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.

**Augusta:** Melody Fitch (Family Violence Project), Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing), Chris Bicknell (New Beginnings), Chet Barnes (DHHS), Arwen Agee (VA), Donna Kelley (KBH), Dan Fleming (Shaw House), Joshua D’Alessio (PCHC), Ann Giggey (PCHC), David Sovetsky (Mid Maine Homeless Shelter), Jessica Wood (OCFS), Alley Smith (Veterans, Inc.)

**Lewiston**: Mike Mooney (New Beginnings)

**Portland:** Ginny Dill (Shalom House), Vickey Rand (CHOM), Cullen Ryan (CHOM), Norm Maze (Shalom House)

**On the Phone**: Gail Garrow (OHI), Boyd Kronholm (BAHS), Craig Phillips (Tedford Housing), Awa Conteh (City of Bangor), Mike Tilton (EMS), Janice Lara Hewey (Catholic Charities), Melissa McEntee (RGH), Emily Flinkstrom (Fair Tide), Jennifer Weatherbee (CHCS), Erin Houlton (KCHC), Keri Bradstreet (Hope and Justice Project), Heidi Bradley (Penquis), Mary Boylan (Emmaus Shelter), Alice Cagney (Frannie Peabody Center)

[If I missed anyone – or missed or misspelled your name, please let me know]

**Meeting: Maine CoC**

**Date: March 16, 2017, 1:00 to 3:00 PM**

**Location: Tandberg Teleconferencing Sites**

**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

**Review of Minutes**: Minutes from February, 2017 were reviewed. Donna Kelly attended by phone but missed introductions. She asked to be added to the attendance. No other changes. Minutes approved as Amended.

**Review of Agenda:** No Changes

**BIG THINK: Merger and Coordinated Entry** – The Joint CoC Board met last week.

**Merger:** They looked at the Pros and Cons lists compiled by each CoC, and the hypothetical Scoring and Ranking scenarios assembled by Amy. They unanimously recommended moving forward with the Merger with the hope that it be accomplished by June.

-Donna pointed out that the Scoring and Ranking was based on prior templates and would likely change under the direction a new, merged, Scoring Template Committee.

- Financially, there would not be any overall gain. The state as a whole would still be allotted the same total amount of funding. But, any ‘bonus’ money made available would be one larger sum, rather than two unequal portions.

- The biggest gain would be in the efficiencies created by only having to do one application, one Point-in-Time, one set of AHAR’s, etc. and not two.

- MaineHousing is prepared to act as the Collaborative Applicant for the new CoC – as evidenced by their hiring Scott for the Coordinator position, and his investing in several new neckties for the role.

-**MOTION** by Cullen, 2nd by Josh, **that MCOC pursue the merger with PCOC,** and prepare a package outlining our due diligence to present to HUD. **PASSED** with no opposition.

-Lynn Morrow and Bob Shumeyko from HUD will be visiting Maine in May.

**Coordinated Entry:** Josh explained that there was a kick-off meeting on February 28th. At this time, in order to test drive the system, they are only collecting data on single adults in Bangor, and using false names, but the rest of the data is real. They need to refine the consent form before they start collecting personally identifiable information.

-Beginning on or about April 1st they will expand to cover the rest of Penobscot County and will add in Families and Youth. It will then be rolled out in the rest of Region 3, and then Region 2, and finally Region 1 before year’s end. HUD wants this statewide by January 2018, and this schedule will get us there.

-There is a lot of information about CE on the HUD website. There will also be plenty of notices and trainings at the local level as the coverage area expands.

-The pilot is just that – a pilot – there are inevitably going to be some bugs and issues discovered and worked out as it grows, it is part of the plan that the system will be able to adapt and adjust as these things come up, but those will hopefully be minor tweaks, and no major revisions are expected.

- Penobscot serves approximately 20% of the homeless population in the state and includes a variety of service provider types. This seems like just the right sample size to test the pilot. Community partnerships between homeless service providers were already strong, and now many new partners are joining this effort – hospitals, law enforcement, etc. The goal is to have one system that works for everyone, in every part of the state, serving every different population we work with.

-What will staff need to know in terms of new forms, new data collection and entry, new processes? The initial assessment tool is 18 questions. Some are “if/then” type questions that lead to others, and some can be skipped depending on previous answers. The goal is to quickly collect just enough information to either help keep someone from becoming homeless that night, or get them into a shelter or other housing situation that night if they are already homeless.

**State and Federal Updates:**

**Federal:** The President just released his new budget with a 14% cut to HUD, elimination of all CDBG and Fed HOME, and a loss of about 200,000 HCV Vouchers across the country. There is a lot of concern. Congress is looking at it now, and we need to reach out to our delegation and advocate for changes.

