

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes February 20th, 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 Tinning	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
Amanda Doyle	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Refugee Services
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
Amy Grommes-Pulaski	City of Portland, Housing & Community Development Dept
Maeve Pistrang	City of Portland, Housing & Community Development Dept
Ali Lovejoy	Preble Street- CLIP
Jessica Kundra	Preble Street- CLIP
Ashley Gorczyca	Preble Street/HVJ
Norman Maze	Shalom House
Ginny Dill	Shalom House
Jim Devine	Homeless Voices for Justice
Tom Ptacek	Homeless Voices for Justice
Jeff Vane	Homeless Voices for Justice
Vickey Rand	CHOM
Cullen Ryan	CHOM
Amy Faulkingham	2-1-1 Maine
Mary Ellen Welch	PPD Community Policing Midtown
Joe McNally	Milestone Foundation
Jenny Stasio	Family Crisis Services
Hanna Sturtevant	Amistad
Peter Driscoll	Amistad
Carol Kulesza	Veterans Affairs
Meg Elam	Cumberland County DA's office
Wendy Harmon	Southern Maine Landlord Association
Marcus Giordano	York County Shelter
Kerry Polyot-Stefani	SteppingStones

I. Introductions

Tom Ptacek, ESAC Tri-Chair, welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made. Bob announced that this is Tom's last meeting as co-chair of ESAC. Everyone thanked Tom on his hard work and congratulated him on his new job. Homeless Voices for Justice will appoint a new co-chair for ESAC.

II. January 2014 Bed Usage Statistics – Bob Duranleau

See handouts. Bob reviewed the statistics in the ESAC packet for January. Bob reminded everyone that the reason for the significant increase in usage of the Joe Kreisler shelter is partially due to a new shelter opening with higher capacity. He further explained that most intakes listed as "Out of Country" at the adult and family shelters are those in the US on a visa and applying for asylum. Bob asked everyone about the last page, showing all of the shelters together and highlighting the peak night of the month. Everyone agreed to keep this page, as well as the change in reduction of graphs for 1st Time Homeless, and the OSS capacity numbers which include beds and chairs. Bob thanked Krista for creating this page.

III. *Oxford Street Shelter Calendar Year 2013 Matrix and January 2014 Matrix – Josh O'Brien*

Josh handed out the Calendar Year 2013 Housing Placement Matrix. He explained the difference in actual and projected numbers for the year, with Home to Stay starting later than anticipated, and York County Shelter taking fewer individuals than originally thought. Josh discussed page two and the number of placements, as well as the placements represented by bed nights and by length of stay and bed nights saved. Finally, he discussed where placements were throughout the state, and outside of Maine. Rob pointed out that 60% of those placements were in Portland, versus 80-85% in previous years. This points out the lack of affordable housing in Portland, and the strong work with other municipalities to get clients back to their home area. Amy asked about the calculation of bed nights saved. Josh explained the formula, in that long-term stayers are projected to stay the rest of the month.

Tom expressed his concern of focusing on long-term stayers versus short-term, and how the number of intakes far surpassed the number of placements. Bob explained the Home To Stay and city ESG funds are designated for those homeless for less than 30 days. These programs will help those individuals who are shorter-term stayers, which allows OSS staff to focus on the long-term stayers.

Josh handed out the January Oxford Street Shelter Matrix and explained the bed night projections, as well as the additional housing placement programs available (listed at the bottom). Josh further explained the tracking of bed nights saved due to the housing of longer-term stayers.

IV. *Family Shelter Calendar Year 2013 Matrix and January 2014 Matrix – Jeff Tardif*

Jeff discussed the Calendar Year 2013 Housing Placement Matrix. He expressed confidence in getting closer to meeting the goals for Section 8 and HTS voucher placements in 2014. He further explained the placements by location, showing that most of the smaller numbers are most likely reunifications with family or their previous municipality.

Jeff discussed the January Family Shelter Matrix. He stated it is difficult to move a lot of those families with roots in Portland to outside the city, but currently each family is in contact with Shalom House, Home To Stay (HTS), or another housing program. Jeff explained that in previous years, no family ever stayed beyond two (2) months. However, due to the difficult housing market, some are staying beyond six (6) months, voucher in-hand. Jeff discussed the focus on reunifications with family or their home communities, as well as the focus on longer-term stayers, similar to OSS. He pointed out that those with no subsidy are those not eligible for housing vouchers. Ali asked if those with no subsidy are receiving rent through General Assistance. He stated yes, and Bob clarified that 35% of those at the shelter are visa holders and are not eligible for vouchers, therefore relying on GA to pay their rent. Jeff thanked Shalom House and Home To Stay for making more vouchers available for those eligible. He also pointed out that more landlords are connecting with the shelters to offer apartments to families with vouchers.

V. *HUD 2013CoC Grant – Bob Duranleau*

Bob notified everyone that the application has been sent, and discussed the changes in the CoC NOFA. The Opportunity Alliance and Bell Street reapplied as Rapid ReHousing, and Preble Street has applied for new Permanent Supportive Housing program to provide services for 30 Chronically Homeless individuals. Bob handed out the Calendar Year 2013 Homeless Shelter Statistics from HMIS and MaineHousing. Cindy sent this as a means to compare shelters and regions throughout the state. Bob pointed out there were 7,765 unduplicated homeless individuals throughout the state, accounting for 358,284 bed nights. He also pointed out that while some shelters went up in bed nights, they down in unduplicated individuals. Cindy from MaineHousing will be at next month's meeting to further discuss the details and answer any questions. The CoC group will also be working on updating the Grant Inventory Worksheet (GIW) to accurately reflect the shelter capacity count.

