

**Remote HHS and Public Safety
Meeting Agenda**
January 13, 2026 at 5:30 PM
Remote Meeting



MEMBERS
Councilor Anna Bullett, District 4, Chair
Councilor April Fournier, At-Large
Councilor Sarah Michniewicz, District 1
Councilor Wesley Pelletier, District 2

To submit written public comment on an agenda item, email HHSPS@portlandmaine.gov. Submissions must be received by 12:00 pm the day before the Health & Human Services and Public Safety meeting to guarantee their inclusion in the agenda packet. All submissions must include the commenter's name and legal address. To help ensure your comment is submitted for the correct item, please include the name of the agenda item (see below).

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You are invited to a Zoom webinar!

When: Jan 13, 2026 05:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: Remote HHS and Public Safety Meeting

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1. Announcements
2. Review and Approval of Minutes from November 13, 2025
 - a. Draft Minutes
3. Discussion: Winter Warming Shelter Activation Threshold (Councilor Anna Bullett, Chair)
 - a. Memo
4. 2026 Committee Work Plan Development (Councilor Anna Bullett, Chair)
5. Next Meeting: February 10, 2026

Health & Human Services and Public Safety Committee

January 13, 2026, 5:30 PM Remote Meeting

Committee Attendance:

Anna Bullett, Chair (District 4), Sarah Michniewicz (District 1), April Fournier (At-Large)
Wesley Pelletier (District 2).

Councilor Attendance:

City Staff:

Adam Harr, Executive Assistant; Greg Jordan, Assistant City Manager; Chad Johnston, Fire Chief; Caity Hager, Emergency Management Coordinator; Maggie McLoughlin, Director of HHS; Mark Dubois, Police Chief.

1. Announcements

- None.

2. Review and Approval of Minutes from October 14, 2025

- Councilor Pelletier Moved to approve the minutes and seconded by Councilor Michniewicz. The minutes were approved unanimously 4-0.

3. Opioid Settlement Funds (OSF) Dayspace Update (Maggie McLoughlin, HHS Director)

- Seasonal half-day space at St. Vincent DePaul.
- Starts at 6:00 AM on the mornings after the Overnight Warming Shelter is activated.

Committee questions and discussion.

- Councilor Michniewicz asked if it will have an MOU.
 - Yes, a signed agreement is in process and include the Opioid Settlement Funds allocated to day space.
 - Will there be outreach to abutters?
 - Yes
- Councilor Bullett thanked Director McLoughlin who thanked St Vincent DePaul.

4. Opioid Settlement Funds (OSF) New Allocations (Councilor Anna Bullett, Chair)

- Providers identified gaps in the continuum of care through the Opioid Settlement Funds rfp process.
- Community Paramedicine
 - Mobile Medical Outreach started in 2017 as a joint taskforce among Fire and HHS.
 - Worked with EMS
 - Pilot was patient initiated but transitioning into community paramedicine requires a physician referral.
 - Referrals go in both direction between MMO and MOM.
 - MOM serves pregnant and post partem people with addiction.
 - Takes care of a number of unsheltered pregnant patients.
 - MMO is eyes and ears to fund and follow up with people.

- Able to check blood pressure and adjust medicine as blood pressure can be dangerously high.
 - Find people to talk about diagnoses patients may not be aware of and need immediate treatment.
 - Trying to track cost avoidance.
 - Catastrophic outcomes for the mom, baby, and community.
 - City services and psychological trauma avoided.
 - Can dispense medication.
 - Able to suppress viral load so HIV isn't transmitted to babies.
- Could lead to a reimbursement model for sustainability.
- Cessation Management (CM)
 - Increase in stimulant use in the greater Portland and Maine community.
 - Uses an incentive to mark a target behavior; loads money on a debit card when someone tests negative for a substance, stimulants.
 - Spurwink has a small grant has served 100 people.
 - Completion rate is 53%, up from 0%.
 - Show rate to appointments 83%
 - Negative urinalysis was 92%
 - Most successful treatment for stimulant use yet seen and helps people change mindsets.
- ME-RAP looks at the spending patterns of OSF fund recipients.
 - These proposals are putting funds to providers working directly with patients.
 - Thanked Portland for its public health lens on this issue.
 - Providing support to get people housed is critical to addressing substance use/behavioral health.
 - Low barrier grants are encouraged for new projects to get off the ground.

