

One City Center

Thursday, September 19, 2019

9:00 am – 10:00 am

Minutes

Attendees:

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Adam Harr	City of Portland	Donna Yellen	Preble Street
Ginny Dill	Shalom House	Norm Maze	Shalom House
Harrison Deah	City of Westrook	Sara Fleurant	City of Portland
Peggy Lynch	Preble Street	Sara Ewing-Merril	GP Family Promise
Jim Divine	HVJ	Cullen Ryan	CHOM
Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors	Josh Ruitto	City of Portland
Amanda Methot	City of Portland HCD	Carol Hutchins	BNA
Jacques Ngaliema	GPH	Vickey Rand	CHOM
Thomas Natalie	Milestone Foundation	Sarah Gaba	CHOM
Christina Cook	PATH/TOA		

Introductions

- Approval of Minutes
 - Sara made a motion to approve the minutes, Vickey seconded and the minutes were approved.
- Announcements
 - The September 24th Health and Human Services & Public Safety meeting is cancelled; the next meeting is October 8th and will have Shelter Policy returning to the agenda.

HVJ

- Forum October 16th to speak with candidates running for City Council

- October 23rd forum for the mayoral candidates. Breakfast first ten questions.
- HVJ is following the Homeless Services Center and shelter policy discussion at the Health and Human Services & Public Safety Committee.
- HVJ would like to increase memberships participation at ESAC.

August Statistics

<https://portlandme.civicclerk.com/Web/GenFile.aspx?ad=3193>

- Numbers slightly lower than last year.
- Family Shelter Warming Center numbers used the average of the warming center from 8/15 to 8/31 for the untracked dates 8/1 to 8/14.

Long Term Stayers

- 233 in housing with a 92% success rate
 - Remaining are the most difficult to house that require other systems to successfully house.

Legislative Update

- Federal
 - Budget: likely a continuing resolution of FY19 levels representing a slight decrease.
 - If nothing is done the budget goes until the end of the month.
 - No THUD bill in Senate.
 - Proposed rules on fair housing disparate impact: taking away the enforcement tool.
 - Comments due by October 18th.
 - Norm made a motion to write a letter opposing the rule, Sara seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
 - Fostering Stable Housing Opportunity Act.
 - Extends vouchers for aging out of foster care.
 - CO Act passed house on September 10th
 - Bi-partisan companion bill in senate.
 - 425,000 affordable USDA RD Homes; it will help keep the existing housing in the program and not go to market rate.
 - Letter from ESAC in opposition to SNAP cuts was submitted.
- Local
 - LD794 resolution to propose an amendment to the Maine constitution to establish a right to food.
 - Homeless rule out to public comment for rule making.

Shelter Policy & Sleeping Outside

- Tuesday 9/10 HHS&PS Committee met to discuss policies of the new Homeless Services Center.
 - Chair of the meeting Councilor Belinda Ray shared a list of policy questions and goals.
 - Councilors asked for community partner input and said that input can be given at public comment.
- How to engage the Council?

- Original proclamation of ESAC: history and laying out the stricture.
 - <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2284/Emergency-Shelter-Assessment-Committee-History-Timeline-081610>
- ESAC can give input on the shelter policy and impact on people sleeping out; is it time to have targeted discussions:
 - Shelter policy
 - People sleeping out
- HVJ: Community of people counting on services from the shelter who do not stay at the shelter.
- Cullen commented on this and the previous meeting is wrapping up early when it has a unique role to look at the needs of people sleeping out looking at statistics have serious deliberations.
 - Concerned with growing population sleeping out.
 - LTS works but cannot be attributed to the drop in the shelter.
 - Possibly due to the perception that violent people are accessing shelter who are then barred from shelter for safety concerns of other shelter stayers.
 - Aaron noted the meetings used to be attended by 50-60 people representing many agencies yet the last meeting only had a handful of people and the third designated tri-chair hasn't been attended a meeting in years.
- Cullen is worried that a similar situation will happen in Portland that has occurred in Skid Row, a square mile in L.A. that now has no sidewalks due to being overtaken by encampments.
 - Occupy movement led to tents being offered to people sleeping out.
 - Outreach to people sleeping out is very difficult
 - Feels like an invasion of space, adding to difficulty.
 - A criminal justice response does not work.
- Cullen Proposing a subcommittee to engage people barred from shelter.
 - Would like people sleeping out added to ESAC statistics.
 - Would like # people barred from shelter added to ESAC statistics.
- Norm made a motion that shelters add the number of people banned from their shelter and the number of people sleeping out submitted to be added to the statistics. Cullen seconded and the motion passed.
 - How will these numbers been collected?
 - Barred (CTOd) easier.
 - Cross referenced to determine sleeping out.
 - Greater Portland Health can participate.
 - Some people who are CTOd have no place use the restroom (use in their restrooms does not result in CTO).
- HOME Team can help get information on people sleeping outside to not put on shelters.
- CDBG is an option; it is competitive but addressing the needs of the homeless population gets the most points. The mandatory meeting is coming up.
- Does there need to be a subcommittee for shelter policy or would that be promoted naturally?
 - Added as an invitation in the notice for regular ESAC meetings.
- LTS could adapt to take on some of the community wide response for people sleeping out.
 - Are we in a space to create a subcommittee yet?
- PATH's role is outreach through a clinical and mental health lens.

- There is an uptick in people who are not severely mentally ill and are outside their grant's scope.
- Data will be very important.
 - People who are criminally trespassed everywhere and people who are medically compromised are more likely to be high users of police and fire and the Medicaid waiver will need that data.
 - State level request to get a different kind of Medicaid funding to pay for supportive housing.
- Norm made a motion that for the next three months we extend the ESAC meeting time by an hour, during which times focus be on the new Homeless Center Policy for planning, coordination, advocacy, and additionally support for individuals experiencing homelessness. The motion was seconded by Cullen and passed unanimously.
 - Discussion: Homeless Services Center Policy as center focus of ESAC.
 - Norm said the City website says it is a standing committee and If ESAC is a standing committee, it should have a City Council member as a Subcommittee.
 - Noted: it is not a standing subcommittee of the City Council.
 - Should this be a subcommittee, working group or be left to the ESAC group?
 - Working group disbanded once the Homeless Services Center opens?
 - Group Decided the needs of those experiencing homelessness and how that should inform the Homeless Services Center Shelter Policy recommendations made to the City Council be a standing item, extending the meeting to accommodate the discussion.
- Structure: only count vote by vote when there is a non-unanimous vote.
 - Revisit votes that are not unanimous.

Next Steps

- PATH requested the Creation of an unsheltered subcommittee be on the next agenda.
- Group decided not to meet and discuss shelter policy before the 8th HHS&PS Committee on shelter policy, but will have a unified message for the full Council when shelter policy comes before them.
- Adam will send out ESAC history document.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 10:10 AM.