**Augusta:** Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing), Leah Bruns (MaineHousing), David Sovetsky (Mid Maine Homeless Shelter), Janice Daku (RCAM), Donna Kelley (WCAP), Tony Veit (KBH), Lauren Bustard (MaineHousing), Mary Wade (MaineHousing)

**Portland:** Vickey Rand (CHOM), Veronica Ross (The Opportunity Alliance), Rachel Boyce (Preble Street), Ali Lovejoy (Preble Street), Mike Merrill (Volunteers Of America), Amy Grommes-Pulaski, Bill Higgins (HVJ), Ginny Dill (Shalom House), Norm Maze (Shalom House), Cullen Ryan (CHOM), Mara Larkin (MMC), Gail Kezer (Senator Angus King’s Office)

**Lewiston:** Mike Mooney (New Beginnings), Chris Bicknell (New Beginnings)

**Bangor:** Don Lynch (FACT), Dan Hodgkins (Preble Street Veterans Services), Johnnie Walker (Partners for Peace), Brenda Leavitt (OHI), Marcie Dean (Next Step)

**On the Phone:** Awa Conteh (City of Bangor), Craig Phillips (Tedford Housing), Emily Flinkstrom (Fair Tide), Rebecca Hobbs (Through These Doors), Ken Capron (Memory Works), Nick St. Louis (BAHS), Melissa McEntee (RGH), Heidi Bradley (CHCS), Meredith Smith (CHCS), Sarah DeRosier (CHCS), Mary J. Boylan (HOME), Michele Staples (York County Shelter Programs), Gerald Botta (HOME), Alice Preble (DHHS OCFS), Kari Bradstreet (HJP), Stephanie Primm (KCHC), Melody Fitch (Safe Voices)

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

Reminder – If you call in, please email stibbitts@mainehousing.org to let us know you were there!]

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.

**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

**Meeting: Maine CoC**

**Date: January 17, 2019, 1:00 – 3:00 PM**

**Location: Tandberg Teleconferencing Sites**

**Review of Minutes:** Minutes of December 20, 2018 were reviewed. Bill Higgins (HVJ) called in but was not listed as attending. Donna Kelley should be WCAP, not KBH. APPROVED as amended.

**Big Think Topic:** Our Board of Directorsis seeking nominations to fill several seats. The following individuals have been nominated: Dan Hodgkins (Preble Street, Veteran Housing Services), Chelsea Hoskins (Portland Family Shelter), Ali Lovejoy (Preble Street), Chris Bicknell (New Beginnings), and Gerald Botta (HOME, Inc.) MOTION to forward these nominees to the BOD. 2nd and PASSED. The Board will make final decisions on these recommendations. It was suggested we develop a ‘Job Description’ for BOD members so folks have a better sense of the time and level of commitment involved. Leah offered to research best practices on this and bring something to the group.

**State and Federal Legislative Updates:** (please see the Policy Committee notes posted with the most recent Statewide Homeless Council agenda on [www.mainehomelessplanning.org](http://www.mainehomelessplanning.org) site for full details.)

**Federal:** The shutdown continues. Senator Collins has put forth a proposal to fund everything but Homeland Security until those issues are settled, which would bring things up to 2019 levels.

**State:** Governor Mills has signed off on the $15M Senior Housing Bond that was passed some time ago but not acted on by the previous administration. While not targeted to homeless populations, projects might be able to include some set-asides, or at least create new stock to free up other units. There is also a new General Fund bond to create housing for homeless populations, to be administered by MaineHousing. SHC is preparing a proposal to create low barrier permanent housing with subsidies for people who have experienced long term homelessness. There are also several things in the works related to Youth, Veterans, Mental Health, and Substance Use Disorder populations.

**Statewide Homeless Council:** Had a facilitated Retreat to look at strategic planning and other big picture items. Overall, very positive and optimistic. A report from the facilitator will be shared soon.

**Regional Homeless Councils: Region 3 –** New Warming Center in Bangor at the BAHS.  **Region 2** – Reviewed legislative information and discussed possible new trainings. Also talked about Coordinated Entry and the need for a new/different approach to how it will work for Youth. **Region 1** – has not met since the last MCOC.

**Long Term Stayers:** Portland has housed a total of 213 people with an overall success rate of 93.8%. They are now working on their 8th list, with the first 5 lists now at zero and lists 6 and 7 in the teens. Sheriff Joyce of Cumberland County attended their meeting and will be attending SHC to help work on DOC/DOJ related issues. Bangor is still in the single digits. Brunswick currently has 4 individuals and 1 family on their list, and last year they housed 9 individuals and 14 families who were LTS’s.

