

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Remote Meeting

Thursday, August 13, 2020

9:00 am – 10:00 am

Minutes

Name	Organization
Adam Harr	City of Portland
Kathleen Babeu	City of South Portland
Dan Coyne	United Way
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland
Jim Devine	HVJ
Benjamin Strick	Spurwink
Bill Higgins	Ha4aLL
Mara Larkin	MMC
Donna Yellen	Preble Street
Cullen Ryan	CHOM
Tom Natalie	Milestone Recovery
Rota	
Phone Number	

Name	Organization
Norm Maze	Shalom House
Ginny Dill	Shalom House
Vickey Rand	CHOM
Amy Geren	Portland Downtown
Anna Brewer	Preble Street
Brian Townsend	Amistad
Harrison Deah	City of Westbrook
Randy Billings	Portland Press Herald
Henry Tarlow	City of Portland
Moly Hardman	MMC
Jonathan Sahrbeck	District Attorney
Marie Gray	

- **Introductions**

- o The tri chairs convened this meeting.
 - Jim Devine, advocate with homeless voices for justice.
 - Dan Coyne, United Way
 - Aaron Geyer, Director of Social Services.
- o Goal is information sharing on the current situation and action items.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- **Unsheltered Homelessness**
 - o Situation in Deering Oaks Park and the encampment in front of City Hall
 - o Anna asked about specific objectives in the meeting.
 - Some of what people learn is from the paper so this meeting is to get to a comprehensive view of the situation that can lead to action items; actions may not be agreed upon today which can be decided at next week's meeting.
 - Goal not to editorialize.
 - o Elizabeth Jackson said there are many calls talking about this including one happening simultaneously to discuss Deering Oaks Park.
 - Good point on not duplicating work.
 - o Brian Townsend said the first thing that came to mind for unmet need:
 - A large number of people who are not accessing day space because not only because of a lack of day space, but because of behavior, specifically substance use:
 - There per the loopholes in the landscapes of formerly available spaces like Amistad and the resource center.
 - Use wasn't sanctioned, but managed on a person to person level to keep people engaged.
 - These spaces are no longer available.
 - Solutions may be radical to the challenge.
 - o Safe injection sites are on the HHS&PS Committee work plan.
 - o Are there CTOs from the City Hall encampment or Deering Oaks Park.
 - So far the DA is not seeing engagement with the criminal justice system from CTOs.
 - One must violate a CTO for him to see this.
 - Donna learned that CTOs are now being given at Deering Oaks and People are getting CTOed.
 - o Day Space
 - No space identified.
 - Are shelters at capacity at night?
 - There is no obvious owner of day space solutions.
 - o CTOs at Deering Oaks
 - Have PD coordinated with any providers about displacement to other areas and if providers are prepared to provide outreach to the locations people will go?
 - There is some coordination because PD is on the daily Deering Oaks/Unsheltered call.
 - Try to refer folks to GA.
 - Kristen is working on identifying day space.
 - Ben Strick said Spurwink was not aware of CTOs occurring at the park.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- o There is a group of people falling through the GA hotel safety net.
 - There are people who are both not allowed in shelter and hotels.
 - Groups of people that struggle in shelter and are sleeping out due to mental health symptoms.
 - There is a lack of options for these people.
- o Cullen is not aware of large encampments being successfully engaged due to many challenges:
 - Outreach can be perceived as invasive.
 - People can't be seen making outreach hard.
 - Isolation can lead to substance use and mental health behaviors that create barriers.
 - Outreach to help people know what is available:
 - o BRAP
 - o Shelter Plus Care.
 - Landlords may be more amenable to renting to people with rental subsidies, despite a tight market.
 - Look for ways to open up spaces to have people available for engagement.
 - DA shared PD perspective that PD does not have answers to where people can go and feel like they are simply moving people around. Answers must come from a policy perspective instead of an enforcement perspective.
- o Action Taken by ESAC
 - What should ESAC do, recognizing other groups are working on this.
 - Information sharing and?
 - Individuals engage city leaders
 - Jim shared the demonstrators from the City Hall encampment had a list of demands that could be reviewed by ESAC.
 - Policy proposals recommended by members can be considered.
 - o Members could receive this before a meeting and then share ones they agree with.
 - Example: removing criminal proceedings from Deering Oaks situation.
 - o Governance process in ESAC: there are opportunities to incorporate this.
 - It makes a lot of sense to invite encampment organizers and the other entities that emerged; it would be good to include those voices.
 - Take a more central role and impactful consensus voice.
 - Onboarding role that would bring groups in.
 - o Jim Has a connection with the organizer of the People's Housing Coalition.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- One demand was having a place at the table; ESAC can be that.
 - o Vickey said this is about relationship work; next week we can devise as experts in the field doing outreach work understand that CTOs in Deering Oaks can jeopardize the relationships being built; what can be done that does not jeopardize relationship building with people we are trying to engage?
- Action Items
 - o Invite demonstrators from the City Hall Encampment to next week's meeting.
 - All are invited to the public meeting.
 - o Review Organizer demands.
 - Some may be outside ESAC's lane.
 - May need to be addressed over a series of meetings.
 - o Updates from the regular meetings addressing unsheltered homelessness (such as the one happening simultaneously).
 - o Adding Unsheltered Homelessness as a standing item to be inclusive of hotels.
 - Not including hotels does not paint the whole picture.
 - o Adding an agenda item from the healthcare perspective?
 - Covid is a public health crisis.
 - GPH is on board.
 - What is needed to be prepared for the Fall?
 - o Council Updates
 - There are ongoing City Council and Committee discussions including some solutions we are talking about.
 - One person that went to meetings report out.
 - Adam can give HHS&PS updates.
 - o A representative from PD regularly coming to meetings would be helpful.
 - PD would likely welcome this.
 - o Proposed rule change to HUD: Access to shelter based on sex where shelters can decide people's gender based on appearances; this has caused homelessness.
 - Comment period ends September 22.
 - Members of congress have signed onto a letter against the rule change.
 - MCoC, Statewide HC, and region 3 HC have signed a letter to HUD, commenting that this does not help end homelessness and can cause it.
 - Does ESAC want to sign on?
 - Cullen of CHOM to draft a letter to be signed by the Chairs. It can be distributed ahead of the meeting for a fast vote at next week's meeting.
 - Donna is not sure about having a vote at the end of this meeting where members have left.
 - Norm is concerned about voting outside of the main meeting and asked if the invitation went to the entire group: it did.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- It will be the first agenda item at next week's meeting, presented by Vickey.