

One City Center

Thursday, November 21, 2019

9:00 am – 11:00 am

Minutes

Name	Organization
Adam Harr	City of Portland
Brian Townsend	Amistad
Henry Tarlow	Portland Public Health
Ginny Dill	Shalom House
Katie Seelen	United Way
Jim Divine	HVJ
Jeff Tardif	City of Portland
Brian Townsend	Amistad
Christina Cook	PATH / TOA
Leah Bruns	Portland Housing Authority
Donna Yellen	Preble Street
Kirk Carlsen	Milestone Recovery
Christine Grant	CMGBH for Atlantic Charitable Fund
Kelley Walsh	City of Portland

Name	Organization
Norm Maze	Shalom House
Sara Fleurant	City of Portland
Vickey Rand	CHOM
Pastor Jeff Logan	Grace Street Ministry
Heather Zimmerman	Preble Street
Suzanne Randall	HA4All
Adam Normandin	MMC/PSLC
Meredith Pesce	Amistad
Michele Savage	MMC/HHP
Amanda Menthott	City of Portland
Elizabeth Jackson	GPH
Cullen Ryan	CHOM
Katie Seelen	United Way
Ben Strick	Spurwink

Announcements and Introductions

- Approval of Minutes: <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/1034>
 - Jim made a motion to approve the minutes as amended.
 - Christine's name was spelled wrong: CMG Behavioral Health Consulting for Atlantic Charitable Foundation.

HVJ

- Annual Winter Solstice Homelessness Vigil Is December 21, 2019 at Monument Square.
- Shelter is a human right demonstration before the November 18, 2019 meeting to protest the cap, access to services if not staying at the shelter, and voice concerns about the riverside location.
 - Next City Council Meeting December 16th.

Stats

- October statistics are available here:
- Overall bed nights are down by 96
- Intakes and first time homelessness are down.
- First time homeless statistic will include percentages of the overall intakes.

LTS

- Group is focusing on people who cannot access shelter.
 - Creating a by name list of:
 - People medically restricted from OSS
 - People CTOD from OSS
 - Florence House
 - Milestone
- People restricted from one shelter though they could not access all shelters.
 - Communicating to individuals the restriction is just to the locations.
- Meeting three times a month due to combining with ESAC.
 - Last Thursday of the month examine the most complicated cases.
- By name list work continues but only warranted updates are given and troubleshooting issues for people already housed.
- Placements from LTS list and Long Term Stayers who are not on the list need to be reconciled.
- LTS has added to the downward trend but the perception people may not be allowed in shelter or not presenting for shelter out of fear that they may get restricted at the wrong time.
- 93-94% success rate staying housed (including rehousing).

Legislative Update

- Federal
 - Government shutdown at midnight.
 - Unclear if it will.
 - THUD increases recommended but may be a continuing resolution.
 - Requires congressional approval.

- Or an omnibus bill with everything.
- o SNAP
 - Proposal that would remove many people will reopen its public comment period.
 - Would now affect 900,000 kids; free to reduced lunch kids with 300,000 losing benefits altogether.
 - Would the committee like to weigh in as a committee?
 - o Cullen a motion for ESAC to write such a letter opposing the change; Brian seconded and the motion passed.
 - Change the standard utility allowance.
 - Contrasts with the State that is looking to raise it.
 - Maine is especially affected due to heating. (HEAP/LIHEAP)
 - Would take away the State's ability to set allowance detracting from the increased SNAP that is granted during winter months.
 - Heather made a motion to write a letter on behalf of ESAC opposing the change on the grounds of how it would affect housing. It was suggested to include this in the letter Cullen is writing and submit them as two separate comments.
- o Low income Housing Tax Credits
 - Affordable housing improvement tax credit would increase reach of low-income housing tax credit
 - Income averaging for 50-60% of MAI would be balanced to help bring in people experiencing homelessness.
- o Ending Homelessness Act would boost the National Housing Trust Fund and increase project-based housing.
- o Historic Tax Credit Growth
 - Increase the Value of the tax credit.
- o 811
 - 2010 Melville act made it rental subsidies for people with disabilities and useful for people experiencing homelessness
 - Maine received 85
 - Portland has used the for LTS
 - Westbrook received 35
 - Under 62 years of age
 - Has a disability.
 - Works in Portland and South Portland (10 Miles around Westbrook)
- State
 - o FUSE not considered but will be appealed.
 - o \$3 million for housing assistance parallel and separate from ESHAP.
 - o State Tax credit Bill approved last year and carried over that could double the low income housing tax credit for new housing development.
 - Only two developments in the state currently.
- Continuum of Care
 - o Trump administration:

- Changed NOFA
 - Housing First projects now have barriers including employment requirements.
 - LGBTQ protections changed.
- Senator Collins with THUD committee
 - Send letter to revert to 2018
 - No difference in point structure for scoring.
 - Norm made a motion to send a letter to revert back to the 2018 requirements. Suzanne seconded and the motion passed.
- Removed the head of the US Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Blaming democrats for homelessness in California
 - Homelessness is not a partisan issue.

Family Shelter Overflow

- Breakfast is starting again next week.
- Upwards of 70 people are reportedly on their way to the shelter; a list of name was sent by a shelter in Texas.
 - 24 tomorrow and about another 50 next week.
- Upwards of 1,000 people are waiting to come in Mexico
- Upwards of 10,000 people are waiting in Guatemala to come into the country.
 - Mostly
- 22-25 are blackout dates for the Salvation army
 - December 9 to December 20th additional blackout dates.
- YMCA can be used when the Salvation Army is unavailable.
 - YMCA and Salvation Army are only for sleeping.
 - Need to leave by 7:00 AM
 - FS only has two vehicles.
 - One has child seats.
- Only 38 spaces for day shelter.
 - Expo is not an Option
 - Need ideas for day shelter.
 - Speaking with catholic charities looking for day space.
 - Hannah is the point person
 - USM may be an option for space while they are on break.
- City Manager is aware of the situation.
- Lack of housing in Portland.
 - 5 families are moving out this week.
- There is some resentment from single adults on the families coming in.

Homeless Services Center - Shelter Policy Resolution.

- City Council voted 6 – 2 to move to workshop it and postpone the vote to the December 16, 2019 City Council Meeting.

- ESAC members concerned with unsheltered numbers concerned about writing policy only considering those in shelter and having a cap; the cap was removed in the resolution sent to the council.
 - Councilor Cook could not be there and asked that the vote wait for the new council.
 - Concerned the cap language would be added back in.
 - Whole City Council will make this decision.
- Because this is a City decision, City staff must abstain from some participation in this conversation and will abstain from related votes.
- There is a learning curve to the City Council and there is concern that this is a lot for a first meeting.
 - What part of this body would like to invite the City Councilors?
 - There is a policy for how staff can interact with City Council
 - A letter from the United Way, Shalom and Amistad could write a letter again after the HHS&PS committee membership is decided.
 - Donna made a motion for the United Way, Shalom and Amistad write a letter to invite the HHS&PS committee to the first ESAC meeting of the new year.
- Heather asked if we should change the December meeting to meet before the December 16, 2019 meeting as the letter sent last time was not responded to.
 - Donna asked if there should be two letters?
 - One following up to the first letter?
 - First letter asked not to make policy decisions without ESAC input.
 - Cullen proposed working out the input to recommend in that letter.
 - Donna is not sure there is enough data or analysis to make the recommendation
 - Cullen has points already on why not to have a cap as the long term stayer committee was created in response to a de facto cap.
 - The workshop topics are unknown so sending concrete questions providers have may be useful, such as where people will go on cold nights.
- Letter to respond to HHS&PS updated to the full City Council.
 - Disclaimer around the language that the value of the potential data and not be perceived as an organized delay and not be open ended.
 - Just asking to not pass something that adds new expectations or burdens.
 - No direct response but there may have been an effect as the votes were delayed and cap was struck.
 - Vickey said the letter ask that no changes be made to the resolution.
 - Vickey will help write the letter and go to the entire City Council
- 2nd Letter will invite the Mayor Elect and Tae Chong to the next ESAC meeting.
 - Is there a specific person who arranges City Council schedules?
 - Unknown.
 - Email them directly.
 - Letter from HVJ and United Way.

- Christine Grant on behalf of the Atlantic Charitable Fund
 - o Atlantic Charitable Fund works in homeless in Maine training providers to increase capacity.
 - o Would like to partner with ESAC.
 - Offering financial resources for data collection.
 - o Here at the last meeting where unsheltered people were discussed
 - Fund is offering money to collect data on the unsheltered population
 - UNE and USM are on board.
 - o Count and survey people sleeping out.
 - o Bangor did a count over a 2-week period with many people working on it that gave a more accurate picture than the point in time.
 - Unduplicated individuals.
 - o Looking to work with a subcommittee of ESAC to a point in time across shelters.
 - Looking to develop and implement in the next month.
 - LTS is working on a count
 - o PATH and Preble Street have attempted data collection:
 - LINK:
 - o This would be paid researchers.
 - o Cullen suggested organizations by a show of hands show they are interested.
 - o Meredith doesn't like the idea of bribing people with a place to stay for a night in order to collect data. Christine responded:
 - Not offer shelter in exchange for participation.
 - Pay for people's time or other incentive to reimburse people for their information.
 - o Campsite outreach will be difficult.
 - o HVJ has trained the police academy in Vassalboro on how to interact with people at their campsite.
 - o Not sure a vote is needed
 - o Christine McNulty Grant can be reached at: CMGbh.com
 - o Data collection now and how to capture that data moving forward.
 - How to track a population that has a hard time being tracked into HMIS
 - How to get them into HMIS?
- Unsheltered Count on October 25th
 - o 67 individuals outside
 - o By assumed Gender:
 - Men: 38
 - Women: 6 7
 - o Age
 - 20-35: 21
 - 35- 50: 7
 - Over 50: 1
 - Unobservable: 9
 - o Sleeping condition
 - Tent: 13

- Sleeping bag only: 8
- Blankets/Tarps only: 9
- Clothing only 5
- Vehicle: 3 but this is not representative
- o Many requests for tents, sleeping bags and heaters.
- o Could there be a central reporting structure for people sleeping out.
- o Complete lack of resources, particularly for people in bayside don't appear to have the equipment of people who have chosen to camp.
- o Substance use has influenced people being out; how much is being our driving substance use.
- People walking around all night then coming in during the day to sleep.
- Community wide concern about unsheltered
 - o Need to brainstorm additional places to stay alive as it is.
- Misperception in the community that some individuals are being served and some are not.
 - o Racial tensions in the community.
- Portland Housing Authority will coordinate in relation to their waiting list.

Access to Shelter

- Where can people who are CTOD go to get warm?
 - o No CTOS for medical, only behavioral at OSS
 - o OSS Makes referrals to shelters where CTOD guests are not restricted from
 - o Is there a place people can go when they are CTOD from all spaces
 - Most people are not CTOD from all spaces and referrals can be made to those remaining accessible spaces.
 - Increase communication to fight perception being restricted from one shelter means being restricted from all shelter.