

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes

April 18th, 2013

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
Harrison Deah	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
Jeff Tardif	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Family Shelter
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division
Carol Kulesza	VA
Patty Robinson	Preble Street
Phil Allen	SSVF/Veteran Housing Services – Preble Street
Therese Johnson	SSVF/Veteran Housing Services – City of Portland
Elizabeth Szatkowski	Opportunity Alliance
Sarah Dietz	Opportunity Alliance
John Shoos	United Way
Linda Janson	Stepping Stones
Ginny Dill	Shalom House
Amanda Kyajohnian	Shalom House
Tom Ptacek	Homeless Voices for Justice
Jim Devine	Homeless Voices for Justice
Bob Dodge	LearningWorks
Kyra Walker	CHOM
Amy Faulkingham	2-1-1 Maine
Lindsey Stillman	Cloudburst Group – Via Conference Call
Kat Freeman	Cloudburst Group – Via Conference Call

I. Introductions

Bob Duranleau, ESAC Tri-Chair, welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made.

II. March 2013 Bed Usage Statistics – Bob Duranleau

Bob reviewed the monthly shelter statistics for March 2013 (see attachment). Bob stated that March's shelter numbers are among record high shelter numbers for Portland. He added that it is taking about a week longer to locate housing at the Family Shelter, so families are staying in the shelter longer. Jeff stated that they've had some luck moving families to Lewiston as there are more apartments available, and the rents for apartments are significantly lower than Portland.

III. State of Maine HMIS Advisory Committee – Update

Jeff and Therese stated that the governance has been completed and is being reviewed by MaineHousing's legal department; the privacy policy will be distributed very soon to be voted on at the next CoC meeting. The goal is to have all of the policies out by the June CoC Meeting. Therese stated that they waiting on more guidance from HUD regarding policies and implementation. Bob and the HMIS Advisory Committee reviewed the CoC conversation regarding the vacant MaineHousing HMIS position. Cindy reported that MaineHousing has not approved filling the vacant HMIS position which will result in reduced resources and a delay in HMIS ServicePoint; the CoC agreed yesterday to send a letter to the Director of Maine Housing urging him to fill the HMIS vacancy as soon as possible. MaineHousing HMIS is backlogged due to being short-staffed. Bob asked if ESAC wanted to send a letter similar to the CoC requesting that the Director fill the HMIS vacancy as soon as possible. All were in agreement. Phil added that individual agencies can also send letters.

IV. Portland Homeless Task Force – Update

Josh stated that there was a meeting of the Public Safety, Health and Human Services Committee on

April 9th in which members of the task force were present to discuss recommendations. Josh briefly reviewed some of the highlights of what was discussed. Materials presented at the meeting are available on the City's website; the link to the committee's website is: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/publicsafecomm.htm> and the link to the packet of information is: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/publicsafety/pshhsmemopacket04092013.pdf> Josh stated that there was good discussion at the meeting. He added that there was no public comment but members of the Task Force were invited to attend the meeting and a new group, the Social Welfare Action Alliance, also was in attendance. Tom stated that if the opportunity for public comment arises he encourages people to attend. John asked if any votes were taken or if it was solely informational. Josh stated that this was solely a presentation; the committee is going to convene again to see if any of the recommendations could be implemented in the current budget process. Bob added that the committee has asked Doug to separate what actions would require a City Council vote and what actions would simply require community support or are already in place/fully-funded. Josh stated that they were also asked to predict what shelter numbers would look like based on new programs/services available; they predict for Oxford Street a 35% decrease in the total number of individuals at the shelter on any given night. This information is also included in the packet available via the above link. John asked if they prioritized within the six (6) areas they presented on. Josh stated that they presented it as a package; the City Council will prioritize if/as necessary. Carol asked about the shelter zoning for the City. Josh stated that they discovered the intricacies of the shelter zoning laws in Portland when they were trying to find a new overflow location. John added that there is great opposition in the City to changing the zoning laws pertaining to shelters.

V. *Preble Street Clinical Intervention Program (CLIP) – Update*

Patty stated that the CLIP team is attending a SOAR training in Augusta today. Elizabeth stated that there have been a lot of trainings for the CLIP team and has received praise statewide as they are further ahead than any other in the state.

VI. *City of Portland ESG Program – Update*

Harrison stated that word is getting out about the program. So far the program has been able to secure 48 housing placements and worked with 16 prevention cases, of which 15 were families.

VII. *Mainstream Resources Committee Update*

Aaron stated that immediately following ESAC (10:30 AM – noon) there will be a mainstream resources training featuring Patricia Ender from Pine Tree Legal Assistance for Fair Housing Month. Aaron stated that this is historically a very popular and well attended training. Aaron stated that if anyone has any recommendations for topics for trainings or gaps that could be filled by certain trainings to forward any ideas to him.

VIII. *Federal & State Legislation*

Cullen could not attend today's meeting. Kyra stated that on the federal level H.R. 1213, the Common Sense Housing Investment Act of 2013, has been introduced; this would make it easier for middle class and working families to be able to stay in their homes and find affordable rental housing. The bill realigns the mortgage interest deduction to better benefit families who need it most by converting the deduction to a 15% flat rate tax credit on mortgages up to \$500,000. This would strengthen the tax benefits for homeowners, while giving working families better access to rental homes. The bill would generate \$196 billion over ten years in revenue, which would help provide critical resources to address the national rental shortage. It would invest the new revenue in expanding the Low Income Housing Tax Credit, Section 8 rental assistance and the public housing capital fund, and provides a source of permanent funding for the National Housing Trust Fund. Kyra stated that there have been some sign on letters for increasing McKinney Vento; Cullen contacted the delegation to sign on and discovered they already had. Cullen wanted to thank everyone for their efforts contacting the delegation; our efforts have shown the Maine delegation the importance of fully funding McKinney Vento which has played a role in our delegation aligning in support. Additionally, the President's budget, so far, looks very good for homeless issues; as part of the President's budget \$2.38 billion is allocated that would almost fully fund

the Hearth Act – if the budget goes through it would be very positive.

On the State level there was a public comment session the proposed GA budget cuts; the room was packed with people testifying against the proposed cuts. On Friday, May 3rd, there will be public comment on LD 598, “Resolve, Directing All Relevant Agencies of State Government To Work in Concert with a Plan To End and Prevent Homelessness To Ensure That Resources Are Available To End Homelessness in the State.” This would require all State departments to align their budgets to follow Maine’s Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness.

Jim added that they will be going to Washington DC to meet with the delegation.

IX. Other Business

Jim stated that he’s on the Executive Board for Pine Tree Legal. Jim stated that he had distributed questionnaires at a previous meeting. However, Pine Tree Legal didn’t receive many responses. He distributed more questionnaires for those who are interested.

Ginny stated that Shalom House has received more BRAP and S+C Vouchers and she encouraged people to have clients apply/be added to the wait list.

A reminder, if anyone has any agenda items they would like on a future agenda or any requests for speakers to contact Tom Ptacek, Bob Duranleau or Vicky Rand.

NEXT MEETING:
Thursday, May 16, 2013
8:30 – 10:00 AM

Refugee Services Area, 190 Lancaster Street

Please contact Robert Duranleau, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division at 482-5124; John Shoos, United Way at 874-1000, or Tom Ptacek, HVJ at 775-0026; if you should have any agenda items for the next meeting.