



## MAINE STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNCIL

Minutes–October 8, 2019 9:30am – 12:30pm

**Location:** MaineHousing Conference Room, 353 Water Street. Augusta, ME 04330.

**Members:** Stephanie Primm (KCHC), Tracey Hair (HOME, RIII), Donna Kelley (WCAP, RII), Josh D’Alessio (PCHC, RIII), Cullen Ryan (CHOM, RII), Alice Preble (DHHS-OCFS) Lauren Bustard (MaineHousing), Chet Barnes (SAMHS)

**Guests:** Betty LaBua (Maine Housing), Tracy Allen (KBH), Melody Fitch (Safe Voices), Jenny Stasio (Through These Doors), Christi Staples (CSH), Peter Kraut (MaineCare), Mary Francis Bartlett (City of Augusta), Richard Hooks-Wayman (VOA), Susan Gagnon (MDOC),

Erin Kelly (Preble Street), Brian Townsend (Amistad), David Simpson (MDOC), Alex Morse (Side Sea)

**Phone:** Cheryl Harkins (HVJ, R1), Donna Yellen (Preble Street, R1), Aaron Geyer (COP), Ginny Dill, (R1)

**Minutes:** Betty LaBua (MaineHousing)

**Approval of Minutes:** Minutes from September 10, 2019 were approved.

### Big Topics:

**Christi Staples, CSH Discussion**–The council sees the merits in the holistic approach taken by CHS’s Strategic Planning Proposal as a starting point. The current legislature provides an opportune atmosphere for addressing the needs of populations currently underserved in housing statewide. An examination of the Gaps and Needs and a cost analysis are both key components to keep in consideration as the council moves forward with any plans. Several members mentioned the lack of funding and the importance of finding funding sources now. Christi estimates the cost of all three phases of the CHS proposal being \$100,000. Stephanie asked for all to share any leads for public and/or private funding.

**Erin Kelly, CE Update**-There will be a presentation of the Policy and Procedures for CE at the October COC Meeting. Once approved, the segment of creating methods for trainings followed by implementation will commence. Erin outlined the 4 phases; Access, Assessment, Prioritization and Referral. Access through a *no wrong door* system will be followed by a phased assessment. Prioritization will be based on VI-SPDAT scores with built in flexibility for input by case workers for recommendation of score adjustments based on knowledge of the individuals and their situation. Case conferencing will provide participating providers an opportunity to work together to insure each person experiencing homelessness is connected to the most appropriate housing intervention possible. Stephanie noted agencies are overburdened with administrative costs and voiced an open invitation for members to share any ideas to assist with the cost of unfunded mandates. Erin concluded with a reminder “the more feedback the better.”

### Brief Reports:

**Maine Homeless Policy Committee**- Cullen reported the President will continue with a continuing resolution versus a budget. At the federal level Cullen is optimistic that favorable housing legislation will be passed in both the House and Senate. There are many pieces of legislation in limbo at the state level. The status of these bills will continue to be monitored.

### Regional Homeless Councils-

**Region1**- On October 8, 2019, there will be an HHS meeting to allow for public input regarding the design for the new city shelter in Portland. The city of Portland wants to cap the shelter at 150 guests. The number of people staying outside is increasing. There needs to be a plan on how to assist barred people who are staying in encampments. Lauren will provide data on the effectiveness of Section 8 Vouchers and Shelter Plus Care when it becomes available.

**Region 2-**The meeting was short due to a training on Sex Expression and Gender Identity and Expression by Ophelia Hu Kinney.

**Region 3-** This month's meeting was well attended. Bangor is currently looking at a building to house 45 chronically homeless people. Josh mentioned the necessity for the SHC to formulate language and provide best practices surrounding warming shelters. Rapid Resolution training will be held on October 28 and 29, 2019. This training is sponsored by the WISH program in Bangor.

**Population Reports-** Ellsworth-5 LTS, 3 Adult, 1 family, Portland-230 LTS Bangor 1 LTS, 16 kids in shelters, 4 Families

**Innovations Team-**The council will be perusing a \$100,000 grant sponsored by the Gates Foundation to fund improvements in statewide communications. Alex Morse, CEO and Founder of Side Sea, a Portland based company dedicated to the social sector pointed out his company's expertise in communication.

#### **DHHS Report-**

**SAMHS-**Jessica Pollard has replaced Sheldon Wheeler. Chet shared that Jessica is aware of housing issues and is supportive of utilizing ICMs as a means of preventing incarceration adhering to his belief that ICMs are key to diversion and reentry. When asked if ICMS could use the VI-SPDAT in jails, Chet said at this point the ICMS cannot take on additional tasks.

**OCFS-**Alice let the council know Dr. Landry issued a report finding 33 additional case workers are needed statewide to focus on child and family services. There is a six month extension for the Youth RFP, however, in January there will be a slight increase given to provider budgets.

**Medicaid Updates-**The service working group determined 15 minute CM meetings do not work for those incarcerated. The barriers of Section 17 were discussed. Group proposes a three tier policy, the first tier being a lengthy meeting to establish a relationship in pre-tenancy. The group feels this may allow money to be channeled to workers going into jails. Once the cost of services is determined, MaineCare needs to approve the costs. A cost analysis model will be created allowing for input from the council.

**Criminal Justice Blue Print Working Group-**As of yet, there hasn't been feedback on the blueprint. Susan Gagnon pointed out the county jails are not at the table and should be.

**DOC Activity-**Corrections in Lewiston-Auburn has a pilot program with reentry coaches working in collaboration with MaineCare for medical care and food benefits. There is \$50,000 built into the DOC budget for mental health. There are currently 6,778 people on probation with 75 Parole Officers. Due to the hard work of POs the prison numbers are down. There is a concern that housing reentry has an over reliance on vouchers. Lauren pointed out that people without criminal records are having difficulty finding homes. SROs with project based vouchers, permanent supportive housing and incentive based transitional housing should all be explored as viable solutions to the problem of housing.

**YDHP-**Stephanie updated the council on behalf of Chris. The current focus is on structure, creating an organizational chart and working on spearheading the site visit scheduled for October 24, 2019.

**NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2019  
MAINEHOUSING CONFERENCE ROOM**

MaineStatewideHomelessCouncil|c/oMaineHousing|353WaterStreet|Augusta,ME04333|maineshc.org

*Developing policies and strategies so that everyone is pushing in the same direction to end and prevent homelessness in Maine.*