

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes January 16th, 2014

Bob Duranleau	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Home To Stay
Josh O'Brien	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
Rob Parritt	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
Kelsey Tonning	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Home To Stay
Henry Tarlow	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Home To Stay
Stephen Sinclair	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Home To Stay
Matt Pryor	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Adult Services
Jeff Tardif	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Family Shelter
Abdirahman Osman	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Family Shelter
Tammy Morse	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, General Assistance
Jon Bradley	Preble Street
Ali Lovejoy	Preble Street- CLIP
Jessica Kundra	Preble Street- CLIP
Ashley Gorczyca	Preble Street/HVJ
Pat McKenzie	Opportunity Alliance
Elizabeth Szatkowski	Opportunity Alliance
Norman Maze	Shalom House
Jim Devine	Homeless Voices for Justice
Tom Ptacek	Homeless Voices for Justice
Vickey Rand	CHOM
Cullen Ryan	CHOM
Amy Faulkingham	2-1-1 Maine
Shana Pike	SteppingStones
Mary Ellen Welch	PPD Community Policing Midtown
Joe McNally	Milestone Foundation
Tom Natalie	Milestone Foundation
Kathleen Babeau	City of South Portland General Assistance Department
Marcus Giordano	YCSPI- Serenity House
Jenny Stasio	Family Crisis Services
Betsy Whitman	First Parish UU
Visiting Students	Bowdoin College

I. Introductions

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

- II. December 2013 Bed Usage Statistics, Oxford Street and Family Shelter Matrixes – Bob Duranleau**
See handouts. Bob reviewed the statistics in the ESAC packet for December. He discussed the changes for next month's statistics. In regards to the Joe Kreisler Center, he pointed out that there are more available beds this year, so that is part of the reason the numbers have increased. Bob pointed out the positive statistics for the family shelter and the increase in those new asylum pending intakes coming from other areas out of fear of soon losing their eligibility for assistance due to DHHS General Assistance rule changes. He also pointed out the seeming drop in numbers for OSS for the month. However this is due to the change in location of the warming center from the Refugee Services Conference Area to the OSS day room. This removed 20 beds nightly for the month (620 bed nights). His team is now in the process of making sure those staying in chairs are being counted as receiving

services for the night, but this proves difficult as there is some redundancy in numbers. Corrections will be made to the December OSS numbers and emailed to the committee.

Bob turned the group's attention to the matrixes, pointing out the housing placements by type of voucher. Meanwhile, the change in the OSS housing program to focus on the chronically homeless (CH) is proving to pay off on the Housing Placements by Length of Stay.

III. HUD 2013CoC Grant – Bob Duranleau

Bob discussed the 2013 HUD Grant (approximately \$3.3M). The projects were ranked by prioritization (see handout). He explained the competitiveness of the grant, along with the scoring process at the federal level. Bob put out an open invitation for agencies to offer letters of leveraging for the applications, and handed out the details of leveraging to the ESAC group. Jon pointed out HUD's focus on housing for the chronically homeless. Job and Bob discussed the difficult funding decisions the CoC had to make in terms of Transitional Housing. Jon further discussed Preble Street's new Permanent Supportive Housing program as a result of reallocation of funds. He is hopeful that they can create a new location and units, with the hope of creating an on-site medical facility in the next few years. Bob pointed out that last year's funding was based on the lack of Permanent Supportive Housing programs, regardless of the fact that the collaborative focused on the chronically homeless.

IV. Chronic Homeless Housing Plan – Rob Parritt

Rob discussed the model change of delivering housing services to the chronically homeless. He reminded everyone of the national best practices and the need to focus on those who occupy the most bed nights, where those with fewer bed nights will most likely house themselves through community resources. So far, the numbers have been positive, and Rob discussed the high level of collaboration between the Oxford Street Shelter, Preble Street, Portland Housing Authority, and Shalom House. As an example, one client with over 4,000 bed nights with Oxford Street has been housed and will follow up with case management. For the 100,000 Homes campaign, Portland is in the top 40 to move forward in the goal of ending chronically homelessness in 2015. Pat expressed her support in this model and how "hot-spotting" first made her hesitant. However, with her seeing the results over and over, people should have faith in the model. Rob explained the process in the following breakdown: of any seven (7) people enter the shelter, four (4) will find housing on their own, two (2) will require minimal assistance with finding housing and assistance, while the last one has the potential to turn chronically homeless and will require intense follow-up.

Rob wanted everyone to be assured that while they are focusing on those 30 chronically homeless clients; they have not forgotten the rest. Human Service Counselors are still focusing on other clients and helping with resources and case management.

Bob gave a special thanks to Shalom House, specifically Norm, Ginny, and Wendy for their outstanding collaboration with the Family Shelter and OSS.

V. Client Support & Services Plan – Update – Rob Parritt

Rob discussed the status of the Plan. Housing placements have jumped, mainly due to the requirement for clients to have a housing plan within 30 days of entering the shelter. The agencies meet regularly to discuss the services plan and community resources. Jon stated that PATH/CLIP's priority has been to work with the chronically homeless and those being discharged from medical facilities and prison. Once their focus is more established, it will further help the collaboration. Ali stated that they are working with chronically homeless and those being discharged, including intensive work with DHHS's Adult Protective Services to help implement long-term support for those in need of services.

