**Augusta:** Catherine Sullivan (Hope House), Anne Giggey (PCHC), Joshua D’Alessio (PCHC Hope House), Chet Barnes (SAMHS), RJ Pinkham (Bread of Life Ministries), Beth Crowe (FVP), Melody Fitch (FVP), Betty Palmer (Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter), Cindy Namer (MaineHousing), Paula Paladino (MaineHousing), Donna Kelley (KBH), Cullen Ryan (CHOM), Vickey Rand (CHOM), Ginny Dill (Shalom House), Mike Mooney (New Beginnings), May Beth Paquette (RCAM) and Martha Everett St. Pierre (Betsy Ross House of Hope).

**Portland:** Not available today.

**Lewiston**: Site not working.

**On the Phone:** Daylene Sinskie (Western Maine Outreach), Elise Johansen (Safe Voices), Melanie Lamore Gagnon (Safe Voices), Mike Tilton (ESM), Janice Lara Hewey (Catholic Charities/PATH), Shanna Curry (Shaw House Waterworks ), Rita Defio (Sweetser), Christine Roberts (HUD), Gerald Botta (HOME), Tracy Hair (HOME), Susie Whittington (VA Togus), Rowena Griffin (BAHS), Paul Hammond (BAHS), Dawn Coffin (Families First in Ellsworth), Craig Phillips (Tedford Housing), Mary Boylan (Emmaus), Hannah Ives (New Hope for Women), Kat Perkins (Sprucerun-Womancare), Beth Meneses (CHCS), Wes Phinney (SHC), Alley Smith (Veteran’s Inc.), Dorathy Martel (Next Step) and Phil Allen (Preble Street/SSVF).

Disclaimer: These notes are not intended to represent direct quotes, things may not be in chronological order, and ideas may not always be accurately attributed. If you have corrections or comments, please let Paula know and she will edit accordingly.

**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

**Meeting: Maine CoC**

**Date: February 18, 2016**

**Time: 1pm to 3pm**

**Location: Tandberg Teleconferencing Sites**

**Review of Minutes** from January 21, 2016 – Motion to approve by Beth and Betty seconded. **Approved as submitted**.

**Committee Updates:**

**Steering Committee Update:** Steering Committee met on Feb. 1, 2016 to develop today’s agenda, and all items discussed in the meeting will be discussed throughout today’s meeting so there are no new updates.

**Resource Committee:** is meeting tomorrow at 9:30 at FVP. The Resource Committee sent out a letter to all of the shelters inviting them to participate in the MCoC or PCoC, which will be part of the new shelter funding requirements. They are working on a March training to occur during the Region II Homeless Council. Mike asked for a DHHS contact person who might be able to speak about some of the lesser known DHHS benefits. They have someone coming from OCFS to speak about transportation, child care benefits, etc. Chet offered to find out the names of other contacts for the training. The training will occur on March 11 at MaineHousing from 9:00-10:30 and they will send out a flyer about the training. Josh is working on a similar training for the Bangor area.

Josh noted that the Resource Committee is going to be working on a master attendance list to track attendance at full meetings as well as committee meetings. It was noted that there needs to be a list for ESG funded shelters so that they are tracked in order to meet their grant obligations. Josh has offered to keep the list and he will be asking committees to send him attendance lists at the end of their meetings.

Cindy noted that all of the meetings could be used as grant match. Specifically, if a column was added to include the amount of time, we could come up with an average hourly rate for everyone’s time and multiply it by the total the amount of time to get a dollar figure. Since HUD requires match, this would help us to meet our match obligations. It was also suggested that if we do this, we also consider overhead benefits and travel time.

Mike also noted that he sent out a list of Committees to have the list updated. Once it is complete, it will be sent to the entire MCoC so that it can be reviewed and newer members can sign up. Members were encouraged to reach out to the chairs for more information.

The Resource Committee thanked Janice Lara-Hewey and Phil Allen for all of their hard work with this year’s Point in Time Count. It is a lot of work coordinating the unsheltered count and they worked hard to organize and engage many outreach groups to participate.

**Data Committee:** The Data Committee did not meet this month. In the March meeting, they will be looking at the performance benchmarks for the shelters. They will also review the Annual MaineHousing shelter and Veteran statistics.

**Project Committee:** There are no updates since the last meeting. The meeting they have scheduled for this coming Monday will focus on finalizing forms and making some recommendations. CoC Funded projects were asked to send copies of their APR’s to the Project Committee, specifically, Wes Phinney, Gail Garrow and Donna Kelly when they submit them to HUD. The Project Committee wants to do monitoring in “real time” and have it be an ongoing process so it is not as overwhelming as it has been in the past. Also, they noted that they will be working on the HMIS monitoring tool as well as an ESG monitoring tool for shelters. Their meeting is on Monday, February 22 at 1:00 pm in Brewer if anyone wants to attend.

