

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Remote Meeting

Thursday, October 21, 2021

8:30 am – 9:30 am

Minutes

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Adam Harr	City of Portland	Norm Maze	Shalom House
Jim Devine	HVJ	Ben Martineau	HVJ
Bill Higgins	Ha4aLL	Dan Coyne	United Way
Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors	Sarah Michniewicz	BNA
Anna Brewer	Preble Street/HVJ	Brian Townsend	Amistad
Sara Fleurant	City of Portland Oxford Street Shelter	Wendy Harmon	Keller Williams Realty
Terence Miller	Preble Street	Hannah Bryer	United Way
Amy Geren	Portland Downtown	George Rheault	Resident
Kelly Walsh	City of Portland	Randy Billings	Press Herald
Peter McLaughlin	People's Housing Coalition	Mie Guthrie	CoP Family Shelter

Meeting Summary

This shorter meeting started by discussing if ESAC should take a position on the shelter referendum questions and no motion to do so was made. During the shelter bed usage statistic discussion, the public expressed confusion about how the GA hotels and OSS capacity are displayed and the process for entering the Oxford Street Shelter and GA hotels. It was explained that singles presenting for shelter stay at OSS if there is capacity and would go to the contracted FEMA hotel when the shelter is full; when the contracted hotel is also full, clients are referred to GA hotels.

- **September Meeting Minutes**
 - o Norm moved to approve the minutes and Brian seconded. The motion passed with none opposed.
- **Shelter Referendum Discussion**
 - o The goal is to discuss and decide if ESAC will take a position.
 - o We have a quorum.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- o United Way has not taken a public position on the referendum.
- o Some HVJ members are strongly supporting C and some strongly supporting A so they will not be taking a position and encourage ESAC to do the same since there is not consensus.
- o Point of order: there is no motion on the table.
- o Members have taken positions; does ESAC have the capacity to take a position?
- o Providing the space for a motion as members expressed strong interest at the last meeting. No motion was ultimately made.
- o ESAC took a position in August supporting multiple referendum questions.
- **September Statistics.**
 - o Increase in GA hotels.
 - o At the last HHS&PS meeting, HHS Director Dow mentioned violent individuals around the shelter but we are not seeing an increase in the CTOs; is there a change being observed at the shelter?
 - The PD could better speak to increases in violence in the neighborhood.
 - It is not just the Oxford Street Shelter's clients in the neighborhood.
 - A who lives close to the shelter agrees with the observation in increased violent behavior in the neighborhood.
 - Some people are housed and not necessarily guests of the shelter.
 - o How do the numbers reconcile with what is shared at HHS&PS?
 - HHS&PS reports the singles and families in GA hotels separately, these slides report the unduplicated total of all GA hotels granted in the month.
 - o Why are GA hotels on a separate slide from the shelter numbers?
 - The slides are confusing for the public and it is unclear that the individuals being sheltered in GA hotels are experiencing homelessness.
 - The GA hotel numbers were originally on the first slide with the average nightly shelter counts but the group decided it was confusing and for GA hotels to be on their own slide.
 - GA hotels are cases granted not a nightly average and are not mutually exclusive; people move from GA hotels into shelter.
 - GA hotels are not staffed and people staying at them do not receive shelter services.
 - o People in the hotels and shelters are experiencing homelessness.
 - o We hope the FEMA funding continues after the first of January.
 - o Increase in asylum seekers.
 - 2 individuals from Afghanistan have resettled in Portland to date out of the 100 coming to the state.
 - o OSS takes guests into the shelter as capacity allows.
 - How does the shelter determine if someone who presents will stay in the shelter or at the contracted hotel?
 - Capacity: When the shelter and FEMA hotels are full, they go to GA.
 - o Clients sheltered at OSS sleep on mats on the floor, not in cots.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- o Shelter staff have capacity to support clients at the shelters and in the FEMA hotel but there is not capacity to staff the multiple GA hotels.
- **Other Business**
 - o HVJ is having a candidates' forum today.
 - It is open to the public; the forum at Florence house was private due to the nature of its program.
 - o OSS and FS need winter clothing donations.
 - o Noted:
 - OSS donations can be coordinated with its director, Sara Fleurant:
 - skf@portlandmaine.gov
 - For families in hotels:
 - **“WINTER ITEMS NEEDED**
 - Clean new, or gently used and sorted clothing items: warm casual clothes only (sweaters, pants, long sleeves), closed toed shoes (no heels or dress shoes), winter jackets, snow pants, hats, gloves, mittens, and boots. All sizes needed from babies up to sizes XXL.
 - Drop off days and times are the Quality Inn located at 738 Main Street in South Portland, Maine 04106 on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday 9am-2pm (October 20th, 21st, 22nd, 27th, 28th and 29th.)
 - If anyone you know may wish to order items for the clothing distribution they can be shipped to the Quality Inn directly at 738 Main St. South Portland, Me 04106."