt to get the sanitation resources to mitigate the need to sweep?
- Removing encampments makes it extremely hard to engage with people.
 - People are setting up their homes in encampments.
 - They are creating stability.
 - Clearing camps loses important documents like birth certificates needed for resources to get out of homelessness.
- Outreach workers work on basic needs and do not have the resources to maintain stability and work on housing; there is only capacity to meet basic needs.
- HHS staff have proposed USICH best practices to the City Manager that include outreach and engagement to encampments,
 - This recommendation is going before the HHS&PS committee.
 - Providers were consulted on the recommendation.
- Trash cans are needed, could the City drop a dumpster there before clearing?
 - Also sharps containers.
- The nearest public restaurant not the trail is at Dunkin Donuts; they closed their restroom. This behavior of area businesses is contributing to the public health hazard.
- Westbrook may be offering areas people can camp.
- Where can people go where they won't be swept again,
- The city has done some cleaning up with outside outreach teams prior to the announcement of the clearing.
- The Monday provider call: the taskforce proposed would bring the city into collaboration already happening.
 - The encampment would be removed in the proposal; this would set us back and harm the people in the encampment.
 - What are the resources that the proposal would add?
- The eviction gives 24-hour notice; where do we tell 50 people to go to tomorrow?
 - Clearing is set for Friday.
- The group want the clearing pushed out by 30 or 60 days.
- People in camps don't have transportation.
- Could people stay in school gymnasiums?
- There is a willingness from community providers to help staff a campsite if there were onsite:
 - Trash removal
 - Sharps containers
 - Hygiene: Bathrooms, Handwashing, Showers
- There is a large encampment behind Logan Place in addition to Bayside Trail.
 - People from a cleared encampment will move to another.
- There are people not at his meeting as they are moving people into housing person by person.

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- We need to be mindful as we respond to unsheltered homelessness and asylum seekers to not appear to be favoring one group over another. We don't want the good work done to be considered negatively.
- Information can be sent to director Dow and Interim City Manager West.
- Is there any chance of avoiding the sweeping of the campsite in the next two days?
 - There is no indication of a delay.
- Preble <https://portlandme.portal.civicclerk.com/event/6240/files> Street MOVED to ask for a 60 day moratorium and bring together a group of providers with the City to best address the people in the camp. TOA SECONDED. United Way offered a friendly amendment that was accepted to change providers to community partners.
 - DISCUSSION
 - Would a 30 day wait and meet in the next two weeks be more palatable to the City?
 - A shorter time frame, an initial 30 days, shows the need to meet sooner and underscores the crisis.
 - The Mayor's constituent meeting is 4PM.
 - Preble Street MOVED to AMEND the Motion to a 30 day moratorium with the understanding community organizations will strategize on a solution in the next two weeks. TOA SECONDED.
 - Discussion:
 - 30 nor 60 days will be enough to find housing. It's not realistic.
 - We have been in an affordable housing crisis forever and has only gotten worse. People need to feel valued and that they have some control over their lives.
 - Some form of timeframe is needed; a sign of good faith would include sweeping will only make things worse and what the next step is.
 - Short, medium, and long term solutions need to be discussed.
 - We need to demonstrate in the next two weeks that partners are willing to work together with the City.
 - The trash is out of hand with the larger number of people.
 - Violence in the encampment has led to several major injuries.
 - This seems to spike in larger encampments.
 - A specific plan from providers on trash and security would be helpful.
 - Coordinate what supplies are being given would help.
 - Carry in-carry out policy.
 - Providers staff trash removal could be appealing to the City.
 - People from the camp need to be invited and participate in these meetings.

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- Nothing communicates dignity and respect more than having a meaningful voice at the table.
 - A resident of the encampment should be part of the taskforce.
- All the voting members present voted to approve and the MOTION PASSED unanimously with the City of Portland abstaining.