Finally, committee members encouraged shelters to join the Project Committee, noting that it is a great opportunity for them to give input on what the shelter monitoring tool would look like. Also, shelters were encouraged to reach out to the CoC if they are having issues they need assistance with. The Project Committee reinforced that the CoC is now emphasizing system performance, vs. individual performance of projects/shelters. IF one shelter is not performing well, it impacts the performance of the system which can affect funding. If issues are brought up right away we can take steps to fix them sooner rather than later when they may become larger and more challenging to fix.

**Scoring Template Committee:** Has not met. They are waiting for the Project Committee to meet and then they will review the recommendations as well as the scoring template**.**

**Governance Ad Hoc Committee:** They are meeting on Friday from 11:30-1:30 at Shalom House in Portland.

**Policy Committee Update:** They met on February 5th and there are a few highlights described below.

**Federal and State Legislation Updates:**

**Federal Update:** The President released the FY 2017 budget proposal on Feb. 9th. For FY17, HUD is asking Congress to provide $88 million for 10,000 new housing choice vouchers for homeless families with children, 18 billion for Section 8 Tenant Based Rental Assistance renewals, $7 million for VASH, which is a decrease compared to the FY 16 enacted level of $60 million. The budget also includes 2 billion for Homeless Assistance Grants, which would be enough to fully implement the HEARTH Act. The Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA) passed the House on 2/2 through a unanimous vote of all present.

House unanimously passed the HOTMA (Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act) Bill, which good news. It will save the country 3-400 million dollars and allows Section 8 to be utilized more effectively. This bill provides more flexibility to project-base vouchers to support affordable housing development and preservation and enable more homeless families or individuals with disabilities to live in appropriate housing. It simplifies rules for setting tenant rent payments, while continuing to maintain key affordability protections. It streamlines HQS and allows 30 days to fix non-life safety issues. Now the bill goes to the Senate for approval.

**State Legislation Update:** Bills of note:

* LD 873, Authorizes a General Fund $4M bond issue for housing for homeless veterans at Togus- Assigned to the Appropriations and Financial Affairs Committee. Public hearing date currently unknown.
* LD 1188, An Act To Implement a Rental Assistance Program for Low-income Households and Individuals. The Affordable Housing Workgroup presented its recommendations, followed by a public hearing on Tuesday,1/26/16.
* LD 1473, Resolve to Increase Access to Opiate Addiction Treatment in Maine. Work session held on 2/10.
* LD 1496, An Act to Support Maine People in Recovery. Work session held on 2/10.

**Statewide Homeless Council (SHC) Update:**

Cullen provided an update of the Statewide Homeless Council meeting on February 9th from 9:30 am - 2:00 pm at MaineHousing. The Blueprint for DHHS is complete and final comments from all three regional councils were incorporated into the document. This will be presented to DHHS Commissioner Mary Mayhew in March. MaineHousing reported out the annual shelter and Veteran statistics. Barbara Brann from the HCV Inspection Department provided an overview and statistics about the HCV Inspection process and encouraged providers to reach out to her with any issues or concerns. There was discussion about the VI-SPDAT protocol and the need to look at this in terms of working with long term stayers. As a result there will be an accelerated Peer to Peer meeting of Navigators to address concerns with the VI-SPDAT.

**Long Term Stayer Update:**

The original Portland list shows that there are 12 people (down from 70 in May), now really 8 because of impending placements and there are very complicated issues with 4 individuals. Brian noted that on the second list (of 70 initiated in January), there are 39 LTS at Oxford St. Shelter, 15 at Milestone and 16 in the community. In January, the LTS listing started with 70 people and it has dropped by 12 LTS who obtained housing to a total of 58. There is a weekly meeting which is well attended to discuss these individuals and make a successful plan to get them housed.

**Vets@Home TA Update:**

Phil gave an update on the Vets@Home TA. The group that is meeting regularly, the Maine Homeless Veteran Action Group, is making slow and steady progress. They are working on a governance policy to guide the work they are doing and they are trying to put together a bundled package of their work to present to the COC as a unified group. They want to be able to ask the CoC’s to have them be recognized as a formal committee of the CoC’s and they are meeting weekly to work on Veteran issue. Attendees include VAMC, GPD, SSVF, HUD VASH, MaineHousing, DHHS, and other providers. They have two tracks: one is process i.e. governance, identifying a secretary, etc., and a product track which is to create a by-name list of Veterans who are homeless and in need. They want to finalize this list as it is one of the USICH benchmarks required for ending Veteran Homelessness. The goal is that by mid-March or early April they will be ready to present to the CoC’s so they are recognized as a formal committee.

