

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes

July 19, 2012

Bob Duranleau	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division
Josh O'Brien	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division
Jeff Tardif	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Family Shelter
John Shoos	United Way of Greater Portland
Amy Faulkingham	2-1-1 Maine
Wendy Harmon	Southern Maine Landlord Association
Patti Robinson	Preble Street
Phil Allen	Preble Street Veteran Housing Services
Therese Johnson	Preble Street Veteran Housing Services – City of Portland
Carol Hutchins	Bayside Neighborhood Association
Shana Pike	MAPS/Step Up
Elizabeth Szatkowski	The Opportunity Alliance
Lori Martin	The Opportunity Alliance
Tom Ptacek	Homeless Voices for Justice
Dee Clarke	Homeless Voices for Justice
Marcia Frank	Homeless Voices for Justice
Jim Devine	Homeless Voices for Justice
Steve Huston	Homeless Voices for Justice
Annmarie Rotolo	ADRC-SMAAA
Jenny Stasio	Family Crisis Services
Tom Natalie	Milestone Foundation

I. Introductions

Tom Ptacek, ESAC Tri-Chair, welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made.

II. June Bed Usage Statistics – Bob Duranleau

Bob reviewed the monthly shelter statistics for June 2012:

	<u>June 2011</u>	<u>June 2012</u>
Adolescents	14 Individuals	14 Individuals
Adults	246 Individuals	294 Individuals
Families	<u>94 Individuals (38 Families)</u>	<u>103 Individuals (42 Families)</u>
Total	354 Individuals	411 Individuals

Bob stated that these are the highest numbers on record.

Adolescent Shelter

The total adolescent bed nights for June 2011 were 415 while the total bed nights for June 2012 were 416. These figures indicate an increase of 0.24% between June 2011 and June 2012. Five (5) individuals stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

Family Shelters

There was a total of 3080 bed nights used for all Family Shelters in June 2012 as compared to 2830 bed nights in June 2011. This represents an increase of 9% in Family Shelter bed usage between June 2011 and June 2012.

The Family Shelter placed 15 families for a total of 53 individuals into housing in June.

The Family Shelter received 23 new families (intakes) for a total of 87 individuals in June. Based on self-reporting 12 families for a total of 45 individuals stated they had never been homeless before, of these 8 families for a total of 35 individuals were refugees.

Bob stated that thus far in July the Family Shelter has had to hotel numerous families due to reaching capacity; currently there are six families in hotels.

Adult Shelters

Adult Shelter bed nights usage increased by 19% in June 2012 compared to June 2011. Total bed night usage during June 2011 was 7390 while it was 8828 during June 2012.

Bob stated that the numbers for July thus far are even higher. Bob stated that the adult shelter numbers do not reflect the number of people in the Warming Center, which was used numerous times in June 2012. Josh stated that the high was 12 people in the Warming Center on any given night. Josh stated that this month the number of individuals in the Warming Center has increased up to a high of around 42 people at any given time. Steve asked if there are people that would rather sleep outside than stay in the Warming Center. Josh stated that this does happen. Tom stated that fact that the weather dictates whether or not people stay in the Warming Center or sleep outside really shows that these are people who would not normally sleep out nor are they prepared to. Vickey mentioned having a separate "Adult Homeless Stats" handout starting next month which would include the Warming Center numbers to paint a clear picture of the current adult homeless climate in Portland. The group agreed to represent the numbers in this manner.

During the month of June, there were 175 intakes at the Oxford Street Shelter, 134 men and 41 women. An Intake or New Arrival is defined as an individual that has not stayed at the Shelter for a period of three (3) months or longer. Based on self-reporting, 46 individuals stated they had never been homeless before (34 men and 12 women).

Oxford Street Shelter Support Services team placed 30 individuals into permanent housing (19 men and 11 women), with three (3) individuals returning to the shelter within 90 days of housing placement.

Florence House Women's Shelter served a total of 54 women during the month of June, including 17 new intakes. Based on self-reporting, 6 of these 17 intakes stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

The Shelter placed 5 individuals into housing, with 2 women returning.

First Time Homelessness

For the month of June 102 individuals, or 35% of all new intakes, reported experiencing homelessness for the first time, based on self-reporting.

2-1-1 Maine Housing/Shelter Calls

Amy could not attend the meeting and thus there were no stats to present for the June 2-1-1 Maine Housing/Shelter calls.

There was discussion on Asylum Seekers.

Elizabeth asked about service animals at the shelters. Josh stated that they have no service animals currently. He stated that they consider a service animal to take the place of an individual as far as capacity goes. Josh stated that with the high numbers when there are service animals it does complicate matters to provide private space for those who can't be around dogs. Jeff stated that they have one service animal at the Family Shelter currently. He stated that many of the refugee families cannot be around dogs which complicate matters as well. Patti stated that they have 4 companion animals currently at Florence House. She mentioned that they're looking at their policies regarding this currently.

III. *Overflow Subcommittee – Update*

Josh stated that they've used the Warming Center every night for the past week or so. He stated that there has been a great collaboration between them, Florence House and Milestone. Staff are working very hard to meet everyone's need with compassion and keep everyone safe throughout the night. Josh stated that once everything is full (Milestone, Oxford Street and Overflow) he is worried about safety having the most at risk people on the streets, as the Warming Center is not usually the most suitable location for this population. Tom stated that they're full by midnight most nights, but they don't send too many people back over after midnight. Josh stated that the collaboration and openness has been instrumental to keep people safe at night. Patti asked how many staff members are stationed at the Warming Center. Josh stated that they usually have 2 at the Warming Center, and 2 to 3 at the Overflow Shelter, and a floater. John Shoos asked if they've had to add staff to cover the Warming Center. Josh stated that they have, they've been calling additional per diems in sometimes for partial nights. Bob stated that they've added 3 new full-time shelter attendants to alleviate the usage of per diems and have a continuum of care/coverage for the shelters.