Hotel Closures

- ERA has been extended through the end of June for people in hotels
- The unknown is FEMA funded hotels, like the Days Inn.
- 18 people will move to a separate hotel, leaving 36 people with nowhere to go when a hotel closes Friday.
 - The Comfort Inn.
 - Preble Street is engaged with this transition and has been staffing the hotel.
 - These are not asylum seeking families.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Remote Meeting

Thursday, May 4, 2023

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Minutes

Name	Organization
Taylor Cray	Preble Street
Dan Coyne	UWSM
Ben Martineau	HVJ
Terrence Miller	Preble Street
Matt Brown	Hope Squad
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland
Devon Stockmayer	Preble Street
Kerri Barton	Portland Public Health
Andrew Bove	
Frank D'Alesandro	MEJP
Eli Wabnitz	Portland Public Health
Ginny Dill	DHHS
Eamonn Dundon	Regional Chamber of Commerce
Ellyse Fredericks	Portland Public Health
Quincy Hentzel	Portland Regional Chamber of Commerce
Erin Kelly	
Terri McGuire	
(Admin mobile)	GPH

Name	Organization
Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors
Sarah Michniewicz	BNA
Bill Higgins	HA4All
Mufalo Chitam	MIRC
Adam Harr	City of Portland
Mary Cook	PATH/TOA
Ben Strick	Spurwink
Vickey Merrill	CHOM
Ryan Murphy	PATH
Dani Laliberte	PATH
Hannah Brier	UWSM
Brian Townsend	Amistad
Clyde Barr	MSHA
Anne-Marie Brown	
Harrison Deah	City of Westbrook
George Rhault	Resident
Thomas Doherty	
Joshua Fichera	

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Cullen Ryan	CHOM	Wendy Harmon	Southern Maine Landlords Association
Nakesha Warren-Colbry	HUB 2/UWSM	Dennis Hoey	
Mike Merrill	VOA	Norm Maze	Shalom House
Briana Costello	MMC	Mal Meyer	
Val Fitzgerald	CCHP	Anne Pringle	
Ann Tucker			

NOTE, attendance was generated using a feature of google meet. Some information may be incomplete.

Meeting Summary

The group discussed how unsheltered homelessness is a nationwide issue, It is not an issue that will go away quickly as providers are already on the ground, and what is needed to meet basic human needs: bathrooms, showers, washing stations, and trash removal. With the City of Portland Abstaining, the voting members present unanimously approved the following motion supporting HHS Director Dow's EOC model taskforce: "Kristen Dow's proposal be adopted with the amendment that both resources and people of lived experience from the bayside and other camps, and the HUB 2 coordinator join the taskforce."

Encampments and Hotel Closures

- Submitted 30 day moratorium ESAC request.
 - HHS&PS and Council had specific questions on what the solutions ESAC would have for the HHS&PS meeting next Tuesday
- Community partner suggestions per the 30 day moratorium:
 - 30 days doesn't seem like enough; it will not go away in 30 days or a couple months. Unsheltered homelessness is a nationwide issue. It is not an issue that will go away quickly as providers are already on the ground.
 - We need to meet basic human needs
 - Bathrooms
 - Showers
 - Handwashing stations
 - Trash removal
 - Need help from the state.
 - We need to bring people staying on the camp to the table.

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- The former OSS building is empty; there seems to be an agreement with Port Prop and Fire but it used to be a shelter and seems like low hanging fruit. If this body wrote a letter in the press to bring Port Prop to the table it could be helpful.
- The fear is that other camps are being asked to leave and moving to the Bayside Trail camp.
 - The City has asked since February but are not an option from Port Property.
 - Can we get that in writing?
- Mobile trailers are available for showers and laundry.
 - State funding
 - HUD funding
 - Gofund me
- A sanctioned location with assistance moving there to not be retraumatizing.
- Try to have people from the bayside trail participate Tuesday night
- Many orgs have issues having the same staff perform outreach.
 - Seeing new faces may make folks not approach for services.
 - Need consistent faces.
- There is an increase in tension and relapse due to the threat of sweeps.
- Keep the mental health of the people in mind. Both the providers and campers.
- It feels like the City doesn't understand there is already a team of people working with the people sleeping outside.
 - Invite the service providers and people sleeping in camps to the table.
- A by-name list of people sleeping outside to not duplicate the great work PATH, Amistad, Preble Street, and Spurwink are already doing.
 - Efficiency of EOC/task force model is the benefit, similar to the LTS group.
- The benefit of the taskforce is streamlined communication to the council and city departments.
 - A challenge is the City Administration don't always know the collaboration happening.
 - Bringing this to the forefront may make people more confident that these issues are not being ignored.
- Do we need to thinking about this in two parts?
 - Specific to the bayside trail and
 - Encampment's that will continue to pop up until there is enough housing.
- We are going to another winter with people outside. We are talking about more people outside than we have ever seen.
- Would permitting smaller encampments with limits on tents considered?
 - With targeted outreach.
- Many are in support of the proposal but it is not enough. We need solutions that include the people we are serving.
- Outreach teams are exhausting themselves just meeting the basic needs. Hours of work that supplant long term solutions like housing and substance use treatment.
 - People living with enough dignity and stability to fill out a 20 page rental housing application.
- We won't get people out of 110 encampments within 30 days.
- Was the 30 day encampment approved and does it count for all camps, not just bayside?
- The moratorium was not approved, but this meeting was asked to be convened for info for next Tuesdays HHS&PS meeting.
- If there is a taskforce, Preble Street will participate.

