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.

**Meeting Minutes: Maine CoC**

**Date: August 19, 2021, 1:00 – 3:00 PM**

**Location: Ring Central**

**Attending via GoToMeeting:** Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing), Betty LaBua (MaineHousing), Norm Maze (Shalom House), Noelle Coyne (Safe Voice), Kate Easter (MCEDV), Bill Higgins (Homeless Advocacy for All), Erin Kelly (Preble Street), Cullen Ryan (CHOM), Awa Conteh (City of Bangor), Kelly Watson (MaineHousing), Elaine Grade (Knox County), Vickey Rand (CHOM), Donna Kelley (WCAP), Rebecca Hobbs (Through These Doors), Mike Shaughnessy (MaineHousing), Lauren Bustard (MaineHousing), Gerald Botta (Home Inc.), Julie Davidson (Caring Unlimited), Joe McNally (Milestone), Boyd Kronholm (BAHS), Tara Hembree (MaineHousing), Katie Spencer-White (MMHS),Beverly Hubbard (YAB), Rich Romero (OHI), Dave McCluskey (Shaw House), Joe Locke (MaineHousing), Kelsea Vincent (YAB), Molly Sirois (BOL), Noel Thibodeau (PCHC), Kari Bradstreet (HJP), Adam Harr (COP), Khelsie Heidemann (PCHC), Rota Knot (Tedford Housing), Bridgette Semler (New Beginnings), Hannah Harter-Ive (NHFW), Sara Wade OBH/(DHHS), Melanie Beaulieu (FVP), Ginny Dill, (DHHS), Emily Flinkstorm (Fair Tide), Meredith Smith (CHCS), Meredith Pesce (Amistad), Alice Preble (DHHS/OCFS), Tracy Allen (KBH), April Reed (MaineHousing), Amanda Cost (Partners for Peace), Terrence Miller (Preble Street) and Semetra Polkah-Toe (PRAINC)

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!]

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

**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

1. **Member Introductions:**

Norm welcomed all in attendance.

1. **Approval of Minutes and Moment of Silence:**

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

*Jerry made a motion to approve July’s minutes, Mike seconded. No discussion. No objections. Passed unanimously.*

A moment of silence to honor the passing of clients was observed.

1. **Big Thinking Topics:**

**COVID 19 Continued Discussion:** Norm opened the discussion by asking for any updates concerning COVID, any lessons learned throughout the pandemic, strengths discovered, what we can carry forward to the Continuum post-pandemic and if there is a qualitative survey update. Jerry mentioned due to the delta variant HOME Inc. has returned to the policies and procedures enacted during the height of the pandemic. Joe mentioned Milestone is not requiring guests to be vaccinated although they are educating people on its benefits. Mike explained as an enticement to those who are vaccine hesitant, Home Provider Grant funds can be dispersed in the form of monetary incentives, up to 50.00 per person. Amistad has had good results with setting up multiple sites to help people feel comfortable. MHHS posts in the shelter, the number of transmission rates by county which has been successful as a conversation starter. Katie mentioned the survey is in the process of being designed and will have something substantive for next month’s meeting.

1. **NOFA/NOFO Update:** Scott announced the NOFA is now called the NOFO (Notice of Funding Opportunities). The NOFO was released on August 18, 2021. The Notice is currently under review, although a preliminary look shows:

* This year Indian Tribes and Tribally Designated Housing Entities are eligible to apply for   
  Continuum of Care funding.
* HUD's Homeless Policy Priorities for 2021 are:   
  Ending Homelessness for All Persons.   
  Using a Housing First Approach   
  Reducing Unsheltered Homelessness   
  Improving System Performance   
  Partnering with Housing, Health, and Service Agencies

Racial Equity

Person’s with lived experience

The NOFO Committee will start meeting in September.

1. **YHDP Update:** Joe updated the continuum by stating HUD has asked for budget clarification on some projects. Once HUD grants approval, all programs will be able to sign contracts and move forward with their implementations.
2. **Legislative Updates:**

**Federal:** Cullen shared his screen to give an update on the Federal Moratorium on Evictions and an overview three bills introduced in July. The Biden Administration/CDC announced it will issue a limited eviction moratorium – starting 8/3 through October 3 – for renters living in communities experiencing a surge in COVID-19 cases. On 7/29, U.S. Representative Cori Bush unveiled the Unhoused Bill of Rights, the first federal resolution to declare unalienable rights for unhoused persons and provide solutions to permanently end the crisis by 2025. On 7/16, House Financial Services Committee Chairwoman Maxine Waters introduced the “Housing is Infrastructure Act,” after having released a discussion draft a few months back. On 7/16, House Financial Services Committee Chairwoman Maxine Waters introduced the “Ending Homelessness Act.” The Act, establishes a universal voucher program to ensure every eligible household can receive rental assistance and provides $10 billion to build homes affordable to people with the greatest needs. Cullen noted the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework does not include major investments in affordable, accessible housing.

