

# **Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee**

## **Meeting Minutes**

**October 16, 2014**

|                             |                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Bob Duranleau</b>        | City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division                        |
| <b>Jeff Tardif</b>          | City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Family Shelter        |
| <b>Aaron Geyer</b>          | City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Support Services      |
| <b>Rob Parritt</b>          | City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter |
| <b>Kelsey Tinning</b>       | City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Home To Stay          |
| <b>Mary Ellen Welch</b>     | City of Portland, PPD Community Policing                                                         |
| <b>Tom Ptacek</b>           | Preble Street                                                                                    |
| <b>Jim Devine</b>           | Homeless Voices for Justice                                                                      |
| <b>Maria Tripp</b>          | Healthcare Affiliates Maine                                                                      |
| <b>Vickey Rand</b>          | CHOM                                                                                             |
| <b>Cullen Ryan</b>          | CHOM                                                                                             |
| <b>Ginny Dill</b>           | Shalom House                                                                                     |
| <b>Norm Maze</b>            | Shalom House                                                                                     |
| <b>Marcus Giordano</b>      | YCSPi                                                                                            |
| <b>Shana Pike</b>           | SteppingStones                                                                                   |
| <b>Steve Ellis</b>          | Frannie Peabody Center                                                                           |
| <b>Tom Natalie</b>          | Milestone Foundation                                                                             |
| <b>Carol Schreck</b>        | Portland Community Health Center                                                                 |
| <b>Elizabeth Szatkowski</b> | The Opportunity Alliance                                                                         |
| <b>Jamie Lasden</b>         | Preble Street                                                                                    |
| <b>Ali Lovejoy</b>          | Preble Street                                                                                    |
| <b>Annmari Bryce</b>        | Group Main Street (GMS)                                                                          |
| <b>Wendy Harmon</b>         | Southern Maine Landlord Association                                                              |

### **I. Introductions**

Bob welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made.

*A moment of silence was taken in memory of Rebecca Dennison, ESAC Co-Chair, who passed away last week.*

### **II. September 2014 Bed Usage Statistics – Bob Duranleau**

Bob reviewed the September 2014 statistics ([see statistics](#)). He stated that numbers are down for the month compared to 2013, with adults having a significant drop. As for families, there has been a significant spike in B1/B2 visa holders at the Family Shelter (page 5). Jeff stated these individuals tend to come from Angola and Djibouti. Rob stated that OSS has been working on placing the longest term stayers into housing.

### **III. CoC Update – Bob Duranleau**

Bob updated the group on the 2014 CoC application. The Continuum will be applying for \$2.5M for the S+C programs, part of 22 Park Ave, Logan Place, Florence House programs. There were a few programs not funded last year, but may be allowed a no-cost extension. These programs include; the rest of 22 Park Ave, Employment Assistance, HMIS, and Bell Street. Priority committee is meeting after ESAC and will prioritize both versions of programs, so to be as prepared as possible for HUD's decision regarding the extensions.

### **IV. Shelter Matrix – Rob Parritt**

Rob discussed the Oxford Street Shelter Matrix. He pointed out page 2 and housing placements; he is looking to hold a landlord luncheon next month (November) for landlords and service providers to meet

and discuss current issues. Rob discussed the reunification portion of placements, and the requirements of the individual to receive bus tickets.

Jeff discussed the Family Shelter Matrix. He said it is nice to see the numbers drop as a whole, but believes they may go back up for October. The number of visa holders has increased in the last few weeks, making placements harder. Despite this, the housing placements are at 14, which is higher than the original goal of 10-12. The shelter is working to help clients move out of Portland, as the market is still tight in the area. In addition, with the increase in rental assistance, but constant rate of overall allowance in GA,

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

Aaron stated that Home to Stay is continuing on through the end of December. In August, there were extra funds to use in a pool on a first come-first serve basis. This has created an additional 16 vouchers. To date, 51 individuals from OSS and 33 families from the Family Shelter have been placed.

**VI. *Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program – Aaron Geyer***

Aaron reported that TBRA has been going since March, serving 49 households. This is short-term assistance with deposits, utilities, first month's rent, etc. To date, the program has spent approximately 35% of its allowance.

All referrals may be sent to:

Aaron Geyer, (207) 482-5131, [aeg@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:aeg@portlandmaine.gov)

Kelsey Toning, (207) 482-5208, [kt@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:kt@portlandmaine.gov)

Guidelines are based on being homeless. Aaron and his team will do this assessment and asked for more referrals.

**VII. *Change in Preble Street Dinner Time (November) – Ali Lovejoy***

Ali stated that starting Sunday, November 2, dinner will be moved up one (1) hour. This is to ensure individuals get their meals and then go to the shelter, while not feeling they have to choose between the two. Individuals 50 and older will be 4:30pm, then the rest at 5-6. In addition, the Resource Center will be closing at 5pm.

**VIII. *Homeless Voices for Justice***

Jim stated HVJ is heading to Augusta today to do state candidates forum. Next week is another one at Preble Street for city candidates. Elliott Cutler will be visiting Preble Street on October 23.