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- The scope and scale is such that it is unclear if the proposal will bring new resources.
- The proposal will show that the work is happening. We need to divide the issues.
- Would ESAC want to make a motion that we support the proposal?
- Ben Strick MOVED that ESAC support Director Dow's memo to help communicate the work that is being done across the city to community members and other City departments. Cullen SECONDED
 - Discussion:
 - ask that resources be attached to the proposal.
 - This is a step to address the immediate and long term needs.
 - Nakesha is the new HUB coordinator whose work will be to have a by-name list.
 - Action is needed
 - Add amendment resources provided, people from the bayside trail encampment will be included.
 - Separate motions: one for support and one for resources.
 - Addendum to include people with lived experience in the taskforce.
 - It feels like if we separate, we are prioritizing the taskforce not the more urgently needed resources. To separate them feels like we are losing sight of the emergency.
 - ESAC is an existing taskforce that hasn't been tracking unsheltered homelessness. This could be a meaningless gesture.
 - We can't lose the resource element. If we do both it has to be both, not just the taskforce.
 - Mary MOVED to include resources, Ben Seconded:

MOTION: Kristen Dow's proposal be adopted with the amendment that both resources and people of lived experience from the bayside and other camps, and the HUB 2 coordinator join the taskforce. VOTE:

- AMENDMENT:
- Amistad Yes
- City of Portland Abstain
- CHOM Yes
- GPH Yes
- H4All Yes
- HVJ Yes
- MEJP Absent
- Milestone Yes
- Peoples Housing Coalition Absent
- Portland Downtown Absent
- Preble Street YES
- Shalom House YES
- Spurwink YES
- TOA PATH YES
- Through These Doors YES
- United of Southern Maine YES

MOTION PASSED

- If your job is to try and keep people alive outside, it is an impossible job in Maine.,
 - We must insist everyone in Maine be indoors.
 - If housing cannot happen, we must insist on shelter.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- It is not safe for people to be outside, even in summer.
- There is no going back once we allow encampments.
- Reached out to Bangor and HUD TA.
 - Suggested by-name list.
- This is the same level of disaster as a tornado or other natural disaster; we should get some of the county emergency management resources.
- The former OSS has facilities and sprinklers that is turnkey ready for organizations to use.
- We shouldn't close ourselves off to any possible resources.

DRAFT

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Remote Meeting

Thursday, February 16, 2023

8:30 am – 10:00 am

Minutes

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland	Norm Maze	Shalom House
Anne-Marie Brown	UWSM	Brian Townsend	Amistad
Vickey Merrill	CHOM	Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors
Mike Guthrie	City of Portland	Ben Martineau	HVJ
Cullen Ryan	CHOM	Lauren Chan	City of Portland
Devon Stockmayer	Preble Street	Mike Merrill	VOA
Taylor Cray	Preble Street	Regina Philips	Portland City Council (District 3)
Jim Devine	HVJ	Terrence Miller	Preble Street
Scott Morrison	Resident	Sarah Michniewicz	BNA
George Rheault	Resident		

Meeting Summary

The meeting started with approval of the 2024 City ESG budget. FEMA reimbursement will go away in mid-April which will prompt the State's ramping down using the hotels. The Homeless Services Center is set to open in the last two weeks of March, depending on when the certificate of occupancy is issued but will already be at capacity when it opens. We continue to see an

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

influx of single asylum seekers via California. The first day of the warming center served 65 during peak hours and 120 on the Saturday. Sean Yardley is the new chair of the Statewide Homeless council. With the start of the session, bill tracking is still being defined as they consolidate, with LR1357 an act to decriminalize homelessness one to follow.

Introductions

- Aaron moved to approve the minutes; Taylor seconded and the minutes were approved unopposed.
- Can we put the recorded meetings online?

ESG Budget

- ESAC sees this budget every year to approve the ESG allocation the City of Portland receives from HUD. The allocation hasn't been released and is assumed to be the same as last year: \$163,813. FY24's allocation ask is the same as FY23.
 - HMIS
 - Service work at FS
 - Homeless Prevention at OSS
 - RRH at OSS
- Aaron MOVED Recommend to approve the FY24 ESG budget as presented with the knowledge the budget would be adjusted proportionally based on the final allocation. Brian SECONDED. No DISCUSSION and the MOTION PASSED unanimously with none opposed.
- The City Council will take up HUD funding with recommendation

January, 2023 Statistics

- Available online: <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/b59b3e26-ce26-41de-8d4f-1b725efe08a3?cache=1800>

Update on Area Hotels and housing and shelter situation

- South Portland voted to extend Comfort Inn and Days Inn hotels through April at the request of the hotel owner.
 - Effort to consolidate into one hotel as the hotel owner wants to begin renovations at the Comfort Inn.
 - Anyone over the Days Inn would go to Howard Johnson as they were not under the same restriction.
- Unofficially, all hotels would go back to their regular use at the end of June.
- FEMA reimbursement will go away in mid-April which will prompt the State's ramping down using the hotels.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- The Homeless Services Center is set to open in the last two weeks of March, depending on when the certificate of occupancy is issued.
- Do we anticipate the influx of individuals from CA to remain and is there a plan?
 - There is not a plan and we continue to ask the State for support and to create a State Resettlement division.
 - The services asylum seekers and circumstantially homeless are vastly different.
 - This is shown on the shuttle rides such as going to MIRC and ILAP
- Is there going to be an effort to direct people in the hotels to the HSC?
 - The Days Inn is an extension of OSS and 60 of the 72 in the Days Inn will go to the HSC with the people staying at OSS proper.
- If someone is CTOD from OSS does that carry over to the HSC?
 - It likely it would.
 - The HSC will be full on night one.
 - There is a chance people won't go to the HSC since it is off the peninsula.
 - Will there not be amnesty?
 - Are capturing the number of people being turned away from OSS?
 - The purpose of ESAC is monitoring our shelter needs and we should track this number and discuss what we can do about it.
- How will people know if there is room at the shelter before heading out to Riverside?
 - There is an app that lets people know how many beds are available.
- It is impressive that the City and service providers have come together to make a comprehensive service center and that a project of this size is on track.
- There was a commitment for a shuttle service and bus service. What's going on with the HSC should be on the agenda.
 - The shuttle is part of the management plan will run directly from the HSC. The bus stop is across the street on Forest Ave. and the HOME Team will fill gas on an emergency basis and OSS will issue taxi vouchers as needed. We will have wrap around services on-site lowering the need for transportation to appointments.

Winter planning discussion - Group conversation (15 minutes)

- RFP for Winter Warming Center will need to be reported here.
- 1st day served 65 during peak hours and 120 on the Saturday.
 - Found three people sleeping outside.
- Thank you to the people that made sure people were safe during the cold snap.

Region I update – Jenny Stasio, others (10 minutes)

- Updates from HVJ
- State and federal updates
- ERA status and extension for another month or two

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- Winter warming center Seeds of Hope and York County Shelter extended day space to the evenings.
- Portland Warming Center efforts.
- Statewide Homeless council: Sean Yardley is the new chair.
- 2 new MaineHousing RFPS winter warming center and an expansion of shelter capacity one time.
- Spike in fatal overdoses

Cumberland County Service Hub update - United Way (5 minutes)

- Remain in the hiring process.
- 3/9 Hubs have been piloting Coordinated Entry. Not rolling out the CE in Cumberland County until the Hub COorindat4d is up and running. Emil Mead from Hub 5 will support us.
 - Offering training
- Will expand CE access points when the Hub Coordinator comes on.

Federal, State, and Local Legislation update (Cullen Ryan, others) - (20 minutes)

- Federal
 - The debt ceiling will be a fight but likely will be resolved before default.
 - House wants to cap funding at 22 levels.
 - President Biden wants to end veteran's homelessness and a renter's bill of rights.
 - Continuous coverage requirement ending could jeopardize healthcare access.
 - Mental Health and SUD for people experiencing homelessness.
 - Asylum Seeker Work Authorization Act.
 - Rule Change on VAWA helps some protections. Changes definition of domestic violence to include technological and financial abuse.
 - HOTMA streamlines section 8 and will see a final rule published.
 - Affirmatively furthering fair housing.
- State
 - \$30 million to expand affordable rental housing in Governor's budget.
 - Bill to supplement appropriations from the general fund to get proper government funds.
 - \$21 million for emergency housing relief: the warming centers and long term solution due February 24th.
 - LR1357 an act to decriminalize homelessness.
 - Can't arrest our way out of homelessness.
 - Working with the Speaker's office to draft some language on alternatives to incarceration for being arrested for daily living activities that would not be illegal if done in a private space.
 - HVJ doing outreach to the police academy to change policing from the start.
 - Student homelessness

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- MaineCare Rates
- Peer respite centers
- Peer support services
- Jill Dusen has an act to support asylum seekers.
- Speaker has 9 housing bills.
 - LD2 has everything the Maine Homeless Policy recommended and put it into one bill.
- \$100 million general bond for housing.
- GA bills.
- 9 month time limit on TANF and 45 day residency and welfare work requirements will need education that poverty doesn't work on a time frame.
- Some GA bills will be helpful.
- Food insecurity bills.
- Things will come up quickly; advocacy will be needed.
- Bill tracking will be sent out on Friday afternoons.
 - Contact Vickey to be added to the list.

Other items, updates, and announcements – (10 minutes)

- Rollout of the HSC to be an active up front agenda item.
 - Danger is people thinking this will fix the problem when it is already at capacity.
- Next meeting is March 16, 2023.

Meeting adjourned approximately at 9:48 AM.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Remote Meeting

Thursday, March 16, 2023

8:30 am – 10:00 am

Minutes

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland	Norm Maze	Shalom House
Anne-Marie Brown	UWSM	Brian Townsend	Amistad
Vickey Merrill	CHOM	Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors
Mike Guthrie	City of Portland	Lauren Chan	City of Portland
Taylor Cray	Preble Street	Sarah Michniewicz	BNA
Jim Devine	HVJ	Leah Bruns	PHA
George Rheault	Resident	Bill Higgins	HA4All
Dan Coyne	UWSM	Jay Taylor	PHA
Ginny Dill	DHHS	Hannah Brier	United Way
Harrison Deah	City of Westbrook		

Meeting Summary

Minutes approval was postponed to the next meeting and the statistics were abridged to CTOs, Warming Center, and OSS intakes surrounding the increase in asylum seekers straining our shelter system. An expanded warming center was opened at King Middle School. MIRC has been running an overnight warming center at the salvation army for two weeks with up to 77 people overnight each night. Asylum seekers at OSS supplanting situational homelessness resources. The HSC will have a ribbon cutting on March 22, 2023 and open for guests on the 28th. The administration released the president's FY24 proposed budget and the congressional caucus on homelessness was reestablished. Portland Housing Authority contracted to create a centralized Section 8 Waiting list; please share with housing navigators.

Introductions

- Shelter statistics were received late and incomplete.
- Due to posting late, the approval of the minutes is curtailed to the next meeting.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

February, 2023 Statistics

- Available online: <https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/deac7267-8e84-4795-b0c5-81c2c106ed13?cache=1800>
- Seeing a population shift to single asylum seekers at OSS.
 - 48 individuals from California.
- A warming center at King Middle School opened following the FS needing to have people sleep in chairs the 58 Chestnut warming center.

Updates and dialogue on the current shelter developing state of the emergency shelter system

- The HSC will have a ribbon cutting on March 22, 2023 and open for guests on the 28th.
- MIRC has been running an overnight warming center at the salvation army for two weeks wit up to 77 people overnight each night.
 - Many go to the YMCA during the day.
 - This is from the short term shelter funding.
- The First parish Church opened a successful warming center.
- South Portland enacted a homeless shelter zoning ordinance that may make their hotels no longer qualify as emergency shelter beyond April 30th.
 - Are any groups planning to open a shelter in South Portland; was this to accommodate a shelter proposal.
 - Bill will follow up on the ordinance.
 - South Portland granted a large \$15,000 of CDGB funds to Greater Portland Family Promise.
- Must lobby all communities to build affordable housing.

Region I update

- Lack of affordable housing.
- Asylum seekers at OSS supplanting situational homelessness resources.
- HVJ gave updates on the bill to decriminalize homelessness.
- Region 1 includes Cumberland and York counties.

Cumberland County Service Hub update - United Way

- Coordinated Entry
 - Two additional hubs are launching a full pilot.
 - Our hub will launch just the assessment piece.

Federal, State, and Local Legislation update (Cullen Ryan, others)

- Federal
 - FY24 President's Budget Request was released
 - Sets administration's priorities and not the actual budget.

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- Includes children's, support for workers, housing affordability etc.
 - 73.3 billion (1 billion more than current fiscal year); will expand assistance to an additional 50,000 households.
- Reestablishing congressional caucus on homelessness.
- State
 - There are many bills.
 - The bill tracking sheet is color coded.
 - LD1050 an act for a waiver on presumptive eligibility for work authorization.
 - Allow asylum seekers during the 6-month wait after applying for work authorization.
 - Public hearing coming p for advocacy.
 - An Act regarding housing stability workers.
 - Provide funding for staff working with people finding housing and stability, keeping it beyond placement.
 - HVJ is working with Speaker Talbot Ross An act to decriminalize homelessness.
 - Still an LR; likely a second session bill.
 - LD2 may shift to potential Housing First Bill to pay for 24/7 services for the creation of new housing first projects with money going to a DHHS housing first fund. Unspent funds would transfer to MaineHousing to build bricks and mortar projects.
 - LD1074 \$100 million Affordable Housing Bond
 - HVJ did advocacy around bills.

Other items, updates, and announcements

- The Section 8 Central Waiting List
 - Portland Housing Authority contracted to create a centralized Section 8 Waiting list.
 - People get kicked off the waiting list for a variety
 - <https://www.affordablehousing.com/mainecwl> provides instruction on navigating the waitlist and what advocacy is needed when removed.
 - Please share with outreach workers so information is up to date in the centralized waitlist.
 - Tell PHA you want to be back on the list; they may be able to get their original place.
 - The developer is in Florida.
 - Can the waitlist be further explained and tracked as an agenda item?
- PHA has 50 new HCV vouchers and 27 mainstream vouchers.
 - Must send letters.
 - Have only received 4 responses so far of the 27 sent out.
 - Not having critical documents and not responding to mail are the biggest barriers.
 - Apply for a reasonable accommodation or an appeal if denied.
- Bill is going to Capitol Hill visits; send info to him that he can share with the delegation.
- Can we focus on solutions based on the data?

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Remote Meeting

Thursday, April 20, 2023

8:30 am – 10:00 am

Minutes

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Taylor Cray	Preble Street	Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors
George Rheault	Resident	Lauren Chan	City of Portland
Dan Coyne	UWSM	Sarah Michniewicz	BNA
Ginny Dill	DHHS	Bill Higgins	HA4All
Ben Martineau	HVJ	Jay Taylor	PHA
Terrence Miller	Preble Street	Hannah Brier	United Way
Donna Alger	MCoC	Mufalo Chitam	MIRC
Josh Ruitto	CoP HSC	K. Scott Morrison	BNA
Rick Lemeur	HVJ	Clare Woodman	Resident
Cullen Ryan	CHOM	Scott Morrison	Resident

Meeting Summary

- Approval of minutes was curtailed until next meeting as there weren't enough voting members in attendance to have a quorum. In the discussion of the statistics, demographics data collection, specifically race has been a goal to be collected and analyzed, but shelters have not collected and shared those data at ESAC; supporting shelters and mitigating any barriers will be a priority going forward. (NOTED: could this come from HMIS?) The different housing subsidy categories are slightly squishy and the group will look at reclassifying to capture placements at public housing authority projects using other subsidies. Our HUB Coordinator was hired. A special meeting to address Encampments and Hotel Closures was scheduled for the Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 3PM.