**CoC Leadership Update:**

The group met one week ago today. The CoC Leadership Group is the joint Board of Directors for both CoC’s so it will now be called the Joint CoC Board of Directors meeting. Everyone at the meeting was invited to attend the meetings: they are open to the public and meet the second Thursday of the month from 1:00-4:00. The next Meeting is on March 10 and it will be held at the City of Portland at 192 Lancaster St. in the Refugee Services Conference Room.

At the most recent meeting, a slate of officers was voted upon. Cullen Ryan will serve as the President, Josh D’Alessio will be the Vice President, and Adam Harr will be the Secretary. Congratulations to all! Amy Grommes Pulaski who was hired by the City of Portland, through the Betterment Grant they received last year, has helped this group with many critical items i.e. the Housing Barrier Assessment, needed for developing a coordinated entry system. For this year, there is a huge scope of work that needs to be accomplished through the Planning Grants that both CoC’s received. There will be a pilot program that will start in the spring in Bangor around coordinated entry.

Also the CoC Joint Board discussed the addition of new members to the Board. Cullen made a motion and Josh seconded the motion to add Awa Conteh from the City of Bangor and Wes Phinney, chair of the Statewide Homeless Council to the Board. The vote passed, congratulations Awa and Wes!

**Support Letters:**

At the Steering Committee meeting on February 1, Steering voted to provide a support letter for the Pay for Success Grant, which is a joint collaboration between the University of Utah, Maine DHHS, MaineHousing, and Maine DOC to provide a demonstration project for permanent supportive housing for the re-entry population. Also, the group voted to provide a letter of support for the Preble St. SSVF program. Members were reminded that if they would like/need a letter of support to please plan ahead and try to request this be put on the agenda for the regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

**Annual Shelter Statistics Report:**

These reports were sent out electronically before today’s meeting and copies were available at the meeting. Cindy reviewed the numbers and summarized them as follows:

In reviewing the statistics from 2013 – 2015, many of the various initiatives have been making an impact on decreasing homelessness and reversing the rate of growth for shelter expenditures. Some of our most successful initiatives have been the Home to Stay Pilot Program, the Shelter System Change Pilot and the Long-term Stayer Initiative in conjunction with the Statewide Homeless Council and DHHS.

In 2015, there were ……..

* 12% less homeless clients
* Utilizing 4% less shelter beds
* Representing 63% decrease in the average length of time clients remain in shelter

When you look at the 3 year report, from 2013 to 2015, look at bed nights changes, the numbers do not move that much. When you look at the LTS and HTS programs starting the beginning of 2014 and in 2015 there were more shelters doing the HTS program. So when you compare from 2013 to 2015, you see that the numbers change dramatically and the programs are making an impact. Cindy reviewed the Veterans report. There is a decrease 46% reduction in veteran homelessness in Maine from 2014 to 2015.

**Big Thinking Topic:**

Today’s discussion centered on the fact that the ESG Funded shelters will be required to attend and participate in the MCoC or PCoC meetings and how the MCoC could welcome and orient them to what it is that the MCoC does besides the annual consolidated application to HUD for funding. The three key areas are that the shelters will be integral to developing the Coordinated Entry System, which is a HUD requirement for all CoC’s. Also, HUD requires written standards for both CoC’s and also ESG recipients. Finally, the shelters can be instrumental in providing information on how their communities address homelessness and what things work, don’t work and what is needed.

It was discussed that as part of the monthly CoC agenda, we should make a space to discuss ESG issues and also have some additional training and information for shelters so they have a better understanding of the CoC. The CES system and the CAARE’s Map were discussed and it was asked if we could post the messaging for the CES/Data Sharing and CAARE’s Map. Paula will post this along with the minutes on the [www.mainehomelessplanning.org](http://www.mainehomelessplanning.org) website.

**HUD All Grantee Meeting:** Paula announced that there is an all grantee meeting by HUD on March 10th, in Concord, NH. The all-day meeting will focus on strengthening your PHA’s and CoC’s ability to end homelessness. The goal of the meeting is to provide a forum with all the partners to hear from PHAs and CoCs about different Coordinated Entry models, prioritization of Youth Homelessness, and strategies for partnering with Public Housing Authorities as well as discuss last year’s NOFA process. You will be given an opportunity to learn and ask questions from your peers, the SNAPS Office, your CPD representatives, and PHA’s.

**Next Meeting:**

March 17, 2016 1:00-3:00 pm: