

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes

July 17th, 2014

Bob Duranleau	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division
Kelsey Tinning	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
Henry Tarlow	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Home To Stay
John Shippee	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Family Shelter
Ashley Gorczyca	Preble Street/HVJ
Tom Ptacek	Preble Street
Norman Maze	Shalom House
Ginny Dill	Shalom House
Jim Devine	Homeless Voices for Justice
Vickey Rand	CHOM
Cullen Ryan	CHOM
Tom Natalie	Milestone Foundation
Carol Schreck	Portland Community Health Clinic
Jenny Stasio	Family Crisis
Dawn Pickles	The Opportunity Alliance
Heather Rhoda	Frannie Peabody Center
Marcus Giordano	YCSP/ Serenity House
Kayla Turner	Pine Tree Legal
Carol Schreck	Portland Community Health Center
Carol Kulesza	VA
Marty Pottenger	City of Portland-Art at Work
Cindy Namer	MaineHousing
Rebecca Dennison	HVJ
Lisa Mace	ME Behavioral Health- ACCESS
Patty Fitzpatrick	Preble Street/The Opportunity Alliance
Wendy Harmon	Southern Maine Landlord Association
Joe McNally	Milestone Foundation
Susan McCluskey	Bayside Neighborhood Association
Steve Hirshon	Bayside Neighborhood Association
Dee Clark	Preble Street/HVJ

I. Introductions

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

Bob introduced new ESAC Tri-Chair, Rebecca Dennison, HVJ advocate, to the group. Rebecca went on to facilitate the meeting.

II. June 2014 Bed Usage Statistics – Bob Duranleau

Bob reviewed the June 2014 statistics (see [statistics](#)). He pointed out that average individuals utilizing shelter services per night has gone up slightly from 2013, with a significant increase in youth.

Wendy asked whether Portland is seeing higher numbers because of the GA DHHS issue regarding lawful and unlawful residents. Bob pointed out that while GA numbers have increased for visa holders, they have not filtered into shelters—there has not been any noticeable increase in visa holders from other municipalities.

III. *Portland CoC Update – Bob Duranleau*

Bob updated everyone on the HUD issue with funding for the CoC. The Collins and Pingree offices have already been contacted by the City's Washington, D.C. lobbyist, and they will be speaking to HUD. There is a group of individuals going to Washington, DC at the end of July who may also speak to HUD officials, but Bob is optimistic that this will be resolved soon.

IV. *OSS Overflow Shelter Update – Rob Parritt*

Rob updated everyone on how the GA overflow has only been used 3 times since the beginning of May; they also stopped using the dayroom warming center located at Refugee Services. The shelter is well ahead of schedule on this move, and Rob thanked everyone in the room with their work on housing and attaining vouchers.

Steve asked about the connection between the rise in homeless and decrease in housing voucher subsidies. Rob pointed out that Section 8 has been impacted and how they work with those most at risk and the chronically homeless. Cindy stated that at the state level, MaineHousing has looked at the vouchers and where to set them aside for home to stay, extra funds, etc. On a local level, money is being repurposed with these populations in mind as well.

Wendy addressed the topic of individuals who are housed, but have nothing to do during the day and then turn towards poor tenant behavior. She is looking for more activities for these individuals and information to give them on these activities. Wendy applauded the work going into housing vulnerable individuals, but asked that once they are housed, how are they being followed-up? Marcus suggested places for individuals to volunteer time to stay productive, give back, and socialize. Carol and Dee backed the social and peer support group model. Patty informed the group that there is a peer support group at the Resource Center, Wednesdays at 9am.

V. *Home to Stay Program Update – Kelsey Tanning*

Kelsey updated the group on the status of the Home to Stay program, and that they are in follow-up mode. Most HCVs and STEPs have been issued and so they are doing follow-ups and maintenance. The teams is looking for referrals for the case management piece.

All referrals may be sent to:

Aaron Geyer, (207) 482-5131, aeg@portlandmaine.gov

Kelsey Tanning, (207) 482-5208, kt@portlandmaine.gov

VI. *Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program – Kelsey Tanning*

Kelsey explained that 18% of the TBRA funds have been used so far and are still taking referrals from outside agencies with homeless verification. 31 households for 71 individuals have been served.