Introductions

- We do not have a quorum so we will postpone minutes.
- Executive committee looking at scope of minutes
 - Also suggested using recordings.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

March, 2023 Statistics

- Available online
- Housing in Biddeford for teens opened and should be reflected in the placements next month.
- Demographics
 - Race is not collected in the shelter data.
 - Gender is collected.
 - This has been an ongoing conversation, but shelters have not yet implemented collecting it.
 - How can we assist collecting that data?
- Can the different categories of housing placement be clarified?
 - Specifically, PHA housing placements.
- What are the evictions numbers and how can we get that?
 - Housing placements can be weighted against evictions/returns to homelessness.
 - Intakes vs Housing placements (inflow vs outflow)
 - The rent board may have evictions data and soliciting their data or participation may be a next step.
- MaineHousing.org has available housing notifications.
 - There is a list of housing on deck to come online.

Encampments and Unsheltered Homelessness

What is the timeline on the removal of the of the encampment near trader joes?

- This appears unconstitutional similar to the 9th circuit ruling.
- In the policy there allows clearing of encampments for health and safety reasons.
 - Instances of violence.
- It is impossible to access bathrooms at area businesses around the encampment.
 - Access has been shut off to everyone, including customers, to avoid serving people camping adding to the health issues.
- What efforts are the city taking to mitigate health and safety issues?
 - Bringing bathrooms back but the timeline is unknown.
- The courtyard bathroom outside of OSS would have helped.
- Could the old OSS building be used for bathrooms and showers for the campers and could someone manage it?
- People are becoming increasingly desperate.
- Bangor had a similar issue; after sweeping a camp, three people died in a fire.
 - Bangor got HUD TA and were able to house people.
 - Portland is requesting HUD TA.
- Meeting next Wednesday, 4/26/23 at 3PM.
- Could there be an advocacy letter?
- Turn away data is squishy, but estimates are possible.
 - This will eventually will come from coordinated entry.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- Elena's Way is at capacity as of this month.
 - There is an active wait-list.

Updates on South Portland Hotel Closures

- Hotels in South Portland are closing some at the beginning of May and some at the end of June.
- Funding ended with ERA and FEMA; April 30th is the end date for finding.
- Shelters are at capacity so individuals are instructed to talk to GA offices of the municipalities of their hotels.
 - South Portland
 - Scarborough
- Some hotels may not take GA and some people may not be eligible for GA
- Days INN will move people to Howard Johnson; HoJo ends at the end of June.
- ERA is sheltering people in hotels which includes Freeport, Lewiston, and Scarborough.
- Only in South Portland: 158 households as of 4/10, this may not include asylum seeking families.
 - MIRC has better info: 233/537
 - Individuals and households by organization.
 - MIRC has 9
 - Prosperity ME has
 - TOA has
 - Locations
 - Sanford
 - Freeport
 - Bridgeton
- What do solutions look like? What is the then what?
 - Compile data.
 - Do agencies have any remaining ERA funding that could be negotiated?
 - Administrative burden on GA offices.
 - Remaining funds go to MIRC for housing stability?
 - Consolidate families into one hotel.
 - Remove fine on HoJo.
 - South Portland did allow the June 30th extension.
 - What do we do with nonimmigrants?
 - Florence House?
 - Tents?
 - June 30th is another deadline.
 - Blueberry Lane funded at ~280 beds but could have a greater capacity.
 - Habitat for humanity site that was not funded?

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Region I update – Jenny Stasio

- Best practices on summer planning.

Cumberland County Service Hub Update – United Way

- Hired HUB Coordinator!

Federal, State, and Local Legislation Update

- **Federal**
 - Debt ceiling
 - Dear colleague letter for funding all of the government with increased funding from King to Collins.
 - Sending thank you letter
 - DASH Act funds for housing.
 - Land use and zoning reforms.
- **State**
 - An act to decriminalize homelessness will likely be next session and may look at CTOs.
 - Emergency Management for Municipal Shelter
 - Housing vouchers for homeless students passed housing committee with bipartisan support.
 - Federal waiver for asylum seekers facing enactment.
 - Housing stability workers down to 10 and may go to next session.
 - Refugee resettlement center for asylum seekers
 - Housing first initiative has broad support.
 - Pilot to encourage ADU development.
 - Workforce housing in rural Maine.
 - Stable home fund.
 - Limited rental assistance for 24 months.
 - Affordable housing development
 - GA Bills
 - Many that put time limits.
 - Senator Moore suggesting a reimbursement 90/10 split
 - Major reforms expected next session.
 - Food insecurity.
 - Support for \$2 million one time funding to Preble Street.

Other Items, Updates, and Announcements

- Encampments and Hotel Closures for the Wednesday, April 26, 2023 at 3PM.