

PORTLAND CONTINUUM OF CARE

Wednesday, September 18, 2013

MEETING MINUTES

Present:

Bob Duranleau, City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
Jeff Tardif, City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division, Family Shelter
Tammy Butner, City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division, Family Shelter
Aaron Geyer, City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division, Home to Stay
Matt Pryor, City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division, Home to Stay
Therese Johnson, City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division, Veteran Housing Services
Josh O'Brien, City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
Cindy Namer (phoned in), MaineHousing
Chet Barnes, Office of Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services
Ginny Dill, Shalom House
Kerry Polyot-Stefani, SteppingStones
Shana Pike, SteppingStones
Vickey Rand, CHOM
Bob Dodge, LearningWorks
Evelyn Blanchard, Milestone
Jon Bradley, Preble Street

I. Introductions

Bob welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made.

II. Continuum of Care Registration – Update

Bob updated everyone on the Continuum of Care grant process and the changes for the next grant application cycle.

III. Grant Inventory Worksheet

Bob gave a brief overview of the GIW and thanked everyone for their quick response in reviewing their sections.

IV. FY 2012 Debriefing Summary (How to improve our scores for 2013)

Bob stated that last year's score was less than desired. The funding line was 97; the Continuum received a 98.5 out of a possible 134 points. Areas to improve included CoC Performance, Strategic Planning, and HMIS. We scored low on Chronic Homeless reductions and achievement of overall goals.

Bob explained that HUD wants more permanent housing beds for Chronically Homeless. All HUD-funded CoC programs should target clients who are in the shelter system. Meanwhile, all progress numbers were lower than proposed by the Continuum, but higher than HUD required. Bob and Aaron explained that employment data does not appear to be capturing all those securing employment. Vickey pointed out that the "163" is before we compression of data at OSS, so this number should look better moving forward. Admin costs may be up to 10%, but bonus points will occur if we are below 7%.

Jon discussed the push by HUD to look at each program, not just the entire Continuum. HUD is pushing reallocations within continuums to ensure funds are being used effectively. When we aren't making our goals, then we may be pushed more to discuss reallocation and combining services. Jeff talked about the adding more responsibility to the priority committee and how it may be needed in order to move forward. Jon agreed, stating that we need a "committee with teeth"; the committee needs to address low-performers and see where they can be helped, it at all. Various items need to be addressed between programs and their returns and performance.

V. Cloudburst Group – HMIS Technical Assistance (TA)

Bob updated everyone on HUD's approval of up to 16 hours of TA with the Maine CoC. A group of people have offered to sit on a committee to discuss what is needed. This group will have a conference call at 2 PM on Friday (20th). Chet recommended those who are handling the HMIS data entry and extraction should be involved in the TA sessions. Jon agreed acknowledging that the correct people should attend.

VI. Portland Agency Data Sharing (HMIS Update)

Bob updated everyone on the process of the data cleanup. Preble Street and the City should be completed with these tasks by October 1.

VII. Conference Call with Bowmen Representatives – Update

Bob discussed the upcoming conference call with Bowmen. The item discussed was how to share the data from one system to Service Point. The major hang up is the transferring of data from individual data systems to HMIS. This has to be done with XML files and uploading the file to HMIS, and vice-versa. HUD will be sending out a schematic to see how complicated it will be to do this.

Bob informed everyone that the next call will be right after the October ESAC meeting (10/17). Jon reminded everyone to have each agency's HMIS point person call in. Double entry is an expensive soft cost item, but using Service Point as first point of entry causes issues because live reports cannot be run.

VIII. Employment Goals

Aaron discussed the importance of data sharing. Once we can see all data, maybe we can focus on individuals KNOWN to be employed. It may cause an increase of numbers without any significant effort. Other employment agencies are willing to take on clients and report information. There are now employment meetings being held. The next one is at CEI (9/26), to include the City, Preble Street, Refugee Services, CareerCenter and extended an open invitation to all organizations with career services.

