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.

**Attending in Portland:** Vickey Rand (CHOM), Norm Maze (Shalom House), Ali Lovejoy (Preble Street), Rachel Boyce (Preble Street), Ginny Dill (Shalom House)

**Attending in Augusta:** Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing), Kat Freeman (Home Fire Consulting), Sara Wade (DHHS -SAMHS), Chet Barnes (DHHS –SAMHS), Pam Moring (Family Violence Project- FVP), Tracy Allen (Kennebec Behavioral Health – KBH), Lauren Bustard (MaineHousing)

**Attending in Lewiston:** Chris Bicknell (New Beginnings)

**Attending via GoToMeeting:** Awa Conteh (City of Bangor), Cullen Ryan (CHOM)Abby Smith (PCHC), Boyd Kronholm (Bangor Area Homeless Shelter- BAHS), Dan Hodgkins (Preble Street Veterans Services), Emily Flinkstrom (Fair Tide), Janice Daku (Rural Community Action Ministries – RCAM), Joe McNally (Milestone Recovery), Julia Kimball (Bread of Life Ministries – BOLM), Delanie Bubar (Homeless Services of Aroostook – HSA), Rich Ramero (OHI), Tyra Parker (Volunteers of America – VOA), Heidi Bradley (Community Health and Counseling Services –CHCS), Brianne Brasslett (CHCS), Sarah DeRosier (CHCS), Meredith Smith (CHCS), Jennifer Weatherbee (CHCS), Laurie Murray (MaineHousing), Janice Lara-Hewey (Catholic Charities), Alice Preble (DHHS-OCFS), Mike Merrill (VOA), Amanda Cost (Partners for Peace), Kari Bradstreet (Hope and Justice Project – HJP), Aaron Geyer (City of Portland), Melanie Beaulieu (FVP), Rebecca Hobbs (Through These Doors – TTD), Hope and Andii (Youth Action Board), Kelsey Brown (HUD), Noelle Coyne (Safe Voices), Amy Grommes-Pulaski (GP Consulting)

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

**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

**Meeting: Maine CoC**

**Date: January 16, 2020, 1:00 – 3:00 PM**

**Location: GoToMeeting**

**Member Introductions:** Norm welcomed everyone, and each attendee introduced themselves. A reminder for all those calling in - please email Scott Tibbitts to be sure you are included in the minutes.

**Review & Approval of minutes:** Minutes were posted on the Maine Homeless Planning website.

***Awa Conteh made a motion to approve the minutes, this was seconded. There was no additional discussion. No one opposed. Minutes were accepted as presented.***

**Big Thinking Topic: Chair Nominations**

Each year one of the chair’s seats opens for election. This year’s opening seat was Awa Conteh. Scott explained there was only one nomination for this position, which was Awa Conteh. He asked if there was any opposition to voting. There was none.

***Vickey made a motion for Awa Conteh to serve in the position of Tri-Chair of the MCOC. Rich seconded the motion. There was no discussion. No one opposed. This passed.***

***Congratulations Awa!***

**Big Thinking Topic: Project Monitoring Process/ Form**

The Project Committee shared documentation at the last meeting, which was approved. The committee has not made any additional edits or revisions to be considered at this time. Discussion was tabled.

**Federal Updates**

The federal budget was passed. It was considered a mini-bus spending bill, which included HUD funding, thus giving us a 2020 budget.

* There were tax credits a few years ago which will affect funding in the future.
* There are three rule changes- including SNAP – time limits for unemployment or underemployed and limited eligibility; broad based categorically eligibility; and utility allowances.
* HUD has proposed another rule on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing. This reverses some policies put in place by the Obama Administration, and could erode personal protections.
  + *Cullen offered to gather more information to share with the group at the next meeting.*
  + *Scott offered to post any information on the Maine Homeless Planning website.*
* There is an increase from 3.71% to 4% housing tax credits that increases the amount of funds availabile for affordable housing, aligns housing tax credits with VAWA, and improves rural housing resources.
* There is a Family Stability Act that would target women who are pregnant and families with children under 6 for a new housing subsidy to help end homelessness for families.

**State Updates**

* **LD 2056** - “Resolve, to create the Frequent Users System Engagement (FUSE) Collaboration.” This resolve is to create a plan to provide stable housing and community services to 200 persons who are homeless/ risk of homelessness who are the most frequent users of psychiatric hospitals, emergency shelters, emergency rooms, police, jails and prisons. *This does not house these individuals, but will create a plan to house them. There is no fiscal note attached.*

Would the COC like to endorse this bill? The group discussed.

One member asked why is another collaboration necessary, if we already do this work with the Continuum of Care and the Statewide Homeless Council? Some of the entities involved are not at the table with the Continuum of Care and/or Statewide Homeless Council.

Another comment was that this is exciting, and it would be great to incorporate the energy here to get more folks involved in the conversations.

* *There is a request for additional information. Cullen will provide this.*
* *There was a suggestion that this be the Big Thinking Topic for next month.*
* **LD1909**- This is a bill to Increase access to and support funding for emergency shelters to fund
* operations to keep shelter doors open. It was requested this not come from the HOME fund.

MaineHousing will likely distribute this funding the same way as the formula grant, except targeted toward operations only. The Bill states that it will be $3 million of ongoing funding.

There was a question whether this “ongoing” piece could be flexible to address the results of the Gaps and Needs Analysis to address possible new shelters coming online. The group could not answer this at this time.

***Awa made a motion to support LD1909, and request funds do not come from the HOME fund. Ali seconded the motion. Chet and Alice from OCSS abstain from the vote. This was approved.***

* **LD 1645, An Act To Create Affordable Workforce and Senior Housing and Preserve Affordable Rural Housing** by creating a state affordable housing tax credit administered by the Maine State Housing Authority through a process similar to its current allocation of federal housing tax credits. This would create more than 1,000 units of affordable housing over 8 years. An amendment includes language requiring that MaineHousing either require or provide incentives to encourage for a minimum of 4 units or 20% of the total number of units, whichever is greater, that occupancy preference be given to persons who qualify for supportive housing to assist persons with special needs in achieving housing stability, "person with special needs" includes a person who has experienced chronic homelessness or is displaced, has a disability, is a victim of domestic violence or has other special housing needs.

***Norm made a motion to endorse this bill. Janice seconded. No discussion. No one opposed. No one abstained. This was approved.***

* LD775 Reverts Section 17 eligibility back to 2016 criteria. There are currently extra steps to get people onto Section 17 that did not previously exist. This bill would remove those extra steps.

Chet commented that the list of Section 17 providers in the state is shrinking. It doesn’t matter if we expand the pool of who is eligible, but do not increase the number of providers. Availability will need to be considered.

***Norm made a motion to support this legislation. Cullen seconded. Discussion: Can we state that there is a huge concern around how to fund these services? The bill addresses criteria, funding is a separate topic and would be a separate motion. No further discussion. No one opposed. No abstentions. This passed.***

* **LD1960 Act** to increase Highschool graduation rates for youth experiencing homelessness in foster care. They can apply for a DOE diploma. There are many barriers including presentation and character witnesses. The goal of this legislation is to remove these barriers. It will also broaden scope to include more youth- tribal, juvenile justice, and other populations.

**Statewide Homeless Council**

Steph Primm was not available. Scott gave an update. Several members of the MCOC Board attended.

* The group got a sneak peek at a new version of the Maine Homeless Planning website, which is being restructured so it is easier to navigate, has a working calendar, and a page for each committee. It will include MCOC and SHC info and will be presented to MCOC before going live.
* There was also a presentation about the FUSE program, which will be posted.
* A 3rd presentation was from the consultants who conducted the Gaps and Needs Analysis. This was a lengthy PowerPoint presentation which will be posted to the website. The report and the presentation are quite thorough and include a long list of recommendations.
* The next SHC meeting will be an off-site Strategic Planning retreat to review accomplishments, timelines and goals for the coming year.
* The Intellectual and Developmental Disability (IDD) focus group provided an update regarding what to do when a person who has IDD shows up in a shelter. There will be regional persons to support and address this. Laurie Mitchell will attend SHC in March to discuss. More to come.
* Also, the regions are having difficulty with payment standard issues.

**Long Term Stayers Update**

Portland- has 243 people housed, and a 94% success rate. They are developing a new list to merge with LTS. Additionally, there is a smaller list of very difficult persons to house. This has been a focus. Brunswick- 20 people placed in 2018 and 2019. Bangor- no update. Ellsworth- no update.

**COC Board Updates**

Vickey explained that there have been four new nominees.

* Kathryn Freeman – Home Fire Training and Consulting
* Tyra Parker- Volunteers of America Northern New England
* Kelly Watson - MaineHousing
* Laurie Murray - MaineHousing

Vickey explained that this includes two MaineHousing employees (replacing Leah Bruns and Lauren Bustard) and two nominees from non-MCOC-funded entities. In the past, the entire slate would be voted on here and sent to the Board of Directors for final approval.

***Ali made a motion to nominate the slate to the Board. No discussion or abstains. This passed.***

The Board did not meet last month and therefore there are no further COC Board updates.

**CES Updates**

The Coordinated Entry Committee has not met since the last MCOC Meeting.

The Youth Coordinated Entry team has a draft policy and procedures manual.

**2020 PIT Update**

Jan 28 is the PIT Date. MaineHousing has the PIT forms. You can request paper copies if needed.

**Maine Unsheltered Network**

Jon Bradley presented a survey at the last MCOC meeting to assess the unsheltered persons in Portland. This was to be coordinated with the MCOC PIT service dates. Jon’s group decided not to move forward with having their unsheltered survey during the PIT to avoid any possible confusion between the two efforts. The group will conduct the survey at a later date.

**Committee Updates**

Data Committee – met to review preliminary results from a user survey. Mary Wade is in the process of analyzing the data and will publish final results when complete. Every year there will be a user survey moving forward (which may be at another time that does not align with the holidays or NOFA). Thank you to all who have participated. Maine HMIS will do another training sometime this year.

Youth – YHDP Team – Aspirational Housing Pathways Planning. Great ideas to move toward our final draft. HUD provided feedback from our last submitted draft, which is under review.

Resource Committee is exploring hosting a training on MaineHousing and DHHS subsidy programs. This will likely be two separate dates. Additionally, Mike Mooney has decided to withdraw from Resource Committee. All thanked Mike for many years of tireless service to the Resource Committee. Norm added that there are now open spaces on the Resource Committee for a co-chair and a secretary.

Kat suggested that we write a Thank You letter to Mike Mooney. Others agreed.

***There was a motion to send a letter of thanks to Mike Mooney for many years of service to MCOC. Motion was edited to add Craig Phillips who recently retired. Passed without objection.***

**Any other business**

VOA is requesting a support letter to reapply for funding. They currently receive 3 grants.

***Chris made a motion to provide a support letter to VOA and any other applicants for these resources. This is seconded by Ali. No further discussion. No one opposed. This passed.***

Scott provide the following updates.

* *Senator Collins’ office announced the 2019 Tier 1 HUD COC awards*, but did not provide many details. These included Tier 1, DV Bonus projects, and Planning. We are still waiting to hear on Tier 2 awards. At this point, MCOC has received $13.1 million. We are waiting to hear the results on the remaining $1.1 million requested. Scott posted this information on Maine Homeless Planning
* *The first part of the AHAR was released*. This looks at the PIT data, nationwide. The headline was homelessness in Maine has gone down 16%, but this is misleading. Only a small part of the population has gone down, and it is in transitional housing. HUD includes transitional housing counts in the PIT and AHAR. Emergency Shelter numbers were actually up.
* *The COC Registration process is now open; the first step in the NOFA application cycle*. As long as the COC has no changes to its geography or Collaborative Applicant, no additional action is needed. Scott asked if there are any changes.

Vickey explained that the MCOC takes a vote annually to ratify its Collaborative Applicant.

***Awa makes a motion to continue to keep MaineHousing as their Collaborative Applicant. Ali seconds. There is no discussion. No one opposed. This passed.***

Vickey explained HUD plans to announce Tier 2, other new projects, and other DV projects “soon.” Once this announcement is released there is a 45 day time period for submitting any appeals.

Congratulations to Awa for being re-elected at a Tri-Chair and Congratulations to the Board nominees!

***Janice made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded and passed.***

Next Meeting: **February 20, 1PM to 3PM**