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 Scott know and he will edit accordingly.

**Augusta:** Beth Crowe (FVP), Chris Bicknell (New Beginnings), Chet Barnes (DHHS), Arwen Agee (VA), Mike Mooney (NB), James Gagne (Preble Street Veterans Housing), Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing)

**Portland:** Ginny Dill (Shalom House), Vickey Rand (CHOM), Cullen Ryan (CHOM), Mike Merrill (VOA)

**On the Phone**: Gail Garrow (OHI), Boyd Kronholm (BAHS), Craig Phillips (Tedford Housing), Joshua D’Alessio (PCHC), Awa Conteh (City of Bangor), Mike Tilton (EMS), Christine Roberts (HUD), Janice Lara Hewey (Catholic Charities), Kari Alley (SpruceRun/WomenCare), Melissa McEntee (RGH), Emily Flinkstrom (Fair Tide), Jennifer Weatherbee (Penquis), Erin Houlton (KCHC), John Person (Veterans, Inc.), Alley Smith (Veterans, Inc.), Courtney\_\_\_\_(Veterans, Inc.)

[If I missed anyone – or missed or misspelled your name, please let me know]

**Meeting: Maine CoC**

**Date: February 16, 2017, 1:00 to 3:00 PM**

**Location: Tandberg Teleconferencing Sites**

**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

**Review of Minutes**: Minutes from January 9, 2017 were approved as submitted.

[This is a reminder that all MCOC agendas, minutes, and other information and materials are posted on the [www.mainehomelessplanning.org](http://www.mainehomelessplanning.org) website. Please subscribe to the site to receive email notifications when new information is posted. Committees should also be posting minutes and other materials on the Maine Homeless Planning site to keep everyone informed of the work they do.]

**Review of Agenda:** Janice requested that the Rural Youth Initiative be added.

**BIG THINK: HUD released the CoC NOFA Application Scores** and held a debriefing webinar. MCOC scored 166.75 and PCOC scored 154.25. As discussed last month, MCOC lost about $270,000 while PCOC was fully funded. This seems counterintuitive but does follow “HUD Logic” as far as how they score and rank applications. However, there were other inconsistencies in the scoring that were brought up during the debriefing webcast, particularly around Rapid ReHousing. MCOC increased RRH beds significantly but did not receive points, while PCOC increase only slightly and received full points. The Debriefing Letters only covered 15 questions out of the entire application, so there may have been other areas with similar issues. Scott has been in touch with Lynn Morrow and she agreed there appeared to be inconsistencies in the way these questions were scored. We may be able to appeal, though according to the NOFA instructions, appeals must be filed within 45 days of the awards announcement. That was back in December, so the 45 days has already gone by, even though the scores were only just announced. We could still try to appeal, or at least submit questions, and even if it does not change the outcome, we might be able to get more information.

**MOTION**: MCOC will look into filing an appeal, if we still can, and pursue further information regarding the inconsistencies identified in the NOFA Scoring. 2nded and **PASSED**. We also need to clarify exactly who would file such an appeal – would it be the CoC, the CA, the individual Projects?

We should also be looking at ways to provide TA to those projects that lost funding to help them remain operational if possible. At least one HUD TA provider is offering TA specifically to Tier 2 listed projects that lost funding. Contact Scott for more information on that. Our Project Committee is also still available to help.

**State and Federal Updates:** The Governor’s proposal to eliminate General Assistance would be devastating to many shelters, not only because many receive GA reimbursement, but also because so many people in housing with GA help would likely become homeless if it were cut.

-Other changes would impact youth ages 18 to 20 who would now be lumped in with ‘able bodied adults’ and could lose MaineCare and other benefits. This could effect about 6000 young people.

-**MOTION:** MCOC advocate to oppose the $65 Million in cuts to GA and other Safety Net programs and have someone provide testimony on behalf of MCOC next week. **PASSED** (with abstentions). Cullen will already be testifying for SHC. Should one of the Chairs go? If Vickey were to go her statement would be the same as Cullen’s. Beth will ask Melody if she would be willing. Chris B. said that Maine Equal Justice has a place on their website where you can sign up if you want to speak. Awa said Rindy Fogler will be speaking for the City of Bangor. All interested agencies are encouraged to advocate and provide testimony.

**Statewide Homeless Council Updates:** SHC also voted to send a representative to testify in opposition to the proposed cuts.

-Heard CoC updates

-LTS numbers continue to decrease

-Discussed developing a definition of Functional Zero

-Agreed to provide support letters for the 3 GPD programs in Maine

-Finalized the outline for what an Ideal Rental Subsidy program would look like

-Adria Horn of the Maine Bureau of Veterans Services reviewed her Draft Maine Plan to End Veteran Homelessness.

**Regional HC Updates:** Region 2 is hosting a training on Subsidy programs, March 10, 9:00 to 10:30 at MaineHousing.

**Long Term Stayers Update:** In Portland there were several housing placements in January and many folks on the LTS lists are applying for units in Huston Commons. The original list is now down to just 4 people. The 2nd list is at 17, the 3rd at 18, and the 4th is already down to 28. The Bangor list is still in the single digits. The Bangor LTS group may merge with another committee of shelter providers to make things more efficient. The by-name list is magic! It makes it so much more meaningful to be able to talk about real people that the service providers know and all work with, rather than just abstract numbers.

**Coordinated Entry Pilot:** There will be a training on February 28 and they plan to go live in March. The Pilot is just in Penobscot County but anyone is welcome to attend the training if they want to learn more. Contact Josh for details.

**CoC Board Update:** Discussed the possible merger of MCOC and PCOC and looked at various scoring and ranking scenarios to see where projects might fall in a merged CoC. The group would like more information before making a final recommendation.

**HMIS Advisory Committee:** The group has not met since our last MCOC meeting.

**SSVF and GPD Program Requests for Letters of Support**: The sample letter is intended to show that MCOC supports the concept and need for these programs, but does not specify that we support any one applicant over another – we would like to see them all continue to receive funding. There are two SSVF programs in Maine, operated by Preble Street and Veterans, Inc.

-**MOTION** : MCOC will provide letters of support for both agencies in regard to SSFV. **PASSED.**

-There are 3 GPD programs in Maine, operated by Veterans, Inc., CHOM, and VOA. John Person of Veterans, Inc. provided an overview of his agency and there 20 bed GDP facility in Lewiston. Mike Merrill provided information about the 10 bed VOA Huot House, the only one of the three that can also serve female veterans, and the 8 bed Veteran’s Career House facility. CHOM is the owner, but partners with VOA for the service component.

-Based on the design of the NOFA, each applicant must follow a particular model. In and effort to not duplicate services and hopefully increase the odds of all three being funded, the agencies have agree to apply as different models. The Veterans, Inc. program will combine elements of a traditional GPD program with a Bridge model to provide temporary housing for homeless veterans who have housing lined up but are, for whatever reason, not able to immediately move in. The Huot House will be a ‘Low Demand’ model, meaning it will not have some of the restrictions and conditions that more traditional models use. The Career House will operate on a clinical model, with LCSW and MHRT staff on site, while still focusing on employment.

-Arwen stated that all three program have been very successful and Togus VA supports all three.

-It was proposed that MCOC, like SHC, compose one letter indicate support for all three programs. Mike pointed out that the submission must be an actual pen to paper letter, not a copy.

**MOTION:** MCOC will provide a letter showing support of all three GPD programs. **PASSED.**

**Point-in-Time and Housing Inventory Update:** All forms and data were due to MaineHousing by the 8th. Janice has conducted an After-Action Review: the combination of a ‘Night of Count’ and ‘Service Based Count’ was very successful, especially in light of the terrible weather on the night of the count. It appears we have found a good balance between the coverage needed and the resources available to conduct the count. We should consider incorporating some additional trainings for volunteers in the future to avoid some inconsistencies. The Youth specific a form was intended to be used in conjunction with the standard form, but many volunteers appear to have used it independently, which means information that would have been on the standard form is missing. Also, many volunteers did not show up at the last minute due to the weather conditions. UNE will be processing the Youth Data – not sure what the time frame is for when we might expect a report. Janice suggested the CoCs develop a clearer and more structured approach to the PIT so it is not so dependent on just a very small set of people, just in case there is turn over and the knowledge is lost. Mike Mooney spoke to acknowledge and recognize all the hard work and effort that Janice put into the Point-in-Time Count – it is over very quickly, but it really does involve an entire year’s planning.

**Rural Youth Peer Network Initiative:** Phase One on Data Collection is complete. Phase Two will focus on Data Analysis. There is a call happening on March 14th to go over the details on this. Phase Three will be focused on Project Development, for those participating areas that get that far. The goal is to develop non-time specific permanent supportive housing options for youth. It appears that there is a need. The question now is, does MCOC wish to pursue this? If so, we will need more people to participate on the call and in the next 2 phases. The Phase Two Application is likely to be out in March, shortly after the call, and probably due in April. We have a chance to prepare now, to be in a better place if we want to compete, but we need to decide very soon. The Steering Committee agreed to investigate this and return with a recommendation. Janice and Chris Bicknell should attend the next Steering meeting.

**COC Score update:** Chris Roberts from HUD said she had been in contact with Lynn about the CoC Scores. Lynn is advocating on our behalf regarding the inconsistencies and is looking into the time frame for an appeal. She has scheduled a phone call with Scott for next Tuesday. All decisions about money are made by HQ, not at the local level. If the appeal process is no longer an option, or if it does not provide answers, we can write to our Congressional Delegation to look into this

**Next Full MCOC Meeting: March 16, 2017 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM**

**Bangor Public Library will not be available in February or March.**