**MCOC Board:** Still reviewing and refining Roles and Responsibilities, especially in regard to the many hats worn by MaineHousing (Collaborative Applicant, HMIS Lead, ESG Recipient, Grantee). The BOD approved a new ‘Working Group Charter’ and has recommended that it be adopted by the MCOC, with some minor edits, for use with all current and future Committees. The forms are intended to help clarify the purpose, scope and make up of each group. Copies will be sent to Committee Chairs to fill out and will be reviewed at our March meeting.

**New HMIS Documents:** Mary Wade provided areview of the new Agency Participation Agreement and Release of Information documents, and stressed the importance of getting these forms approved soon because other work depends upon having these in place. Part of the reason it took so long to finalize these drafts is because they had to go through several layers of review and revision by lawyers at MaineHousing and other agencies. The forms are HIPPA compliant. The old Agency Participation Agreement was a one-time thing, usually signed when an agency first began entering HMIS data. For some agencies, that was a very long time ago and a lot has changed since then. The new form will be renewed annually and incorporates the new Data Sharing Agreements. Janice D. said she appreciated the thoroughness and clarity of the new forms. Chris B. stated that the ROI would put Youth Providers out of compliance with DHHS Licensing and TLP requirements because ROI’s for youth must be more limited. Federally, anyone over 18 can sign their own ROI, but in Maine there are different rules for youth 18 to 24 who are being served by a Youth Provider Agency. The discussion generated a number of questions that Mary and others did their best to answer:

-Would it be more appropriate to have a separate form for Youth?

That is something the group can consider. We could approve these for use by ‘adults’ now and spend some more time address youth specific concerns.

-Is collecting and sharing all of this information, even for adults, really necessary?

These are the HUD UDE’s (Universal Data Elements) and Common Data Elements – the most basic information that all program have to ask any client. Sharing them means clients do not have to answer the same questions over and over again when they go to a new program that is in the system.

-Can anyone – everyone – see all of this information once it is ‘shared’?

Only HMIS Participating agencies can share data – this is not ‘public’ in any way. HMIS users have to be licensed through MaineHousing, and if someone leaves their employment, their access to the system is removed as soon as the HMIS team is notified. Soon, HMIS licensing will also require background checks.

-What if someone doesn’t want their data to be shared? Given the ‘Power Dynamic’ of client and provider, they may not feel that they can say no.

A client may request that their data not be shared, and opting to not share data cannot be used as a reason to deny services. This needs to be made clear to them by the intake worker.

Due to the number of questions and concerns from the group, it was decided that these forms would not be put to a vote today. We will revisit this in March.

**Coordinated Entry Committee:** No meeting since last MCOC. The results of the After Action Review are in – both from the Navigator Training and from the Survey Monkey sent to MCOC members. The raw information has been posted. Leah will compile and organize this to identify themes or patterns and will bring that more detailed report to the CE Com and BOD for further discussion.

**Resource Committee:** Gearing up for the Point-in-Time. Conducted a Survey Monkey to get ideas for upcoming trainings – if anyone has additional suggestions, send them to Norm.

**Project Committee:** Looking at Monitoring Documents and Procedures with an eye toward more clearly separating the monitoring from the scoring processes.

**Data Committee:** Looking at Data components of the Monitoring tool and trying to line things up with the new SAGE APRs. Would like to be able to look at Unit Utilization for projects that serve Families, not just Bed Utilization, which can negatively impact Family projects.

**Youth Committee:** New Beginnings received a grant from the Gorman Foundation to help support the work of the Youth Action Board and expand participation. MaineHousing is also looking into ways they can provide support for travel, accommodations, or registration fees to help Youth attend the upcoming Youth Homelessness Conference in DC in March.

**Veterans Committee:** Would like to invite everyone to their Annual HVAC meeting on Jan 28th from 3:00 to 4:00 at the Bangor Savings Bank Conference Center in Augusta (near the Senator Inn).

**Other Business:** Preble Street’s SSVF program has requested a Letter of Support from MCOC. Typically, MCOC will provide such a letter to any and all applicants for SSFV and similar programs, so as not to appear to favor one agency over another – we want them all to succeed. The Chairs will reach out to other known SSVF applicants to see if they too need such letters now, but funding cycles may be staggered. For now, because of the impending deadline, there was a MOTION that MCOC provide a Letter of Support to Preble Street’s SSVF Program. 2nd and PASSED.

Will the Federal Government Shutdown impact MaineHousing’s voucher programs? MaineHousing expects to be able to cover all February voucher payments. Not sure what will happen in March if this continues.

HMIS will be implementing a new Training site. This will be separate from the HMIS site itself. MaineHousing will be getting our own LMS (Learning Management System), called Bridge, which means we will be able to design and create all of our own training modules in house, keep them all up to date, and track usage to ensure that everyone who needs training has access to the information. We hope to have it in place by April 1st.

**The February MCOC Meeting has been CANCELED!!!**

**Next Meeting: March 21, 2018.**