-The ACA replacement proposal would be harmful on a number of levels. Basically, it makes MediCare a block grant program to states, with much lower rates. Democrats seem to all be opposed. Some Republicans are also voicing opposition.

**State:** There has been lots of activity this month regarding the Governor’s proposed changes to safety net programs, including both public and legislative opposition.

On the bright side, there is a new Bill to that sets aside $675,000 for Services in a Housing First model program in Portland, a new Bill for $14M for Senior Housing, and the Governor’s Budget includes full funding for State HOME funds, and the $2.5M for Homeless Shelters.

**Statewide Homeless Council:** Did not meet due to the storm. Rescheduled for March 28th.

**Regional HC Updates:** R2 had a training on Voucher Programs, about 50 people attended. Based on the questions that came from that it is clear that most front line staff are not connected to or aware of the broader policy/legislative side of things that impact Vouchers, or even their own programs. We need to facilitate the transmission of that sort of information better – in both directions. They have direct experience and information that should be considered in policy making. Also, we need that information to show the need for these programs. Shelter Plus Care has waitlists. Everyone hates them. But it shows there is still a need. For Substance Abuse Treatment program, there are only about 250 on the waitlists, which doesn’t seem very big to people assume the need is low, but really it’s because there are so few programs available that people just don’t bother signing up.

**Long Term Stayers Update:** Numbers are still going down. Working with local Housing Authorities to see if they will set aside some vouchers to house LTS’s in their jurisdictions. The Bangor LTS group has merged with another committee and this has created many new connections.

**CoC Board Update:** See Merger and Coordinated Entry discussion above.

**HMIS Advisory Committee:** Looking at the New Hampshire HMIS Governance Document and may use that as a model for the next re-write for Maine.

**Rural Youth Peer Network Initiative:** There was a Phase II webinar on Tuesday that will be posted if anyone who missed it is interested in viewing it now. Phase II is focused on Capacity. There will be 4 remote workshops and one or two day long intensive workshops with the Corporation For Supportive Housing, for those agencies participating in Phase II. Those who make it to Phase III will have 6 months of more intensive trainings and then begin development of their program. The Phase II Application will be available soon and is due April 10th. The application is submitted by the CoC (by the CA on behalf of the CoC), but must identify the specific agencies/providers who will be participating. The Homeless Youth Group recommends we apply.

**MOTION**: MCOC apply for Phase II of the Rural Youth Peer Network Initiative Grant. 2nd and **PASSED** without objection.

**Unfunded Projects Update:** Of the 8 MCOC projects that lost funding in the 2016 round, so far only Milbridge Harbor has reached out for TA. It was suggested we reach out to local Housing Authorities in the areas were these projects operate to see if they would be willing to provide set-aside vouchers. This may not work for all the projects, but it might help some.

**MOTION**: MCOC will draft a letter to PHA’s asking them to set aside vouchers for these projects. **PASSED**. Region 3 has invited PHA’s to their next meeting- can we get the letter out by then?

PCHC is Transitional Housing so this would not help. They are looking for other grant opportunities, and in the meantime they had to raise the rents on their units.

**NOFA Related:**

**MCOC Score Appeal:** Steering is formally appealing the MCOC score from the 2016 competition based specifically on the inconsistencies in scoring on the 4 questions discussed at our last meeting. HUD has 60 days to respond. They may simply dismiss it because we are well past the time to appeal that was stated in the NOFA, but that was 45 days from the Awards Announcement date, and this time the actually Scores were not released until much later, and it was not until we compared the scores that we saw there were problems.

**Monitoring:** Amy is working with the committee to develop and refine their process, especially in light of the planned merger.

**Other Business:**

-Our next full meeting is scheduled for April 20th, which is the week of most school vacations. It was determined that enough people will still be available to have the meeting on schedule.

-**Alley Smith of Veterans, Inc. thanked MCOC** for the Letters of Support, and all the other support they have shown, for the GPD program and homeless Veterans in Maine.

-There is a **NEW APR submission system –SAGE – starting April 1st**, all APRs must be submitted through this new system. If you have started your APR in esnaps, you can finish it there, but after that everything is moving to Sage. You will still enter everything in HIMS, then generate an HMIS report to upload to Sage. There was a webinar and there will be more guidance out soon.

-Not sure exactly what this new APR format might look like, but it **could seriously impact our Monitoring Process**, which relies heavily on the APRs.

**Next Full MCOC Meeting: April 20, 2017 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM**