**Augusta:** Helen Rogers (Knox County Homeless Coalition), Chet Barnes (DHHS), Donna Kelley (KBH), RJ Pinkham (Bread of Life Ministries), Craig Phillips (Tedford Housing), Martha Everett St. Pierre (Betsy Ann Ross House of Hope), Jamie Hunt (FFCC), Dawn Coffin (Familys First Community Center), Phil Allen (Preble St.), Cullen Ryan (CHOM), Christine Roberts (HUD), Marie Dean (Next Step DV Project), and Paula Paladino (MaineHousing).

**Tandberg:** Not working today (Paula will work with locations to ensure they are on line next month).

**On the Phone**: Megan Buregtes (WHCA), Sharon Dean (Millbridge), Sheena Curry (Shaw House), Gail Garrow (OHI), Ally Smith (Veterans Inc), MJ Boylan (Emmaus), George Moody (VA), Janice Larey Hewey (Catholic Charities/PATH), Meredith Smith (CHCS), Catherine Sullivan (Hope House), Michelle Staples (Shalom House) and Norm Maze (Shalom House)..

**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

**Meeting: Maine CoC**

**Date: April 21, 2015 Time: 1pm to 3pm**

**Location: Tandberg Teleconferencing Sites**

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 Paula know and she will edit accordingly.

**Review of Minutes** from March 17, 2016 –**Approved as submitted**. Motion to approve by Cullen, seconded by Betty. Minutes were approved as submitted.

**Big Thinking Topic:**

This month the big thinking topic is on Section 17th. If people currently have BRAP, they will not lose it. There are still concerns about how folks who are homeless can access this if they don’t have MaineCare as the grant funds will be eliminated. The concern is what the mechanism will be to become eligible for Section 17 without it being a barrier. It is important that this includes access to BRAP subsidies. Members discussed concerns about rate setting for Section 17 and 13 in which recommendations were made to lower the rates. There will be a domino effect that we will lose a lot of money and it can impact the 2016 shelter ESHAP program. The proposal is 1/3 reduction in rates which would impact staffing levels. There is the ability to make comments on rate setting methodology. Craig offered to send Paul the link to the rate setting study for TCM and Section 17. The link is <http://www.burnshealthpolicy.com/MaineBH/>. This link provides a webinar for all of the proposed rate settings, including Section 13, and a link to provide comments on the rate setting by May 18. The part of the complete report containing the Section 13 rate study will be posted with the minutes, and Craig suggested that all review page 17. One member said that defining services and funding at the level to support people in housing is challenging. Typically DHHS works with a lot of people with high needs and to get them approved through MaineCare for Community Support Services (section 17). The question was asked “what about people who need a lighter touch and need some help but not at the level of intensity and services needed for those folks?” How do we get those services? Is it through ESHAP Navigators or the PATH Program? Another member stated that that the needs of LTS (long term stayers) drop significantly when they get housing. Their need drops over time, but it varies based on individuals. For a small number of the population you need to have a level of care/services to meet them where they are at for a short period of time. If you don’t quality for Section17 there is Section 92, a new service called Behavioral Health Homes (for children and for adults). These are statewide and are a step down service from Section 17 or Section 13 Children’s services. The ideal system would be that a homeless individual could be followed by the same persons through the system. The discussion concluded with a reminder that members need to provide comments on the rate setting by May 18th. It was stated that the general expected weekly billable hours is 26 hours per week for a Case Manager. However given that geography (rural vs. urban), travel time is an issue coupled with the paperwork expectations and entering information into APS for approval, it is going to be hard to get by with the new rates.

**Steering Committee updates:** Paula provided a quick update on PIT/HIC counts and the HUD submission date of May 2. There is a HUD forum on May 4th. Folks who attended this morning’s Supportive Housing Workshop gave feedback: they know the right questions to ask, the appropriate contacts to reach out to and it was a bit overwhelming but also very helpful to look at the big picture. Please see attached Steering Committee Minutes for more information.

**State and Federal Legislation:** Cullen presented an update. The policy committee met on Friday and reviewed new updates since last month. Please see the attached update.

**SHC (Statewide Homeless Council) Update:** Met on the 12, Sheldon presented information on section 17 and he reviewed the rule itself. Denise Lord from MaineHousing came to solicit feedback on the National Housing Trust funds. MaineHousing is developing forums to get feedback for how the $3 million allocated to Maine should be spent. SHC provided some feedback on this and they will be informed of the forums when they are scheduled. There were federal and state updates and a BRAP discussion on the housing shortage. STEP is still targeting those who pass through the shelter rapidly. They also felt they needed something more long-term. Also discussed was the MCoC meeting, HUD forum, PCoC needing to complete HUD Submission. The Governor is engaged in the dev’t process, there is a pilot in Bath by the housing authority to keep seniors at home, and MaineHousing’s HCV department is looking at having navigators to assist with those folks who have complex needs. MaineHousing has hired a new Development Director, Mark Weisendanger, who comes from HUD and concluded with a LTS discussion and how new definition of CH but HUD does two things: 1) it starts to look at length of homeless as a criteria for CH and 2) you can have episodes of homelessness but way they define it if you touch a shelter once a month for a year and have been in a shelter for 12 days total and then be called CH.

**Regional Homeless Council Updates:** No updates.

**Long term stayers update:** Cullen just came from a meeting on LTS. From the original list of 70 from May of 2015, it is down to 8 with 3 on deck to get housing. This is the hardest group to house. The second list of 72 is down to 41 with 4 on deck and they expect to have this list exhausted by July. LTS definition is people who have the longest stays of homelessness whether in shelter or on the street except for the city of Portland. Of all these people only one has had a return to homelessness. In Bangor, PCHC will house 8 of their LTS by the end of the month and 4 more in May, so all will be housed.

BRAP will offer a waiver to those leaving Riverview as it’s cheaper that having them enter a PNMI group home.

**Vets@Home Update:** They’ve fully developed their governance and they have drafted their roles and responsibilities as a joint standing committee. This will be voted upon at the next MCoC meeting in May along with the full governance document currently being revised. They have a list of homeless veterans which is approximately 130 veterans now that are homeless. The MVHAC is meeting weekly and they are going to have a guest speaker from CT who has been involved in helping to end veteran homelessness in that state. Phil noted that the 130 people on the list, all have some sort of connection to a program whether HUD VASH, GPD, SSVF, etc., but it may not be the most ideal plan in place. For example some may be on the list for SPC when it should be a HUD VASH voucher. They are trying to keep pace with what the COC is doing and they will be using the VI-SPDAT to conduct assessments on everyone on the list so that they can better prioritize according to their vulnerability. They are looking at doing a “boot camp” which helps to motivate and engage providers to work on addressing all the current homeless veteran issues. Paula suggested that landlords be involved and that MaineHousing has a landlord excellence program which could be an initial way to identify landlords.

**oC Board Update:** Bangor Pilot is going to be postponed. There will be town hall meeting on May 11 and invitations have gone out for this Coordinated Entry Pilot in Penobscot County. Josh D’Alessio at PCHC is the contact for more information.

**PIT/HIC Submission:** Already discussed. However, Paula provided a reminder to CoC projects that if there are any changes to the population being served or a change of use (i.e. from transitional to permanent housing), projects must get MCoC approval prior to the change and then HUD approval. In addition, if there are MaineHousing funds in the project, the owners must get MaineHousing approval as well.

**Other Business:** None.

**Next meeting:** May 19, 2016 1:00-3:00 pm.

**On-Line:** Vickey Rand (Community Housing of Maine), Ginny Dill (Shalom House), Paula Paladino (Maine Housing), Melody Fitch (Family Violence Project), Mike Mooney (New Beginnings), Awa Conteh (City of Bangor ), Craig Phillips (Tedford), Chet Barnes (DHHS), Donna Kelley (KBH)

**Meeting: MCOC Steering**

**Date/Time: 4/4/16 10:00 am – 10:40 am**

**Location: Online**

**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

**Committee Updates**:

**Policy:** Vickey reported that the next meeting is Friday April 8, at 3:00. There will be federal policy topics updates. The State focus remains centered on rate changes and also the eligibility for Section 17. There was a hearing on Friday.

**Resource**: Mike stated the committee is planning a presentation on general assistance. Resource and project committee are working together regarding having leverage and match discussion at a future CoC meeting. It was mentioned that Region 1 might coordinate with the committee on trainings. Region 3 is busy working on coordinated entry project pilot.

**Project:** Met and reviewed another draft of monitoring form. They made changes on the form as requested by the committee members. They discussed the need for educating projects on leverage and match and how it relates to scoring. The committee hasn’t been able to complete any reviews and they are still mapping that out via the GIW.

**Data:** Rescheduled the meeting due toschool vacation week. Next meeting is Tuesday April 12th. Committee will review PIT data.

**Governance Ad Hoc:** Committee worked through the governance in its entirety and plan to share with full CoC once the creation of veterans standing committee for inclusion in governance occurs at the next CoC meeting. Materials will go out to the steering committee.

**Scoring:** The Scoring Committee has not met.

**Scoring template committee:** The Scoring Template Committee not met.

**Selection and Ranking:** The Selection and Ranking Committee will become a standing committee should the governance get voted in at the May CoC meeting.

**HUD CoC/PHA Forum:**

Paula recommended attendance at the May 4th lunch and afternoon portion as of the HUD CoC/PHA forum. PHA’s attendance is also encouraged. The Portland CoC is on the agenda for the morning discussion regarding the plan for the City of Portland and collaborative applicant. There is an opportunity to dial in but in person participation is encouraged for all possible. Afternoon forum is from 1-3.

**Supportive Housing Workshop:**

Bill Olsen/MaineHousing will host a workshop to share on supportive housing programs. Information will be shared about several MaineHousing, VA, and HUD programs. The workshop is April 21, from 9:00-12:15, the morning of the next Maine Continuum of Care meeting.

**PIT/HIC HUD Submission:**

The Pit/Hic submission is due to HUD on April 29th. Paula will be entering the data in manually into HDX. There have been a few changes on the HIC and that will need to be updated. Paula’s goal is to have everything completed by next week before the data committee meeting. The CoC will need to vote on the PIT/HIC submission at the April meeting.

**CoC meeting on April 21st:**

Chet offered to facilitate the meeting as a guest chair. Paula plans on giving updates and taking minutes.

**MCoC Agenda:**

Big Thinking Topic – MaineCare program changes and their anticipated effects.

Steering Committee Update

State and Federal Legislation

Statewide Homeless Council

Regional Homeless Council Updates

Long Term Stayers Update

Vets@Home TA Update

CoC Board Update

HUD CoC/PHA Forum on May 4

PIT/HIC Submission Review

Any Other Business

**Reminder that committee minutes need to be sent or posted to Maine Homeless planning site**

**Thursday April 21, 2016 at 1:00 pm– Tandberg sites (check agenda for locations)**

**Policy/Advocacy Update – April 2016**

**Federal Legislation Update:**

* **The Senate Committee on Appropriations passed its FY17 THUD funding bill on 4/21** by a vote of 30 to 0. The bill will now go to the Senate floor. The THUD allocation is $1.4 billion more than it was in FY16. Of the allocation, HUD will receive $39.2 billion, an increase of nearly $891 million from last year’s level. There are no major cuts and a few programs received funding increases. Importantly, the spending levels in the THUD spending bill should allow for continued assistance to all households currently served by HUD programs. The bill would provide:
  + Sufficient funding to renew existing housing choice vouchers.
  + $57 million for VASH, $7 million of which is to serve Native American Veterans.
  + An additional $20 million to support more than 2,500 new Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers. Additionally, the bill would extend the eligibility age for FUP vouchers from 21 to 24 years old and replace the 18-month timeline for youth vouchers with a more administratively manageable 36-month timeline.
  + $11 million to a new housing choice voucher mobility demonstration designed to encourage families to move to lower-poverty areas and expand access to areas of opportunity.
  + $10.901 billion to renew all project-based rental assistance contracts for calendar year 2017, an increase of $85 million from the FY16 funding level.
  + Increased funding for homeless assistance programs to $2.3 billion from $2.250 billion in FY16. Additionally, the bill targets $40 million to address youth homelessness.
  + Flat funding for the HOME program ($950 million), the CDBG program ($3 billion), and the HOPWA program ($335 million).
* **The House released its FY 17 budget proposal on 3/15.** According to CPBB, the budget calls for what would be the most severe budget cuts in modern history in assistance for Americans of limited means. These programs would be cut a stunning $3.5 trillion over ten years, eliminating, by 2026, roughly 40 percent of federal resources for low-income assistance. Although low-income programs account for 28 percent of federal domestic-program spending (i.e., spending on everything except defense and interest payments on the debt), they would bear about 60 percent of the cuts in the House budget.
  + The budget would make tens of millions more Americans uninsured by repealing the ACA (without putting anything in its place) and cutting Medicaid more than another $1 trillion over ten years on top of that.
  + The budget would cut non-defense discretionary programs and services by *roughly $1 trillion over ten years* *below* *the levels under the harsh sequestration budget cuts*.  Yet under sequestration, spending for this part of the budget is already slated to shrink to the lowest level on record by 2018, as a percent of GDP, with data back to 1962.
* **H.R. 4888: Ending Homelessness Act of 2016** – introduced on 3/23 by House Financial Services Committee Ranking Member Maxine Waters (D-CA). This legislation would provide $13.27 billion in new funding over five years to several programs and initiatives that would provide significant resources to end homelessness in America. These funds are in addition to the annual funding amounts for existing HUD programs. According to the NAEH, the legislation would provide:
  + $5 billion in McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Grants funding, which would fund 85,000 new permanent supportive housing units, estimated as enough to end chronic homelessness.
  + $2.5 billion for special purpose Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers.
  + $1.05 billion annually in mandatory spending dedicated to the National Housing Trust Fund.
* **The President released his FY 17 budget proposal on February 9th.**

Proposed HUD budget items of note:

* + **$18.447 billion for Section 8 Tenant Based Rental Assistance renewals**, an increase from the $17.681 billion enacted FY 16 funding.
  + **$7 million for VASH, a decrease compared to the FY 16 enacted level of $60 million.**
  + **$88 million for new/restored TBRA (Veterans, FUP, DV, etc.) – *New***
  + **$15 million for the Voucher Mobility Demonstration Program – *New –*** Designed to help families with housing vouchers move and stay in areas of opportunity.
  + **$10.816 billion for Project-Based Rental Assistance,** an increase compared to the FY 16 enacted level of $10.62 billion.
  + **$2.664 billion for Homeless Assistance Grants**, an increase compared to the FY 16 enacted level of $2.25 billion.
  + **$950 million for HOME funding**, level funding compared to the FY16 enacted funding level. However, the proposed budget also make the traditionally $10 million stand-along Self-Help Homeownership Opportunity Program a set-aside within the HOME program.
  + **$2.8 billion for CDBG**, a decrease from the FY 16 enacted level of $3 billion.
  + **$355 million for Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)**, level funding compared to the FY 16 enacted level.
* **H.R. 3700, the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA) passed the House on 2/2 through a unanimous vote of all present**. It will move on to the Senate for consideration. CBPP explains that the bill would:
* Help address homelessness by 1) allowing local housing agencies to make greater use of project-based vouchers to assist the homeless (as well as veterans, the elderly, and people with disabilities); 2) revising the rules for inspecting units that families with tenant-based vouchers wish to rent in order to get vulnerable families into homes more quickly, while protecting them from eviction if subsidy payments to an owner are suspended because a unit has developed housing-quality violations; and 3) strengthening voucher assistance for former foster children, a group that faces a high risk of homelessness.

Importantly, H.R. 3700 would make these improvements while leaving in place the core characteristics that have made federal rental assistance programs effective. It also would do so without raising costs; in fact, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated that H.R. 3700 would reduce program costs by $311 million over five years, with $195 million of that reduction stemming from the bill’s rental assistance provisions. (These figures do not reflect amendments that the House approved, but those will likely have only a modest net impact on costs)

* **S.993/H.R.1854, The Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act,** Introduced by Senators Franken (D-MN) - Cornyn (R-TX) and Representatives Collins (R-GA)-Scott (D-VA). The Comprehensive Justice and Mental Health Act (CJMHA) recently passed the Senate and the House Judiciary Committee with bipartisan support. It has beneficial provisions from the prospective of ending homelessness.  In Maine we have always seen a pattern where people with mental illness are swept into jails, as well as homeless shelters.  The people would be much better served and at far less cost in permanent supportive housing. The bill includes provisions around screening people who interact with the criminal justice system for mental health conditions and connecting them with services, at all points in the justice system from intake to transition.
* **S. 2668: A bill to provide housing opportunities for individuals living with HIV or AIDS, introduced by Senator Collins.** Referred to the Senate Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee

**State Legislation Update:**

* Items of note:
* **Section 17 rule changes** – **Legislative review** **Public Hearing held 4/1, Work Session held 4/6.** Section 17, which provides services for people with Serious and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI), was one of the mechanisms of compliance for the AMHI (Augusta Mental Health Institute) Consent Decree. There are many ways people can present with psychotic symptoms including: Schizophrenia, Schizophreniform, Schizoaffective, Bipolar, and major depressive disorder with psychotic features. It is also possible with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), or some personality disorders. In its proposed rule changes, DHHS essentially chose two of the five, Schizophrenia and Schizoaffective disorder, as eligible diagnoses for Section 17 services. The proposed rules do include a mechanism for including these other diagnoses as eligible for services, but the process and documentation needed is potentially a barrier. These changes could result in many individuals being discharged from needed case management services, and significantly limit who is eligible for services or make it more challenging to document eligibility, depending on diagnosis. In addition to the effect on consumers’ case management services, those receiving a BRAP (Bridging Rental Assistance Program) rental subsidy will also be affected, as qualifying for Section 17 is a program requirement. Mental health providers estimate that services that are allowing consumers to stay successfully housed will no longer be available to, potentially, 8,000 of the approximately 16,000 people currently being helped with this service.
* L.D. 1698, which passed unanimously in both the House and Senate on 4/12, directs DHHS to extend from 90 days to 120 days the transition period for clients now receiving Section 17 services. DHHS also will be required to offer 90-day extensions through 6/30/2017, to clients who can demonstrate that they would be unable to access other programs within MaineCare. Section 17 clients now receiving BRAP rental assistance will be grandfathered under the new rules.
* **LD 1607**, **An Act To Implement the Recommendations of the Maine Affordable Housing Working Group.** Became law without the Governor’s signature on 4/3.
* **LD 1473, Resolve to Increase Access to Opiate Addiction Treatment in Maine.** Passed to be enacted; placed on the Special Appropriations Table pending enactment on 3/23.

**LD 1496, An Act to Support Maine People in Recovery.** Passed to be enacted; placed on the Special Appropriations Table pending enactment