

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes

August 15th, 2013

<i>Josh O'Brien</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
<i>Rob Parritt</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
<i>Harrison Deah</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
<i>Aaron Geyer</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division
<i>Patty Robinson</i>	Preble Street
<i>Amy Gallant</i>	Preble Street
<i>Brian Townsend</i>	Preble Street
<i>Jon Bradley</i>	Preble Street
<i>Ashley Gorczyca</i>	Preble Street
<i>Elizabeth Szatkowski</i>	Opportunity Alliance
<i>Ginny Dill</i>	Shalom House
<i>Tom Ptacek</i>	Homeless Voices for Justice
<i>Jim Devine</i>	Homeless Voices for Justice
<i>Mary Jo Skofield</i>	Homeless Voices for Justice
<i>Betsy Whitman</i>	First Parish UU
<i>Bob Dodge</i>	LearningWorks
<i>Cullen Ryan</i>	CHOM
<i>Vickey Rand</i>	CHOM
<i>Jenny Stasio</i>	Family Crisis Services
<i>Amy Faulkingham</i>	2-1-1 Maine
<i>Shana Pike</i>	SteppingStones
<i>Kathleen Babeu</i>	City of South Portland
<i>Heather Rhoda</i>	Franklin Peabody Center
<i>Carol Kulesza</i>	Veterans Affairs
<i>Kelsey Tanning</i>	HTS
<i>Carol Hutchins</i>	BNA
<i>Mary Ellen Welch</i>	PPD Community Policing Midtown
<i>Dan Coyne</i>	United Way of Greater Portland
<i>Sadie Kitchen</i>	United Way of Greater Portland
<i>Tom Natalie</i>	Milestone Foundation

I. Introductions

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

II. July 2013 Bed Usage Statistics – Josh O'Brien

Josh reviewed the monthly shelter statistics for July 2013 (see attachment). He explained that while the Family Shelter is very busy, OSS is staying steady. Josh also expressed his confidence that placements will increase with the CLIP and Home To Stay programs starting. Carol Kulesza inquired about the spike on the tenth of the month noticed in July's meeting. Josh stated the tenth of the month is typically when income runs out. Kathleen Babeu stated that South Portland's SSD has noticed the same spike. Josh reviewed the Warming Center handout.

III. Oxford Street Shelter and Family Shelter Matrixes – Josh O'Brien

Josh briefly reviewed the matrixes, indicating the changes to the format showing where individuals are being placed each month, going back to March, 2013. He discussed the housing programs still showing '0' for the month, as they have come online later than expected. Regardless, the green line shows they

are on track.

Tom Ptacek discussed the open housing stock in Portland hovering around the 2% mark, proving housing placements to be that much more remarkable. Rob Parritt stated that placements in Portland are around 80%, with a low of 56%, showing that the City needs to expand into other communities for placements. Tom further discussed the reunification numbers, showing that 16% of clients are choosing to go back home. This helps the argument that while they are coming to Portland out of necessity of services, they are returning to their home areas.

IV. *Client Support & Services Plan – Update – Brian Townsend*

Brian commended the group on its efforts, indicating the efforts are being seen in July's numbers. With the new programs starting, it will start paying back dividends. CLIP's role is that, while most cases are those with two or more high barriers, exceptions are being made. These are the long-term, hard to reach individuals. Josh agreed to the notion that with more vouchers coming available, and the housing options proving to be nicer and nicer, these individuals stand a higher chance of staying housed. Before, it was a "get what you can get" situation, causing some to turn back to homelessness, as their previous homes were substandard. Rob Parritt discussed the collaboration with OSS staff and the improvement expected with more staff dedicated to the program coming on board.

V. *CoC Update – Aaron Geyer*

Aaron reported there was not a lot to update. CoC was cancelled for August, after a meeting with the Cloudburst Group. This resulted in a TA request being sent for the HMIS system, including a request to have multiple databases "talk" to one another. The first training is scheduled for September 19, immediately following ESAC, to discuss TANF.

VI. *Federal and State Legislation – Cullen Ryan*

Cullen updated everyone on the Governor's scheduled visit for August 30th. In regards to Federal news, a group went to Washington, D.C. to meet with delegates. Senator Collins was the only Republican to vote for the HUD bill, and was aligned with King to get funding for McKinney. Cullen also discussed sequestration in D.C., where he and others delivered messages and snippets—all welcomed by delegation. They can now go back to other government committees and say, "yes, these cuts do impact those you know with Section 8 vouchers." Vicky Rand distributed a survey asking, "How how sequestration affected you?" Vicky asked that individuals submit their responses to her or Cullen. Cullen reminded everyone that 140,000 Section 8 vouchers are at risk with a 7% cut to McKinney-Bento. He also pointed out that while HUD cuts are going to cut money and increase pressure to reallocate and ensure funds are being used appropriately, this should be happening every day regardless. Finally, Tom Colburn wanted to cut funding to those agencies receiving two types of federal funds for the same program, as it appears to be double-dipping. This cut almost went through, but Collins fought back.

VII. *Other Business*

Amy Gallant reminded everyone of the median ordinance going into effect today. She stressed this is not against panhandling, just standing in the medians, as it is a safety issue. Rob stated that OSS staff did outreach in the median spots the week leading up to the ordinance date to tell panhandlers the resources available to them. He and Amy both stated that while it is not an arrestable offense now, it could escalate if non-compliance occurs.

Amy also addressed two potential cuts to SNAP. No nutrition bill was passed for September. While everyone is confident it will pass, this needs to happen by 9/30. Also, SNAP recipients are scheduled to receive cuts in November—averaging 17 meals per month for each Maine family. September is Hunger Awareness month and individuals are encouraged to take the SNAP Challenge, where they see if they can live on a SNAP budget for a month. Those looking to participate should contact Amy. Vicky pointed out that these cuts have also affected Meals on Wheels, causing some to shut down.

Vicky Rand stated that every month, Senator King sends out seven (7) Constituent Service

Representatives to different communities and that we should see this as a great advocacy opportunity. It is a great opportunity to discuss items like SNAP and GA to staffers. Jim stated that he has seen them, but they should make themselves more visible to the general public as to who they are.

Amy Gallant discussed MaineCare bus pass changes and the new discussion around the state on MaineCare recipients missing rides to appointments and treatments. She asked for any feedback, including hold times and reasons for calling in. She will forward stories on to DHHS and the appropriations committee.

NEXT MEETING:
Thursday, September 19, 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; or Tom Ptacek, HVJ at 775-0026; if you should have any agenda items for the next meeting.