Public comment opened at 5:59 PM

- Annika Moore, Advocacy Team Leader of Preble Street to speak in favor of using the OSF funds to HOPE, Syringe Redemption Program, and the Half Day Space. Moving into housing is a critical first step for unhoused people. In its first year of 4, HOPE's 4 outreach workers secured housing for 42 people.
- Deb Rothenberg, Family Dr and Director of Preble Street learning collaborative. Connect is their mobile health van run by a psychiatric practitioner. Reaches unsheltered patients in a wide range of settings and collaborate with MMO. The half day shelter will make a world of difference and Connect supports each recommendation.

Public comment closed at 6:04 PM

Committee questions and discussion

- Councilor Fournier asked if there needs to be an amendment; for what's been presented, is there a dollar amount and do we need to rank or change?
 - There are rough buckets except for the flexible funding for partners
 - Would have funding for 2 years of the existing funds
 - Flexible grants would significantly change this.
 - Councilor Fournier supports MOM, CM, and HOPE.
 - Flexible grant is lowest due to back end regranting issues.
- Councilor Pelletier is most interested in CM, despite initial skepticism.

- If it is working it is incredible cost effective.
 - Supports the initiatives.
- Councilor Michniewicz is excited for CM and seeing the clear line of success addressing a gap in a lack of response to stimulant use.
 - Less inclined for flexible funding due to structural back end.
 - Supports HOPE.
 - How would funding affect the program between housing retention and new housing placements?
 - Support two retention specialists and one housing navigator.
 - These retention specialists will take the work load of retention work that is currently supplanting the housing work the current housing counselors are doing.
 - Supports the day space.
- Councilor Bullett likes the idea of flexible funding for local partners but does not see it as worth it for this bucket.
 - The county CDBG process is starting soon so there are resources for local nonprofits.
- Motion that the committee recommends amend Order 62-24/25 to allocate funds for the purposes of syringe redemption, day space, housing support to unsheltered individuals, community paramedicine substance use support and contingency management not to exceed \$14 million.
- Councilor Fournier moved MOTION and Councilor Pelletier seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

Emergency Operations Plan (Emergency Management Coordinator, Caity Hager)

- Two items for final review
 - Revised ordinance language
 - Section 2047n termination of an emergency (Time after the City Manager declares an emergency that the City Council must vote to renew)
 - Seven days
 - Updated Emergency Operations Plan.
 - Spoke with partners based on feedback at last meeting.
 - Small changes based on partner feedback.
 - Director of Cumberland County Emergency Management did a thorough review.
 - This is a base plan with hazard specific annexes developed over the next year which are listed at the end of the base plan.
 - Will exercise it in late spring.
- Community engagement around emergency planning
 - Survey and idea board are open until November 30, 2025.
 - Paper copies brought to Age Friendly Emergency Preparedness summit.
 - 130 responses to survey.
 - Shared with faith and community leaders and asked how best to engage with them
 - Invited to 4 neighborhoods meetings and will start meeting with them in the new year.
- Councilor Michniewicz heard from neighborhood groups and likes this engagement. She asked what the renewal timeline other municipalities set for the emergency timeline?
 - Most either do not specify or choose 7 days.

- Some language changes in the start do not carry completely through the last two sections; is this lack of consistency an oversight or intentional?
 - Will double check with corporation counsel.

Public comment opened at 6:23 PM and closed at 6:24 PM

Committee questions and discussion

- Councilor Michniewicz moved to move this forward to the full council and Councilor Pelletier seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

Police Citizen Review Board Discussion (Rachel Millette, Associate Corporation Counsel)

- AT the last meeting, the Committee asked for examples of different qualifications.
 - The board member qualifications and disqualifications are described in the attached memo but there are not many consistencies across them.
- The goal tonight is to amend the existing ordinance if necessary and pass to the council for ratification.
- Councilor Pelletier proposed an amendment:
 - **Sec. 2-78.2 Any** present or former member of the City Council or School Board, who held that position in the previous ~~five~~ *one*-year period;
 - A current member would be disqualified without this change.
 - **Sec. 2-78.4 b.** ~~The applicant has been arrested by any member of the Portland police department within the previous ten (10) years, or has had the final disposition of any criminal proceedings resulting from such an arrest within the previous ten (10) years, whichever is longer;~~
 - c. the applicant or any member of their immediate family has filed a complaint with the internal affairs unit of the Portland police department within the previous ~~ten (10)~~ *two* (2) years;
 -
 - **Section 2-83** The board shall annually elect one (1) of its members as the chair and one (1) of its members as the vice chair, to serve in the absence of the chair. ~~Whenever possible, non-voting members of the board shall serve as the chair and vice chair.~~
 -

Public comment opened at 6:33

- Randy represents his own opinions but is a member of the BCRB. If the ordinance is approved currently it would go against other standards and the recommendations of the racial equity committee; the amendments are a good direction but should go further. Step 1 and 2 match up well but the 2-78 number 4 restrictions could change part a to any current member of the police department or family member of a current PD member. Part b could be reduced to applicant that has been convicted of a felony in past 5 years of family member that have been convicted of a felony on the past one year. 478 part c should be removed completely. It is unreasonably discriminatory towards applicants. Part d pending litigation has potential bias. Overall encouraged the ordinance get revised before approved.
- Joey Brunelle is a member of the board and sent a letter and would like the chair and vice chair as non-voting members should be removed and the disqualifications needs change as the most senior member of the current board would be disqualified. In his personal capacity,

he said because these basic issues are not yet solved, we can't get to the substantive elements of the board after 2 years.

Public comment closed at 6:39PM

Committee questions and discussion.

- Councilor Michniewicz thinks 10 years is a long time to disqualify.
 - Rationale of 5 years is to have confidence in the board. Trying to avoid the revolving door where one might carry over a position of powers influence onto the board.
 - Employees are included in Councilor Pelletier's amendment.
 - As ordinance stands shouldn't be carved out for a specific individual and does not support going down to one year.
 - We don't have enough people applying or diversity on our committees. People who know how to have access get a disproportionate amount of sway can impede new participation; it is not our responsibility to further an individual's civic ambition.
- Councilor Fournier wants to assume the best intent and a system in place for oversight.
 - It takes a lot to serve in these positions and people tend to serve their communities after employment or public office.
- Councilor Bullett said all applicants would go through legislative and nominating.
- Each piece of Councilor Pelletier's amendment was divided into separate motion to reach substantive change.
- Councilor Michniewicz appreciates the vote on the changes to express their thoughts
- Councilor Pelletier moved to make changes to section 2781 and 2782 to change the timeline from five years to one year for former City officials and staff. Councilor Michniewicz voted no, motion passed 3-1.
- Councilor Pelletier moved to strike applicant arrest section in 478b and update lettering. Motion passes unanimously 4 – 0.
- Councilor Pelletier moved to reduce the amount of time an applicant or member of family has filed a complaint from 10 years to 2 years. The motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.
- Councilor Pelletier moved to strike the second sentence so non-voting members of the board. The motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.
- Councilor Bullett moved to pass the ordinance as amended and Councilor Fournier seconded. The motion passed 3 – 1 with Councilor Michniewicz voting no.

Next meeting is January 13, 2026.

- Chair Bullett thanked staff and everyone who worked on this committee.