All referrals may be sent to:

Aaron Geyer, (207) 482-5131, aeg@portlandmaine.gov

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VII. *Hearts, Minds & Homes – Marty Pottenger*

Art at Work is to tackle issues that typically don't have art-based solutions. Marty gave background on Art at Work with the Portland Police Department and helping their morale. Afterwards, the group participated in an Art at Work communication exercise.

Hearts Minds & Homes is a two-year citywide project focused on gentrification in Portland. Only one grant has been secured so far, so it is small. The project will include interviews, conversations and facilitated dialogues with people from the business, social services, Portland PD, public services, real estate, residents, elected officials, Homeless Voices for Justice and Preble Street. All participation is volunteer-based. Marty pointed out that many people may ask "Why?" This project is to bring out all ideas, confusions, etc, to be discussed with the mindset of possible solutions culminating from talking

from various perspectives.

If you would like to participate, please contact Marty at:
Marty@artatwork.us
(207) 874-8681

VIII. *Homeless Voices for Justice*

Jim discussed the monthly rally at DHHS on their announcement of relocation. The next rally is August 20 at 10am. CHOM and Amistad are cosponsoring the event for August. Jim encouraged ESAC members to attend the rally.

IX. *Federal and State Legislation – Cullen Ryan*

State: The Governor's effort to not provide reimbursement for asylum seekers and visa holders is a hot topic. Cullen pointed out that these individuals are here legally. They have a right to apply for asylum, although only about 5% of these individuals receive asylum. He applauded the City of Portland for continuing assistance to these individuals. Cullen pointed out that this is a good time to invite those involved in state legislation to show them the work going on with homelessness, as well.

Federal: Cullen discussed his visit to Washington, DC and his meetings with individuals. Funding for HUD was a top discussion: the House decided HUD funding should be cut, while the Senate raised it slightly, but not enough. He reminded everyone that Sequestration caused this cut, with the Omnibus Bill bringing it back halfway. Right now, unfortunately, those involved in redistricting may be at risk due to possible moderate views. Many have been staying further to the right or left for fear of losing their seat. Cullen pointed out that this will be an uphill battle for agencies and reminded them to focus on correctly using the resources they have.

Bob discussed the United Way's asylum work group. They will be having a drop in the backlog of applications due to the hiring of seven new employees to help process applications. The Boston Asylum Office sent out a release stating: "...the Asylum Program nationally has been struggling with the increasing number of Credible Fear and Reasonable Fear receipts over the course of the last year. This caused us to develop a significant backlog of affirmative cases... As one way to address this immediate need, the USCIS has authorized the hiring of yet more asylum officers." Their estimate is that 7-8 officers and one supervisor will be hired for the Boston office.

Cindy stated that she has been going to regional homeless councils and discussing the long-term stayer (LTS) approach. She handed out the LongTerm stayer Initiative Point in Time 2-year Comparison on all of the shelters in the state of Maine. Cullen pointed out the changes in LTS, where more of the upticks are showing up in family shelters, and that is directly correlated to the lack of Section 8 vouchers available. Rob pointed out that this data will help in challenging other communities, including rural communities, on best practices on addressing the LTS issue. Cindy announced that Rob will be taking over Josh's role in traveling the state to discuss this with other shelters.

X. *Other Business*

On July 25th, there will be a biannual homeless summit at Togus or the Portland Clinic
Thomas.money@va.gov

Cindy reminded everyone of the HMIS Training Symposium being held on Thursday, August 7, 2014, at the Oxford Street Shelter (203 Oxford Street). There will be two sessions to the training:

9:00 am – 12:00 pm – HMIS APR Training

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm – HMIS User Forum

Bob and Rebecca thanked Josh. Everyone expressed their gratitude to Josh, and delivered a round of applause. Bob invited members to stay after the meeting to visit with Josh.

**Thank you to Josh O'Brien for all of your hard work.
We appreciate your service to the City and homeless community.**

***NEXT MEETING:
Thursday, August 21, 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.*