VI. *Chronic Homeless Housing Plan – Update – Rob Parritt*

Rob discussed the history of the change in focus on housing long-term stayers, rather than the short-term stayers. He expressed his anticipation for the next month's ESAC numbers, as it more accurately reflect the results of the long-term stayer approach and how it will show the real progress. Rob thanked Shalom House for the large number of vouchers being made available. Tom expressed his concern of the number of intakes versus those being housed. He understands that while some leave on their own there appears to still be a significant gap in the numbers. Tom asked how many more months can the shelter handle 100+ intakes and only ~30 housing placements. Rob expressed the same concern and stated his confidence in the work of his staff and handling each case differently. He pushed the fact that most likely twice that number leave the shelter, but no one is told where they go. Cullen further clarified how many long-term stayers are helped or identified in the shelter. Pete Driscoll expressed his concern that these numbers are only those staying in shelters and not accounting for those in homeless camps or other areas. Rob clarified that the PIT survey proved that most homeless individuals are, in fact, in a shelter. Ginny, Cullen, and Joe all pointed out that there are plenty of programs and vouchers to get those individuals directly from the street to housing, and there are outreach groups working with those individuals.

VII. *Human Trafficking Presentation – Meg Elam*

Cumberland County is seeing an increase in sex trafficking, which is typically tied to drug trafficking. Meg stated that while they are working with the police in getting these individuals out of their situation, there is no safe location to bring them to. While hotels are offering free hotel rooms, it isn't always safer. Hanna asked about trainings for local organizations. Meg agreed with training local organizations, and stated that they are still learning and receiving trainings, themselves. Jim expressed his appreciation for their efforts; he would like to see a more effective strategy to bring traffickers to justice. He suggested Crossroads for Women as a helpful resource. Rob asked for a specific person or contact number. Daniella or Jenny would be the individuals to contact at this point. Preble Street has grant money and a program starting, but it is not available yet. Tom asked if other communities have been contacted as resources. She said they have met with providers in Boston to learn more on what they can do or network and exchange information.

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

Rob stated the Point in Time (PIT) Survey went very well this year, and seems to be more streamlined every year. They found a total of four (4) individuals, none of which wanted to complete surveys. He stated it was freezing that night, so there was evidence in known campsites, but people were not out there. Peter stated that Amistad regularly sees individuals who are typically camped out and feels the unsheltered population is significantly undercounted. He further expressed his concern that Amistad was not included in this year's survey, as well as interest in being a part of the PIT process in the future. Rob stated that there is most likely another outreach event in August/September for 100,000 homes campaign, where they will most likely catch more individuals, and informed everyone he would send updates to ESAC. Carol pointed out that many are staying in cars. Rob agreed that many are hidden in plain sight and they did find one in a truck and now have found that individual housing. Hanna stated that some individuals just walk around at night and sleep in a chair during the day at Amistad. Mary Ellen agreed that they work in creative ways to help these individuals. Some can't be served at shelters due to behavior and they work to get these individuals help. Ali discussed a monthly Trust that meets regarding the top 10 homeless individuals in the area receiving the highest number of emergency services but camping out.

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

Aaron discussed the later start in 2013 and how they are now in full swing. Approximately 75% of the HCV vouchers are in the hands of individuals. And 147 households (154 individuals) are utilizing the case management piece of HTS. Bob stated MaineHousing has extended this grant from May 31st to December 31st.

X. 100,000 Homes Campaign – Rob Parritt

Rob explained the 100,000 campaign and directed everyone to the 60 Minutes piece on it ([click here](#) to see the report). He stated they are doing very well, housing 55 chronically homeless individuals. This has put them in the top percentage of communities in working with the highest percentage of their chronically homeless population. Rob informed everyone to keep an eye out in their inbox for updates.

XI. Federal and State Legislation – Cullen Ryan

Cullen briefly discussed the state vote on receiving Affordable Care Act funds. The state is still waiting to vote, but numbers look promising.

On the federal level, the Omnibus bill passed. Sen. Collins worked heavily on this and in ending sequestration; restoring a lot of funding back to 2012 levels. This should result in a reduction of use of family shelters within the next 6 months due to the increase in section 8 vouchers. However, in bad news, there is a lower baseline calculation. Sen. King is working on changing this formula. There is a draft template to thank Sen. Collins in her efforts on this effort and Cullen asked if everyone would like to send this to her. Everyone is in favor, so he will send it out.

Ashley discussed the bill to overturn the Governor's veto. She will keep everyone updated.

She also discussed LD1751, which will increase the "Circuit Breaker" cap to help those needing property tax help.

XII. Other Business

Jim stated that starting February 26, the Region 1 meetings are being alternated between Portland and Biddeford.

Jim updated everyone on Homeless Voices for Justice's efforts in the legal rights for individuals looking for employment. They are looking to have a strong relationship between the business community/job providers and the homeless community.

Bob reminded everyone that if they agenda items, to let him know via email or phone.

**NEXT MEETING:
Thursday, March 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 if you should have any agenda items for the next meeting.