



**City of Portland, Maine
Public Safety / Health & Human Services Department
July 8, 2014**

Meeting Minutes

Committee Attendance: Chair Suslovic, Councilor Leeman and Councilor Duson

City Staff Attendance: Sheila Hill-Christian, Deputy City Manager; Julianne Sullivan, HHS; Asst. Chief Malloch, PPD;
Trish McAllister, Corporation Counsel; Michael Bobinsky, Public Services; Mike Murray, Island/Neighborhood Liaison

Meeting Called to Order and Minutes from June postponed until September

Meeting was called to order at approximately 5:45 PM by Chair Suslovic. Minutes were postponed until the next meeting on September 9, 2014 at 5:30pm.

AGENDA ITEM 1 – Public Health Division Update

Chair Suslovic thanked and congratulated Julianne Sullivan for stepping into the role of Acting Director of Public Health following the recent departure of Doug Gardner.

Julianne provided updates on recent and ongoing efforts of at Public Health:

Chronic Disease Prevention

- Brought in speaker from the Boston Public Health Commission on how their health department has incorporated Narcan into their overdose prevention program.
- The City received our 4th gold medal for Let's Move Cities, Towns and Counties, which moves us up from 7th to 5th place in the nation.
- Worked with the Downtown District to have the children's area at the Old Port Festival 100% smoke-free.
- Worked with organizers of the Greek Festival to have their event be smoke-free.

Environmental Health & Safety

- Developed and published new Food Handler Guide, which boils down the complicated and often convoluted Maine Food Code and provides contact information for licensing, regulations and more.
- We conducted 572 inspections in FY14.
- Tracked complaints for the first time – 44 in FY14, 7 confirmed.
- The federal Food & Drug Administration and the National Association of City & County Health Officials are funding Mike Russell to speak about the success of our program and our early success with meeting the retail program standards.

Health Care for the Homeless

- Medical services closed at the end of May. Still providing dental and behavioral health care services through November.

Health Equity & Research

- Minority Health Program staff co-organized and presented at the 4th Annual Maine Minority Health Conference at UNE on June 13.
- Submitted all documentation to the Public Health Accreditation Board on June 17. Site visit will occur in the next 6 months.
- Minority Health conducted a clean-up day at Wellesley Estates on June 28. Also worked to pass an indoor smoking ban that will go into effect August 1.

Chair Suslovic noted the success of the food program. Vice Chair Duson noted sharps brochures are informative and mentioned making them available to providers; Sullivan agreed and noted sending to pharmacies may be helpful as well.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – Graffiti Update

Trish McAllister reported that website complaints have declined since the passage of the graffiti ordinance. Graffiti removal kits are available for private property owners. Criminal prosecution is still happening and district courts are on the same page with the process moving forward, noting the South Portland case. The Police Department is also tracking when private property owners report graffiti. That information is sent to the crime analyst and special attention is given to an area based on the timing of graffiti removal.

Mike Murray reported that he is the City's contact with Graffiti Busters and is in partnership with the Portland Downtown District and Learning Works. Graffiti Busters work three days per week and are mainly staffed by individuals required to perform community service. The concentration of this work is completed during summer months due to removal not being possible in winter months. As such volume of work can be high at times. This service is also available to private property owners, subject to availability and funding.

Chair Suslovic asked what the City's relationship is with Graffiti Busters – who pays? Who is the service for? Funding comes from the overall budget for the City of Portland. Services are for public and does include private property but are subject to availability and funding.

The Chair encouraged additional public relations on this topic and noted it may be beneficial to pass on this information to Jessica (Communications Director) for distribution to private property owners.

The Chair noted several areas off the peninsula (mainly traffic intersections) needing attention of graffiti removal. Mike Bobinsky responded on behalf of Public Services that both the public services staff as well as a Portland Downtown District Team are both available for clean-up. He noted staff will be reminded to be more proactive regarding clean-up in addition to their work with Graffiti Busters.

Mike Bobinsky also noted that in 2013 there were 32 reports of graffiti in Portland. Since the ordinance passed there have been 21 reports on file for 2014.

Vice Chair Duson asked Mike Bobinsky if the department was keeping trending data. The answer was yes.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – Needle Disposal Program Update

Sheila Hill-Christian provided updates on this program. The number to call city staff for sharps disposal has been confirmed. The July 1st distribution of awareness materials has been postponed until all materials are received. Public Service Announcements are forthcoming with the availability of grant monies.

Chair Suslovic initiated a discussion surrounding what entity is responsible for the disposal of sharps whether they are found on private property or city property. Assistant Chief Malloch and Sheila responded that sharps found on City property will be disposed of by City staff. Sharps found on private property are the responsibility of the property owner, but there are additional resources available. The discussion further identified hotspots in the City where sharps are found and described that education and further distribution of awareness materials is expected to assist with the safe disposal of sharps.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – Downtown Public Safety Update

Assistant Police Chief, Vern Malloch, provided a general update on public safety in the downtown area. Public nuisance crimes have gone down 16% and part 1 crimes have gone down 12% in the past week. A general statement was made that weekly compstat meetings and analysis have been very effective in reducing crime on a weekly basis.

The Portland Downtown District and Police Department have two cadets (funded by the PDD) who have been very active and made contacts with a significant number of people. There are also two additional officers dedicated to the Old Port area.

The Chair and Vice Chair noted this update is positive and complimented the police department on a job well done. The discussion continued to mention the recent media attention to the question of safety in the Downtown District

AGENDA ITEM 5 – Motorcycle Noise Briefing

Trish McAllister provided the most recent statute update on motorcycle noise. AC Malloch confirmed the department is issuing violations (Trish had copies of citations with her) but also noted there has been an increase in compliance to compliment the lower number of citations being issued. It was noted that enforcement could be improved, but that there was not a high number of complaints comparatively. Trish also shared that Falmouth traffic PD does not enforce this issue.

The Chair requested a joint press release regarding motorcycle noise being enforced in Portland.

Public Comment

Public comment was made by Ralph Carmona of 105 North Street regarding upheats in crime. Representative Diane Russell was present, thanked Councilor Leeman for her service and provided a brief background of the motorcycle noise legislation becoming law. She noted that loud pipes are illegal and the American Motorcycle Association denies that loud pipes save lives. She also noted there are efforts at the State level to assist law enforcement agencies with this enforcement.

Michael Mastronardi, owner of 164 Middle Street, spoke regarding public safety in the downtown area and noted that aggressors know when police are not on duty and that activities increase during that downtime. He noted that restaurants leave chairs outside boundaries and break the rules when inspectors are not working.

Jim Brassier of 99 Silver Street spoke regarding motorcycle noise and in favor of increasing enforcement.

Andy Ford of Mountfort Street spoke regarding the history of motorcycle noise in Portland and encouraged more enforcement by the police department.

With no further business to attend to, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM. The next meeting has been changed to Tuesday, September 9th at 5:30pm.