Councilor Fournier moved to adjourn, and was seconded by Councilor Pelletier. The motion passed unanimously 4-0 and the meeting adjourned at 6:59 PM.



To: Health and Human Services & Public Safety Committee
Councilor Anna Bullett, Chair

MEETING DATE

January 13, 2026

AGENDA ITEM

Agenda Item #1 - Discussion: Winter Warming Shelter Activation Threshold

PURPOSE

Review the activation threshold for the Winter Warming Shelter

COMMITTEE WORK PLAN/CITY COUNCIL GOAL ALIGNMENT

Warming & Cooling Shelter Planning was a priority on the 2024-2025 work plan

BACKGROUND

Current Threshold and Activation

The Winter Warming Shelter is activated when the daily low temperature reaches 15 °F or below, or snow accumulation of more than 10 inches occurs, from November to April 15th.

- The National Weather Service (NWS) 48-hour forecast is used to assess conditions and make this determination two days in advance of a potential activation.
- The source of the forecast is the National Weather Service Impact-based Decision Support Services (IDSS) forecast at two points - a coastal point and an inland point (zip codes 04101 and 04103).
- If the forecasted temperature at either the coastal point or the inland point is at or below 15°F at any time between 8:00pm to 6:00am when individuals would be actively sheltering then the Winter Warming Shelter is activated.

Threshold Determination

Starting in the winter of 2023-2024, Winter Warming Shelter operators have partnered with the City of Portland to apply for State funding available through Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) for operational costs. The Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) provides historic temperature data to the Winter Warming Shelter operator and the operator uses the data to estimate how many nights the shelter could be open at different temperatures. The operator uses this information in their budget calculations for the grant application.

Threshold History

The current winter is the first time that the City of Portland has operated the Winter Warming Shelter. This winter the Winter Warming Plan is using the same thresholds as last year (2024-2025). During the winter of 2023-2024, the threshold was a daily apparent high of 20°F. Changing the threshold from daily high to a daily low (as was done in 2024) aligns the opening of the shelter with the coldest time of day and led to the shelter opening more often (34 nights, compared to 17). Historically, the midpoint in the number of nights the facility is activated occurs around the first week in February; however, the weather can significantly shift with late season colder temperatures and snow.

Cost Implications

Without consideration of one-time costs such as the metal detector, it costs the City \$7,746 to operate the shelter per night at the current location. 80% of those costs are associated with staffing while 20% are associated with client supplies. Staffing is dependent on the operational model and physical layout of the building.

Based on the last five years of weather data, if the threshold were increased to 17 degrees, the shelter would be activated an additional 5-10 times seasonally, resulting in a total cost increase of \$38,730-\$77,460. A similar analysis at 20 degrees increases activations by 14-21 days with an associated cost of \$108,444-\$201,396. Increasing the threshold to 40 degrees increases the number of activations to 131-160, with an associated cost of \$1,014,726-\$1,239,360.

Staffing Implications

Operation of the 2025-2026 winter warming shelter is dependent on the assumption that the facility would operate a maximum of 50 nights in the season, which is the upper threshold of what is possible with our existing staffing. Additional investments in operational time would require commensurate additional staffing; recruiting and training staff to be available this season would be challenging.

Research and Peer Review

A memo provided for the April 2025 HHS & PS Committee Meeting details research and analysis of warming and cooling centers in 18 comparable cities. The research found that Portland stands out as the only municipality researched that operates its own homeless shelter; many communities have limited year-round shelter capacity that increases the need for sheltering in the colder months. Of the cities that do have warming shelters, the majority of the warming shelters are open nightly on a seasonal basis and are operated by private non-profit organizations. One of the cities researched operated a warming shelter.

FISCAL IMPACT

See note above regarding costs.

PRIOR COMMITTEE REVIEW

April 2025

PREPARED BY

Caity Hager
Emergency Management Coordinator
Fire Department

Greg Jordan
Assistant City Manager
Executive Department

Maggie McLoughlin
Director
Health & Human Services

ATTACHMENTS

none