IX. Mainstream Resources Committee

Aaron and Shana are running this committee. Terry Hamilton will be visiting after the September ESAC meeting to discuss TANF, for anyone who wants to attend. He asked everyone to share their needs so he can offer trainings pertinent to everyone. Jon mentioned the Affordable Care Act and what is needed. Also, anything on aging issues and resources, including Adult Protective Services and Maine Equal Justice, would be helpful.

X. Maine Housing and City of Portland Planning Grant Proposal

Bob handed out the objectives for the planning grant. These are ways to work together and moving forward. Bob suggested a committee be put together to discuss reallocations. This program starts January 1, and allows us enough funding to conduct a few focus groups.

Jon discussed a conference in DC and how they discussed reallocations continuously. Many states are looking at third parties to come in and look at reallocations, where those making the decisions are impartial and can make objective decisions. We need to look at the best decision for the city, whether as a task force of all the agencies involved or a third party.

Chet suggested a scoring template, similar to that used in his department. Jon mentioned utilizing HMIS to track performance and outcome measures against HUD's requirements. Vickey pointed out that CoC 2.0 is discussing a board that is separate, yet involved, like a Board of Directors. Jeff discussed a meeting with everyone around the table, and explaining each program and how it became an issue after the priority committee stopped.

Chet backed Jeff and agreed that these programs can find common ground and work together before January 1. Jon stated that all programs receiving HUD funding should know who they are funding, and that they should meet to discuss. HUD won't tell agencies how to reallocate, so at this point it would be risky to lose funds in doing so. Chronic and long-term status clients should be put first in housing, rather than those who barely meet requirements for certain housing options.

A discussion was also centered on DHHS Shelter Plus Care to change their focus and work more closely with the Shelter to identify the chronic homeless individuals. The focus should be on longer-term stayers

Jon explained that Preble Street and the City of Portland are now involved in the 100,000 Homes project and their focus is to look at vulnerabilities and an index. This includes those who are chronically homeless, mentally ill, have substance abuse issues, etc. Chet pointed out that proper documentation will be the downfall, but that if we start all of these ideas now, it will be easier.

Bob redirected back to the objectives, mainly the consultant and getting the two committees to work together. By having the two committees meet together, they can create an action plan and bring them back to their respective CoCs. This will be a Monitoring and Evaluation committee. These groups will not be the end-all, but will do the research and create a recommendation with methodology on how to do the evaluating. This will have a funded and non-funded committee member.

Cindy stated that collaborative applicants (State and City) are the programs accountable should things fail. MaineHousing will back out if objectives cannot be reached. Collaboration is already happening in Portland, so this should not be difficult. She stated the next step will be to go to the Maine CoC meeting and discuss the grant objectives. Portland is in agreement and if Maine CoC is in agreement and can pick people, Cindy and Bob will look for a consultant. Cindy also believes they will feed each other and make things easier for both groups.

The Collaborative Applications will hire a consultant to facilitate and implement these efforts. It is recommended that the Planning Grant create two separate Ad Hoc Committees; 1) Coordinated Assessment and 2) Program evaluation. Each Ad Hoc Committee will be comprised of a CoC funded member and a non-CoC funded member from each CoC, designated by the full CoC membership. These Ad Hoc Committees will be responsible for exploring national trends, researching and analyzing best practices and drafting a recommendation and methodology for the CoC and Collaborative Applicant. The Continuum voted to approve this course of action. Unanimously Approved.

XI. Other Business

Vickey addressed HR2790 (Housing Assistance Efficiency Act). Cullen sent out an email discussing the bill's details. CHOM is looking for a letter of support from CoC participants. Everyone is in agreement to do this. Vickey will send a template out to each program.

Bob reminded everyone that Friday the 27th 9 AM-3 PM is the next Cloudburst brainstorming session.

Shana informed everyone of the Stepping Stones open house tonight from 4 PM-6:30 PM.

Next Meeting:
October 16, 2013
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM
REFUGEE SERVICES CONFERENCE AREA
190 Lancaster Street

Please Contact Robert Duranleau, City of Portland, Health and Human Services Department, Social Services Division at 482-5124, or rmd@portlandmaine.gov if you have any questions.