

EMERGENCY SHELTER ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

REFUGEE SERVICES CONFERENCE AREA
190 Lancaster Street

Thursday, April 21, 2016
8:30am – 10:00am

Minutes

Attendees

Name	Organization
Dave MacLean	City of Portland
Brian Marchant	CoP OSS
Bill Higgins	HVJ
Adam Harr	City of Portland
Norm Maze	Shalom House
Kathleen Babeu	City of South Portland

Name	Organization
Joanie Klayman	Preble Street
Jim Devine	HVJ
Cullen Ryan	CHOM
Jan Bindas-Tinney	Preble Street
Chris Bickwell	TOA
Claudette Ndayininahaze	TOA

I. Introductions

II. March Shelter Bed Usage Statistics

Brian Marchant explained the March 2016 statistics ([see statistics](#)); overall average bed nights were down compared with last year, but were up from February. Going over the residency of Oxford Street intakes, and remarked at the high number, 10, coming from Biddeford. He asked the group if anyone knew of an eviction or other situation that could explain the high number. Joanie had noticed a math error in the adult bed night totals; Rob thought that the adult overflow numbers were being double counted and Adam said he would fix the affected reports. Dave explained that TBRA, Tennant Based Rental Assistance, received \$25,000 in additional funding earmarked for mass eviction relief.

III. Shelter Matrix

OSS didn't use the warming center in March. Brian attributed the lower housing placements, 24, to a member of his staff departing from the city. Of the 24 housing placements, 6 were long term stayers. The family shelter is serving slightly more people than last year; placements are also slightly down compared to last year, but up from the previous month.

IV. Long Term Stayers Report Update

LTS list started April 30th, 2015 with 70 people and is down to 8 individuals with two on deck to be housed. The new list of 72 started on January 7 of this year and is down to 43 with 5 on deck to be housed. The new list is comprised of long term stayers who are helped from various service providers: 35 people from OSS, 15 from Milestone and the remainder are people who were unsheltered.

V. Homeless Voices for Justice Update

Bill said that they HVJ has been working on no cause evictions and met with councilor Belinda Ray. She was receptive to landlords not discriminating against tenants with housing vouchers, but pushed back on the idea of a moratorium on no-cause evictions. Jim said that HVJ has been focused on evictions but pointed out that the India Street closure may affect a lot of the same people. Bill said that they see folks coming from Biddeford and Rob explained that the York County Shelter is a high barrier shelter requiring sobriety which leads to people being sent to Portland instead.

VIII. Federal and State Legislation

Federal: The house released a budget proposal with more cuts than sequestration. An Ending Homelessness Act introduced in late march would provide 13.27 billion dollars to CoC programs, special purpose Section 8, and the National Housing Trust Fund. HOTMA hasn't moved in the senate. Collins introduced a bill to increase housing services for people living with HIV/AIDS.

State:

DHHS has been putting out rules for Medicaid that has received public pushback in section 17. 117 testified against the change at a Health and Human Services Committee Hearing. A new change made to section 17 removes several conditions previously covered that could affect 10,000 individuals. It changes 9 ways to have mental illness that qualify for services to 2. People who have BRAP subsidies from the 7 conditions dropping from section 17 will be grandfathered into keeping their subsidies. A situation where BRAP funding was increased but eligibility narrowed may lead to housing resources on the table as people that could historically access it can no longer. A bill was vetoed that would have frozen rate changes. The governor vetoed a bill increasing access to Naloxone/Narcan, the overdose antidote. (Since the meeting, the legislature overrode his veto.) Jim asked if anyone knew about the LEAD bill, a jail diversion program, Jan said that it passed the house but does not know if it has moved forward since.

IX. Housing Evictions

Jan described the mass housing evictions the initial community response to rehouse some of those affected. The eviction wave has impacted over 100 individuals, leading people back to shelter. HVJ, The Portland Tenant's Union, PSRC, Shalom House, The Opportunity Alliance, and Catholic Charities organized to hold a meeting with city councilors and created a list of asks to assuage the mass evictions: non-discrimination against voucher holders, moratorium on no-cause evictions, fully funded TBRA, a limit on rent increases, creating stable housing, increasing the GA cap, and fixing the housing replacement ordinance. She asked that ESAC support the effort in the form of a letter to the City Council. Cullen made a **MOTION** to send a letter of support to the council, the **MOTION PASSED** with city staff abstaining. Jan will write the letter and Cullen will edit it.

X. Other Business

Brian said that increasing GA could have an unintended consequence where GA is increased but vouchers aren't; landlords raise rents to the GA level and creates a GAP between GA and Voucher holders. Cullen remarked that the rent cap may be more effective.