**PCOC Meeting Summary**

**Back Bay Room, 196 Lancaster Street**

**January 26, 2017**

**Attendance**: Rob Parritt, Jon Bradley, Vickey Rand, Ginny Dill, Veronica Ross, Dave MacLean, Rachel Boyce, Norm Maze, Wendi Dubois, Adam Harr, Meaghan Void, Joanie Klayman, Scott Tibbitts.

**Minutes** from December 22, 2016 were reviewed and **approved** as submitted.

**Joint CoC Board Updates:**

**Coordinated Entry:** The Board received a walk-through of the Social Serve software from Scott Rich. It seems to be working very well and the pilot program in Penobscot County is about to get under way. New HUD guidance says that CE systems must be up and running by next year.

**Merger:** Reviewed the lists of Pros and Cons provided by each CoC and tried to sort out the items that were clearly facts from those that were speculation. The facts were generally very positive. Those items that were negative were largely speculation. Their next step will be to look at the Scoring and Ranking process for each CoC and try to assemble a mock ranking that combines all the projects in one list to see where everyone might fall. They will also be looking at the differences between HUD priorities and the priorities of each of the CoCs.

The Board currently meets the 2nd Thursday of each month – they may switch to the 1st Thursday. They also alternate locations between Portland and Augusta, which can impact attendance.

**Agency Updates:**

Jon said that Maine did not get the HUD Rural Youth Demonstration Grant we applied for. There were many applicants but very few awards. Nonetheless, some good things came out of the process and it re-energized the Youth Provider Group.

-All DHHS Youth Program Funding was RFP’ed: Outreach, Drop-in, Shelter, and Transitional. The plan is to create a ‘Youth Continuum’ in each region. In Region 1, Preble Street and The Opportunity Alliance collaborated on an application. They are not aware of any other applicants from Region 1. One of the requirements of the grant is that there be 8 Transitional beds for Youth, so they would need to develop that resource. There may be 2 applicants in Region 2. Not sure about Region 3.

-Preble Street is working with MaineMed to establish the level of need for Respite Care. They are doing a one week count of everyone who goes to the ER to assess their housing situation. They are also tracking all Shelter referrals to MaineMed to see if these figures line up.

-In general, Preble Street is seeing many more people, especially more families attending meals, much higher levels of stress, overdoses are becoming a regular occurrence, and violence is increasing – people may have seen in the news that a staff member was stabbed in the face with a fork recently. This appears to have been a very random incident, totally unprovoked – there was no confrontation, no warning signs.

Norm encouraged people to continue to make referrals to Shalom House. They have a couple of new Community Integration workers and are hoping to get information on the final rates for Sections 13 and 17 soon. He also encouraged agencies to comment on and advocate for not cutting the rates. **A MOTION was made, Seconded, and PASSED that PCOC should coordinate a response to the new rates** once we have that information, and advocate for not cutting or reducing the rates. It was suggested that a draft of the language be sent around so that member agencies could decide to sign on, or not, in case their agency does not fully agree with the language.

**Policy Committee:** Vickey reported that Cullen spoke with the Maine State Legislature for about 25 minutes about homelessness, the Statewide Homeless Council, Funding, etc. and that it went very well and he received, and continues to receive, lots of good questions from the Representatives.

State Budget and proposed cuts to GA: Dave wanted to clarify that the Governor’s recent statements were full of misinformation. The City of Portland GA program was audited and there were no findings – they are in full compliance with the law. The city does not believe the proposal to eliminate GA will go through - there is likely to be some sort of compromise – but any cuts or reductions could still be catastrophic to the city. Even just the change regarding assistance to Asylees could cost the city about $4M.
-We need to let people know when the hearings are scheduled so they can show up and be heard.

-Also, there are proposed cuts to other social service programs like TANF which would likely mean many more people will seek help from their local municipality – the GA office.

-Trump has proposed eliminating Medicaid (=MaineCare) for any “Able Bodied” people, but it is not clear who will make that determination.

- LD 136 expands reasons for which landlords can evict tenants.

-LD 36 would create a 9 month limit on GA – which would be a moot point if there is no GA at all.

**GPD Programs:** VA Grant Per Diem Programs provide Transitional Housing for homeless Veterans and services related to goals like stability and employment. There are 3 GPD programs in Maine: Volunteers of America’s Huot House in Biddeford, CHOM’s Veteran’s Career House in Saco, and the Veteran’s Inc. Program in Lewiston. All of these programs now have to reapply for funding under the newly re-structured GPD guidelines.

The new NOFA for this is huge – only existing GPD programs may apply and not all will be funded. Each program must now be classified as a particular type: Respite, Clinical, Bridge, Service Center, or Low Demand. It appears HUD will prioritize funding one of each type in a state before considering funding another of the same type, so it is to everyone’s advantage to agree on what type each will apply as. PCOC will invite Mike from VOA to the next meeting – he has requested a letter of support. Such letters are not required, but if PCOC provides one, we should provide the same to others – we want all of them to be funded and do not want to appear to favor one over another.

**Point-in-Time:** The “Night of” count is done and the Service Count continues. The shelters were very busy that night, given the horrible weather conditions. All data must be submitted to MaineHousing by February 8th.

HIC information is due the same day and must reference beds/occupancy on the night of the PIT. Maybe the HMIS Team can send out a reminder to everyone about this and the deadline?

Preble Street has requested a change of lead agency – to them from Avesta – for both Florence House and Logan Place. It is ‘not quite final’ but they have been told by HUD to go ahead and list themselves as the lead for the HIC.

**PCOC Goals for 2017:** Continue discussion, and possible implementation, of merger with MCOC.

-Continue “Big Picture” discussions – let’s brainstorm some topics next month.

-Need to re-visit Families discussion. Let’s invite providers to a planning session for a larger Family Forum, as suggested last month, and let’s work with Susan Wiggin to get the Superintendent to play a lead role. We also need to connect to other agencies working with immigrants and asylum seekers.

-Let’s plan a joint meeting between PCOC and MCOC – obviously to discuss possible merger issues but also just to share information about projects, methodologies, philosophies, etc.

**Other Business:** Tonight at 5:30 on MBPN radio there will be a story about the proposed rate cuts – Mary Haynes Rodgers of Shalom and Mike Tarpinian of TOA were interviewed.

**Next Meeting: Feb 23, 2017.**