VI. Legal Clinic for Homeless Individuals – Jon Bradley

Jon handed out the brochure of services dedicated once a month to help clients work with lawyers, whether it be just information or actual legal help. Preble Street is working with local law firms, including Pine Tree Legal Aid and Bernstein Shur, with now more than 12 agencies signed up. There

will be a regular day and time established at Preble Street, with a referral process. Jon is hoping the referral and follow-up processes can be established soon. In the beginning of February, there is a meeting at Bernstein Shur to have all those involved discuss referral, intake, and follow-up processes. On March 6th, there will be a full-day training for those lawyers participating. Regardless, many will be referred to specialty-lawyers (ILAP for immigration, PTLA for tenant issues), but they can handle child support, misdemeanors, and identification issues.

Tom inquired about increasing the number of available hours in the month. Jon said with the number of those interested, it may be able to offer more resources to those who need it. Jim said they will be interested in presenting this to the community and making sure it is a known resource in the area. Jon said it is a national model and we will now be following it.

VII. *Home Fund – Aaron Geyer*

See handout. Aaron discussed the program. Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program (TBRA) will work with those at the OSS and Family Shelter, but not stationed at other shelters. This should be rolled out by the end of January once contracts are signed and partnerships are established. Once everyone is set, Aaron will send out an email to the ESAC list to give further details on the program. Bob pointed out that this is similar to the former Emergency Services Grant (ESG) program.

VIII. *Point-in-Time Survey – Rob Parritt*

Rob stated that the Point-in-Time Survey is set for January 29th. Unfortunately, the planning committee was not well-attended with **only three people**. This survey requirement is from HUD, requiring that all homeless be counted in the community, including those in campsites and reaching out to other groups. He stated they need more manpower and asked that anyone interested contact him by January 23rd. They will start at 5:30pm on the 29th at OSS and it will end when upon completion. He asked that everyone send some sort of RSVP, including how long they can stay, so he can have an accurate headcount of surveyors.

IX. *Home To Stay Program – Update – Aaron Geyer*

Aaron stated it was a slower December. Moving forward, the program will be focusing on HCV vouchers, as they should be used by the end of February.

X. *GA Sign-in Process – Update – Tammy Morse*

Tammy discussed the General Assistance lottery system that started on October 28th due to the increased number of instances. A formula is used to determine how many tickets may be drawn and clients will be seen both in the morning and the afternoon.

Elizabeth stated that the previous system seemed to be better since people knew if they would be seen. Rob pointed out that while he understood it, this is the lesser of two evils and the need to stop the first-come first-served is due to severe safety concerns. Elizabeth asked for more options, since people can't make appointments. Bob pointed out that some people come in multiple times a month. If everyone only came in once a month, five full days would be saved for appointments or just other clients. Bob suggested that people with issues to call Palmer Peters. Kathleen is also seeing record high numbers in South Portland. Elizabeth asked about scheduling appointments, and Bob pointed out that Portland had a 50% no-show rate for appointments and a 75% no-show rate on carry-over from previous days.

Tammy discussed the need for clients with emergency prescriptions being discharged from the hospital. She stated they tried a system of doctors' notes and this did not work, as everyone came with a note. They prioritize those just discharged from the hospital or those with autoimmune issues (chemo, dialysis, etc.) Marcus stated that while they were discouraged at first, his clients now know it is safer and now that clients know the process, it is easier for them to be seen. Pat pointed out that those working with the mentally ill need to know the system better so they can better serve those clients with medications within the GA system. Bob reminded everyone of the after-hours program and those are only for an overnight prescription and to get clients to the next day. The Committee members closed by stating they appreciate

all the work of the Portland General Assistance employees.

XI. Federal and State Legislation – Cullen Ryan

Cullen discussed the state legislature. Sen. Craven put in Bill LD1717 to help keep the funds for New Beginnings' Youth Shelter, and that \$750,000 of the general fund should be distributed between the shelters throughout the state. Some shelters don't have the backing of their GA, so they need this funding to help keep them open. The hearing for this bill is on Tuesday, January 28, at 3pm, and will take place in front of the Health and Human Services Committee in Cross Building Room 209.

Cullen addressed a GA rule change proposal limiting immigrants' access to GA, including TANF and food stamps. There was unanimous testimony against the rule change. Another policy against GA is to change GA to a block grant program to save the state money. This would eliminate the 90% reimbursements to many municipalities, including Portland, Lewiston, and Bangor. Cullen urged everyone to contact their local representatives voicing their opposition to this proposal.

LD1578, regarding Affordable Care Act funds, is still being discussed. This bill cuts off those needing access to health care by helping them navigate the system. He stressed that if you cannot attend the testimony, to please send letters of support and testimonies to Cullen and he will forward them to the state level, or submit them to DHHS by next Wednesday. Cullen stated that in the last legislative session, it passed to accept the funds, and was vetoed by the Governor. They were two votes shy of overriding the veto and so this is close to passing, just need a final push.

Norman talked about LD1664: The elimination of itemized deductions for nonprofit organizations. The Maine Association of Nonprofits (MANP) is taking letters of support against this.

Cullen spoke on federal legislation, with the house approving a large amount of money to the transportation, housing, and urban development fund. This is to help McKinney funds, HUD/Section 8, HOME, and CDBG. \$2.15B has been approved and should cover all renewal project applications throughout the country applying for HUD funds. However, this does not cover any increases. Section 8 has also been increased to help those renewing their vouchers, so we should not see people being displaced by sequestration.

XII. Other Business

Elizabeth and Jim spoke about NAACP, UNE, Center for African Heritage, City of Portland, Maine Interfaith Youth Alliance, HVJ, The Opportunity Alliance, and Goodwill holding the "NAACP Annual MLK Jr. Community Dialog—The Silence of Inequity: Hunger, Health and Education." It will be this Saturday at UNE's Ludcke Auditorium in Portland. It will mostly facilitated by high school students in the community, and is an opportunity to learn more about this topic.

NEXT MEETING:
Thursday, February 20, 2014
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.