IV. *Preble Street Veteran Housing Services Program Update –*

Phil stated that they've successfully been re-funded; they'll be here for at least another year. They were funded at the same amount as the original funding amount. The program was recently highly rated and noted as a top performer in the country by the regional coordinator. The Regional Coordinator stated that they're implementing the program the way it's meant to be implemented. The success of the program is based on the success in the community. Phil distributed some program statistics. They've seen 84 clients that they've had to turn away due to not qualifying for the program or not willing to participate. They've served 136 individuals which equates to 100 veterans program to date. Thus far 68 individuals have exited the program. Therese added that roughly only 12% were considered homeless when they exited the program. Phil stated that their target population is 30% AMI, which has been an easy group of people to work with, and 73 of the households served were below 30% AMI. They're finding that many of the people in with less than 30% AMI were not connected to any VA services when they originally came to the program. Phil stated that connecting these individuals to VA benefits/services can dramatically change their situations, sometimes going from zero income to up to \$1,200 per month. They've served 45 Oxford Street clients which equates to roughly 5,000 bed nights. They've saved almost 2,500 bed nights in the last quarter in total. Phil stated that in their last review they were advised to take more risks with clients that may not be easily housed or easily fit into the program. Therese stated that some of the people that didn't want to enter into the program were able to be housed (7 out of the shelter thus far) working outside of the box. She added that 13 families came into the program with children. Therese added that roughly one third of the people that enter the program were not connected to any VA benefits/services. Phil stated that they were approved to expand outreach services to part of York and Sagadahoc counties. Phil stated that they've had great success thus far in York County. He stated that he was surprised with the low number of referrals they've received from Sagadahoc County. He asked that if anyone knows anyone to connect with in Brunswick and Bath for referrals to contact Phil. Dee asked about VASH vouchers. Phil stated that they're a completely separate entity from VASH. They're working with veterans who are homeless and provide services under the homeless umbrella to get them stably housed, including Section 8, GA, market rents, etc. They're using the same tools that any other case manager is currently using to house homeless individuals. The one additional aspect is that they're able to connect people to VA benefits/services to potentially change situations drastically. Phil stated that they have to ability to provide short-term interventions; people are limited to 90 days of rental assistance. At this point there is a reapplication and a review of the case and the possibility of another 60 days of rental assistance based on the situation and their stability plans for up to a total of 5 months of rental assistance. Phil stated that they usually take on clients that would have a housing stability plan in place within the initial 90 days, which is a VA target population. He stated that taking more risks, as previously stated was recommended by the

Regional Coordinator, includes going out of this mold. Phil stated that the VA isn't looking at housing rates; the VA is looking at connecting people to benefits, services, housing, connections, contacts, etc. for the total picture.

V. *NEW – State of Maine HMIS Advisory Committee*

Bob stated that Cindy Namer could not attend today's meeting. Bob stated that HUD is requiring the lead HMIS agencies to have a clear governing structure. The CoC sought technical assistance regarding the HMIS governing structure. Kat Freedman from TAC in Boston came and provided TA regarding this matter. Bob distributed a handout on "The Maine Statewide Governance Project" which will be a statewide effort to write the HMIS governance. The State of Maine HMIS Advisory Committee will be charged with completing The Maine Statewide Governance Project. There has to be a good cross-section of people that do everything from intakes to policy making, along with representatives from each type of program/project for a good diversity of perspective. Bob stated that serving on this committee will require a lot of work, including weekly or bi-weekly meetings and they need to appoint representatives almost immediately. The timeline is very quick; the first meeting is July 27th and everything will be finalized going into October. Bob stated that this is a very tight schedule because we can only receive TA prior to the NOFA being released; once the NOFA is released TAC cannot provide any assistance. Bob stated that Therese Johnson and Phil Allen from VHS, Jeff Tardif from the Family Shelter, and Chris Noll from Shalom House were appointed by the CoC to the Advisory Committee. Bob mentioned that we're still waiting on an advocate from HVJ to be chosen to serve on the Advisory Committee. Elizabeth thanked those serving on the Advisory Committee for the work they will undertake as it will greatly impact the next CoC application. Bob added that this is very important for all the agencies that receive funds from the CoC and the people who benefit from services in these programs. He stated that there will be changing in scoring, what's measured, who can and cannot be served in projects/programs, governing structures etc. in the upcoming CoC application.

VI. *Task Force to Develop a Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness – Update*

Tom stated that the entire Task Force hasn't met since the last update and are still in their subcommittees. The next full Task Force meeting is one week from today. Tom stated that he would provide an update at the next meeting.

VII. *Other Business*

Bob distributed a revised Client Engagement Policy draft and gave a brief overview. He stated that there has been a lot of collaboration on this with Oxford Street and Preble Street. A working group will be formed to continue work on this so there will be opportunities to comment on the policy. Tom mentioned that HVJ has concerns with the policy. Bob stated that this is why they requested that HVJ be involved in the working group.

***NEXT MEETING:
Thursday, August 16, 2012
8:30 – 10:00 AM
Refugee Services Area
190 Lancaster Street***

Please contact Robert Duranleau, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division at 775-6315, extension 224; John Shoos, United Way at 874-1000, or Tom Ptacek, Preble Street at 775-0026; if you should have any agenda items for the next meeting.