There is currently discussion happening regarding storage at the shelter and how to make it more available to clients in the area. They are looking at the options in offering storage lockers and the needs of the community.

Jim stated there will be a meeting with Logisticare re: bus pass issues. Local clients and providers have not been satisfied with this service and would like to discuss these issues with Logistcare.

**IX. *Federal and State Legislation – Cullen Ryan***

State: Now is a good time to get Representatives out into the community to learn more about our agencies and programs.

Federal: Congress is back in session on November 12. They will be reviewing the OMNIBUS Bill or CROMNIBUS (Continued Resolution version) Bill. Funding levels will only go as high as FY 2014, at absolute best. If the Senate turns Republican, this is likely to happen, with a continued long term resolution happening past January 1<sup>st</sup>.

**X. Other Business**

Ali discussed trends found at Florence House, Joe Kreisler, and the Resource Center:

The housing market is difficult, where they have vouchers, but no place to house individuals. They are also seeing more complex medical issues coming into the shelter and tend to see more individuals who are stuck in limbo. The Resource Center has also seen a drop in individuals with MaineCare (from 33% to approximately 27%). The Veterans program is doing well, but is struggling with individuals who are not qualified for MaineCare.

The Teen Shelter (Joe Kreisler) has been struggling with calls from DHHS regarding youth transitioning out of foster care and sending them to the shelters. Bob stated that DHHS has been calling them with Child Protective cases and reunification. They had a meeting to discuss this issue and how the City will not be taking cases. Ali discussed her frustrations with a lack of discharge planning on the state's part.

Florence House has seen a trend of women with substance abuse issues without many community resources, including detox.

Rob backed these trends, citing similar issues at OSS, specifically substance abuse and needle users. Mary Ellen gave details on an open discussion at Channel 5, discussing the issues with IV drug users. It is at 6pm on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. If you have questions, please contact Laura Cannon with the Bayside Neighborhood Association. This discussion will be recorded and shown at a later time.

Cullen discussed the forum held in Bangor discussing the concerns surrounding opiate use. This included the prescription of opiates by hospitals and over prescribing. Mary Ellen pointed out that many of these younger individuals have moved to heroin, as it is cheaper and easier to locate, as well as bath salts. Cullen pushed the shelters to continue placement of longer term stayers so they are ready for the younger generation with significant substance use issues. Annmarie and Wendy discussed the need for education for medical providers and parents over the prescribing of opiate pain killers to youth. Parents can have more control than they think, and medical providers need to be aware and prescribe less. Cullen would like to see ESAC take a lead on this education campaign.

A meeting is scheduled with the Mayor's subcommittee on substance abuse at City Hall on November 13. Elizabeth suggested for the first showing, they just discuss the issues and bring people from "21 Reasons" and the local PTA, medical providers, Portland Health, etc. Bob suggested a subcommittee of ESAC for this. Wendy, Cullen, and Elizabeth agreed to be on it, with Cullen and Elizabeth running it. Mary Ellen discussed a monthly meeting with Chris Corson at Public Health. Rob discussed how this group should be heard more of, where he hasn't heard anything about this. Jim pointed out that there are varying subcommittees throughout the city all with the same goal and they need to get together rather than having redundancies.

Rob vented his frustrations surrounding discharging to homelessness from hospitals, DHHS, Foster Care, mental health facilities, etc. Region 1 headed up a set of guidelines for hospitals to follow if they believe there will be a patient discharged to homelessness. This went to the Statewide Homeless Council and the Statewide Hospital Association, receiving a stamp of approval, but now it is up to hospitals to enforce these guidelines. Elizabeth asked for individuals to help Stacy Ladakakos at Opportunity Alliance with this initiative. She can be reached at: [Stacy.Ladakakos@opportunityalliance.org](mailto:Stacy.Ladakakos@opportunityalliance.org). The next meeting to discuss this will be held on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 3pm after the Region 1 meeting.

Norm thanked OSS and their staff with helping with the Long Term Stayer initiative. The BRAP freeze has been lifted. This will allow for the issuance of more vouchers, but it does not help the tight housing market.

Bob asked for a nomination of Carol Schreck to the CoC Priority Committee; **Cullen moved, Rob seconded, unanimously approved.**

Tom discussed the open enrollment for the Affordable Care Act starting November 15. Even if an individual knows they will not qualify, they should apply and receive the official denial. When they receive the official denial, they receive an exemption number. This exemption number allows the individual to qualify for special enrollment, should their circumstances change. If an individual doesn't have an exemption number, taxes may be difficult. Annmarie discussed the need for MaineCare denials and asked if they should go through the Marketplace denial as well. No one had a definitive answer on it and agreed it is a good topic to look in to.

Rob discussed the Long Term Stayer initiative and how his team is looking to spread the word throughout the state. Bangor is next week to discuss Bangor area shelters, PCHC, and LAA to encourage S+C providers up there to prioritize their vouchers to chronically homeless. Cullen praised Rob, Cindy and Ginny in their push to inform providers throughout the state of these methods.

**NEXT MEETING:**  
**Thursday, November 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.*