**Attending via GoToMeeting:** Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing), Betty LaBua (MaineHousing), Melanie Bubar (Homeless Services of Aroostook), Norm Maze (Shalom House), Emily Flinkstrom (Fair Tide), Noelle Coyne (Safe Voice), Joe Locke (MaineHousing), Kate Easter (MCEDV), Bill Higgins (Homeless Advocacy for All), Chris Bicknell (New Beginnings), Alice Preble (DHHS), Sarah Wade (DHHS), Bridgette Semler (YAB), Erin Kelly (Preble Street), Tracy Allen (KBH), Cullen Ryan (CHOM), Boyd Kronholm (Bangor Area Homeless Shelter), Awa Conteh (City of Bangor), Rotta Knott (Tedford Housing), Rebekah F. (YAB), Meredith Smith (CHCS), Kelly Watson (MaineHousing), Elaine Grade (Knox County), Christina Dingus (MaineHousing), Katie Spencer White (MMHS), Rich Romero (OHI), Rachel Boyce (Preble Street), Vickey Rand (CHOM), Donna Kelley (WCAP), Joe McNally (Milestone), Cam (YAB), Leo (YAB), Kenneth Capron (RR), Janice Lara Hewey (Catholic Charities), Marcie Dean (Next Step), Melanie Beaulieu (FVP), Kelsea Vincent (YAB), Aaron Geyer (City of Portland), Ginny Dill, (DHHS), Allie Lovejoy (Preble Street), David McCluskey (Community Care), Beverly Ebersold (USICH), Susan Randall (Homeless Advocacy for All), Bonnie Gagnon (Caring Unlimited), Rebecca Hobbs (Through These Doors), Rebekah Paredes (New Hope for Women), Melissa McEntee (RGH) and Molly Sirios (BOL)

Stephonie Gregg (YCSPI) and Kari Bradstreet (FVP).

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

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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 email [blabua@mainehousing.org](mailto:blabua@mainehousing.org) to let Betty know and she will edit accordingly.

**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

**Meeting: Maine CoC**

**Date: February 18, 2021, 1:00 – 3:00 PM**

**Location: Ring Central**

1. **Member Introductions:**

Vickey welcomed all in attendance.

1. **Review & Approval of minutes:**

MCOC Minutes from the January meeting were posted on the Maine Homeless Planning website.

***Bill made a motion to approve January’s minutes, Noelle seconded. Norm mentioned the misspelling Avesta.. Noted and corrected.***

1. **Big Thinking Topics:**

* **COVID 19 Continued Discussion-** Vickey opened the discussion pointing out next month will be the year mark for meeting virtually. Katie mentioned the planning for the aftermath needs to start now. It was decided to add an agenda item starting next month to address planning for the aftermath in order to examine
* What have we learned?
* What are the best practices?
* What has been gained and what has been lost?
* What changes in the configuration of shelters are necessary in order to address the changing needs of the unsheltered?

1. **NOFA;** Since there will not be a NOFA this year, Lynn Morrow, from HUD, will be reaching out directly to recipients for required documentation relating to grant agreements.
2. **Legislative Updates:**

Cullen provided a summary of this month’s legislative packet.

* **Federal** Cullen gave an overview of President Biden’s $1.9 Trillion American Rescue Plan, highlighting the plan calls for an additional $30 billion for rental assistance, $5 billion in emergency assistance to help secure housing for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness and to extend the recently enacted 15% increase in SNAP benefits through at least September.
* **State** Cullen brought attention to the following list of bills thus far that the Maine Homeless Policy Committee supports.
* LD 81 An Act To Ensure the Safety of Children Experiencing Homelessness by Extending Shelter Placement Periods
* LD 175 An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Create and Enhance Regional Homeless Shelters
* LD 211 An Act To Support Emergency Shelter Access for Persons Experiencing Homelessness
* LD 475 Resolve, To Create the Frequent Users System Engagement Collaborative
* LD 50 An Act To Authorize a General Fund Bond Issue To Invest in Housing for Persons Who Are Homeless.
* LD 48 Resolve, To Require the Department of Health and Human Services To Request a Waiver Relating to Support Services and To Provide Funds To Prevent Homelessness
* LD 415 Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services To Increase MaineCare Reimbursement Rates for Targeted Case Management Services To Reflect Inflation

1. **SHC Updates:**

Scott updated the committee by highlighting the key points discussed at February’s Council meeting starting with Lisa Letourneau’s CDC updates. With shelter staff in Phase 1B of the vaccine roll out, Lisa stressed the importance of staff role as vaccine ambassadors in order to curtail fear of the inoculations and the spread of misinformation. Scott shared slides from the CSH presentation to show data from the focus groups, list the nine service Hubs, to define the roles of the three levels of the system redesign and to map shelter availability in relation to 211 calls. Scott ended his update by giving an overview of Sybil Mazerolle’s presentation on OPTIONS, is a new program out of DHHS to combat opioid overdoses in Maine by teaming with co-responder agencies throughout the state. Both the CSH and The OPTIONS presentations have been posted on the Maine Homeless Planning websites.

1. **Long Term Stayers:**

Cullen reported the Portland area LTS group has successfully placed a total of 301 people with a success rate of 94.9%. There were no updates made from the Bangor or Brunswick areas.

1. **COC Board Update:**

* **Coordinated Entry Committee-** Erin gave the committee update. TAC meeting with Ashley reconvened on February 9, 2021 with a focus on the Referral Phase. The bulk of the conversation centered on how best to structure a denial policy. The committee will continue to meet via zoom weekly on Tuesdays from 3-4. Additionally, the CES Chairs met and will continue to meet with CSH to collaborate on the system redesign and ensure everyone is on the same page. Discussion regarding setting the timeline for HUD Mandated COC Entities will remain as a place holder on the MCOC monthly agenda.

1. **Youth Action Board Update:** Leo gave this month’s YAB update. The YHDP is in the next phase, with the RFP applications made available with a deadline of March 26, 2021 for submissions. Many YAB members will be attending the Youth Inclusivity Training on byDee Balliet of True Colors United on March 12, 2021.
2. **Standing Committee Updates:**

* **NOFA-** Did not meet. Will meet again when NOFA’s status is formally announced.
* **Resource Committee-** The committee is formulating a schedule for 2021 trainings on the following topics Youth Inclusivity, VAWA and HUD LGBTQ Equal Access Rule Trainings. The Youth Inclusivity will be held in March and has been posted on the Maine Homeless Planning website. Norm noted Janice will be submitting a follow up PIT report and committee will be working with Scott on future PIT count expectations.
* **Project Monitoring-**Committee will resume meeting in March.
* **Data Committee:** The February meeting was canceled due to weather.

As a way to welcome people to join committees an overview of each committee’s purpose and their meeting times will be listed on the Maine Homeless Planning Website.

1. **Next Meeting Agenda:**

* Big thinking topic: Post COVID Planning-Lessons Learned
* All were invited to email Betty, Scott or chairs agenda suggestions.

**Next MCOC meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 pm**