**State:** Today’s update centered on LD 1733, An Act to Provide Allocations for the Distribution of State Fiscal Recovery Funds. The Legislature is planning on considering this bill as amended on 7/19. Included in the majority report is nearly $6M to backstop increased pay for behavioral health workers, $50M for affordable workforce housing with a Maine State Housing Authority and Department of Economic and Community Development partnership, $10M in one-time funds (2021-2022) for grants to existing emergency homeless shelters, including those that assist homeless youth, to be used for operations, maintenance or capital improvements and $1.5M Support for Housing navigators in the Maine State Housing Authority. There were no new updates to report on the Back to Basics Budget-FY22.

1. **SHC Update:** The Statewide Homeless Council did not meet in August.
2. **Long Term Stayers:**

Cullen started the update by announcing the FUSE legislation has been passed into law. The Portland area LTS group has successfully placed a total of 340 people with a success rate of 90%. No reports from Bangor, Ellsworth and Brunswick however, it was noted the work in those areas continues.

1. **COC Board Update:**

* **General Updates**: Cullen gave a brief update. The Board is examining how the system is performing by looking at Stella reports and by defining what is a permanent and what is a temporary exit. The Board is will also start examining how to best charter sub committees. A motion passed stating: *Moving forward, any change in data fields not mandated by HUD be brought forth to the CoC for consideration*.
* **Lived Experience Participation Discussion:** MSHA is paying for six people with lived experience to attend the NAEH Conference in September. Bill H. is in the process of gathering information from other CoCs on how best to structure compensation for people with lived experiences to attend continuum meetings.
* **CES:** Erin K. let the Board know that with the planning portion of the emergency housing vouchers complete the committee will pivot back to the CES design process starting with choosing the best assessment tool. She also reported there have been 77 referrals for EHVs.

1. **Youth Action Board Update:**  Bridgette gave this month’s update with Beverly H. and Kelsea present. YAB members participated in an “Ask the YAB” forum, with the role of consultants answering project design questions. YAB is recruiting members with the goal of having representation from all parts of the state of Maine. It was suggested they try The People’s Housing Coalition and Maine Behavioral Health Bridge.
2. **Standing Committee Updates:10**

* **NOFA/NOFO-** The committee will resume meeting in September. Anyone interested in participating in the meetings held on Fridays at noon should contact Scott or Vickey.
* **Data-** April Reed, on behalf of the committee, proposed a new data quality management plan that recommends shifting back to having AAs run their own quality data reports and for AAs to work in tandem with HMIS to resolve Quality Data issues. *Awa first moved to adopt the Data Committee’s proposed plan. Bill seconded.* *No discussion. No objections. Passed unanimously.*
* **HVAC-** No report.
* **Monitoring:** Mike reported all project monitoring will be completed by the end of September. The committee’s September meeting will be rescheduled due to the Labor Day holiday.
* **Resource Committee-** Norm’s update started by introducing Semetra Polkah-Toe. Semetra explained the SOAR training scheduled for September 15-17th is free, web-based and self-guided. SOAR is a national program sponsored by SAMHSA, designed to increase access to SSA disability benefits for people who are experiencing or at risk for homelessness. Kate Easter and Andrea Mancuso will conduct a VAWA training on September 10, 2021 from 9-11. Both of these trainings will be posted on the Maine Homeless Planning website.

1. **Next Meeting Agenda:**

* Big thinking topic: Continued Discussion – COVID-19 One Year Later: Lessons learned throughout the pandemic, strengths discovered, and what we can carry forward to the Continuum post-pandemic.
* All were invited to email Betty, Scott or chairs agenda suggestions.

1. **Other Business:** The change in name from NOFA to NOFO necessitates updating several documents. The Document Review Committee will assess all documents and report on which ones will need to be altered.

**Next MCOC meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 pm**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |