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.

**Attending via GoToMeeting:** Ali Lovejoy (Preble Street), Alice Preble (DHHS-OCFS), Amanda Cost (Partners for Peace), Awa Conteh (City of Bangor), Chris Bicknell (New Beginnings), Cullen Ryan (CHOM), Dan Hodgkins (Preble Street –VHS), Donna Kelley (Waldo CAP), Erin Kelly (Preble Street –VHS), Gerald Botta (HOME, Inc.), Mike Merrill (VOA), Meredith Smith (CHCS), Kate Easter (MCEDV), David McCluskey (Community Care/Shaw House), Nick St Louis (Bangor Area Homeless Shelter), Rebecca Hobbs (Through These Doors), Linda Holmes (City of Biddeford), Rota Knott (Tedford Housing), Andy Parlin (Western Maine Homeless Outreach), Rich Romero (OHI), Rachel Boyce (Preble Street), Katie Spencer White (Mid Maine Homeless Shelter), Melanie Bubar (Homeless Services of Aroostook), Melissa McEntee (Rumford Group Homes), Norm Maze (Shalom House), Kelly Watson (MaineHousing), Tracy Allen (Kennebec Behavioral health), Vickey Rand (CHOM), Virginia Dill (Shalom House), Sara Wade (DHHS-OBH), Bill Higgins (Homeless Advocacy for All), Janice Daku (Rural Community Action Ministries), Amy Grommes Pulaski (GP Consulting), Aaron Geyer (City of Portland), Noelle Coyne (Safe Voices), Abby Smith (PCHC), Marcie Dean (Next Step), Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing), Arwen Agee (VA), Kari Bradstreet (Hope and Justice Project), Kelsey Brown (HUD), Joe McNally (Milestone Recovery), Casey Moore (PCHC), Tyra Parker (VOA), Kat Freeman (Homefire Consulting)

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

**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

**Meeting: Maine CoC**

**Date: April 16, 2020, 1:00 – 3:00 PM**

**Location: GoToMeeting**

1. **Member Introductions**

Norm welcomed everyone. A reminder for all those calling in - please email Scott Tibbitts to be sure you are included in the minutes.

1. **Review & Approval of minutes:**

Minutes were posted on the Maine Homeless Planning website.

***Rich made a motion to approve the minutes. Joe McNally seconded. No one was opposed. No one opposed. Minutes were accepted as presented.***

1. **Big Thinking Topic: COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Discussion Continued**

***Shelters:***

**Milestone** suspended their detox and outreach program. In the shelter they have removed 7 beds and are serving 34 a night. They screen people at the door and take temperatures. It’s been tense. They are coordinating with City of Portland. There is a daily COVID call to check in with shelters, Sullivan Gym and medical providers. They could use sanitizer, cleaning supplies, PPEs, etc.

**New Beginnings** has been limiting entrance to youth under 18. They have received a lot of calls from hospitals and law enforcement for youth. They are working to create/stand up a wellness center/ shelter at the Armory in Lewiston. The community has been chipping in, Bates is supplying food etc. There are five shelters in Lewiston, one is closed the rest are limiting access.

**City of Portland**- There is a daily call (started by Bob Fowler). It puts providers in contact with each other. The family shelter is for those who are sick while those with possible exposure are at the Expo. Sullivan Gym is for those who are currently healthy. There have been good partnerships with local hospitals. Mercy came and screened all persons on site at the Expo. Others too. Shortage of PPE.

**Preble Street** – Joe K shelter has limited day time to youth staying at the shelter. Florence House is running at capacity. Sullivan Gym Shelter is up to capacity. There are 50 people there, nightly. There is still a need for more so everyone who can access a bed.

***Other Providers:***

**Shalom** – Housing people has been slower due to COVID and there has been a decrease in applicants. Shalom is completing virtual inspections. Both move in and move out inspections have been virtual. Annual inspections have been waived by HUD during this public health crisis. Disability documents have been temporarily waived to allow staff recorded observation of disability. The Shelter Plus Care one-year lease requirement has been waived to help all recipients to move quickly into permanent housing.

**Office of Behavioral Health** has converted BRAP to 40%, which means residents only need to pay 40% of their income towards their rent (it was 51%).

**City Bangor** – Bangor Area Homeless Shelter and Hope House have worked together to get applications and bring clients into offices for interviews for apartments etc.

**CHOM**- We are doing our best to keep it business as usual.

**Veterans** – SSVF got extra funding, this will support Veterans on SSVF and HUD VASH. They are working to get Veterans out of shelters and into hotels and off the streets and into safe spaces. They have been doing calls as well on how to best serve our veterans. There is a slow down on Move Ins. Worried about an influx when eviction moratoriums lift, and are planning for that. Looking for a statewide landlord mitigation fund.

***Announcements:***

Cullen comments that he is impressed with the work that shelters are doing to help keep people safe and getting people to services that they need.

Colin O’Neil is coordinating delivery of cloth masks from DOC. Call him if you need some.

**Federal Updates:**

Cullen provided an update about the next Stimulus CARES Package. Our delegation has been really responsive. About $12 billion is going to HUD programs. About $4 billion is for Homeless Assistance grants. Also more funding for CDBG, HOME, Section 8. Also strengthened Housing First language as a best practice. There was three-month extension for Homeless Youth Demonstration projects.

Cullen explained that most other items are stalled.

The threat to reduce SNAP time limits (to lower eligibility to 3 months) was blocked by a judge.

There could be a 4th COVID Stimulus Package. They have seen a push to have an exit strategy to help folks experiencing homelessness for rental subsidies and affordable housing tax credit increases.

**State Updates:**

The State passed a supplemental budget. They left a lot of bills on the table, such as FUSE Collaborative, $3 million for shelter operating subsidy. They hope to reconvene at the end of the summer. A few bills did pass: Affordable Housing Tax Credit and Social Justice bill.

There were two motions to write letter to elected federal and state officials thanking them.

***Norm made a motion to send a thank you to our legislation- Senator Collins. Aaron Seconded. No Discussion. No one opposed. Passed.***

***Norm made a motion to thank the Governor and request that there be a focus of some of the $1.2 million to safely house people in congregate places- like shelters and jails etc. Seconded by Dave McCluskey. No one opposed or abstained. Passed.***

**Statewide Homeless Council**

The group is working with MaineHousing to respond to the crisis.

* More people are realizing that homelessness is a health issue. We need health providers to help address some of these needs. We need the momentum to continue.

**Long Term Stayers**

* Portland discussions are on hold because providers are overwhelmed. Thank you to all the providers in Portland. There has been a lot of support from folks that have not all been around the same tables.
* No other updates.

**COC Board**

* Amy explained that the Board also discussed COVID-19 and best practices.

**Coordinated Entry**

Rachel provided an update. They have created a framework for coordinated entry. They are working on each section and fleshing out the details.

**Standing Committees**

Resource Committee has not met.

NOFA Committee is canceled on Friday 4/17/20.

There is a push to advocate for the postponement of the NOFA. Senator Collins could be a key voice in the Senate. The request would be to continue funding all projects that were funded in FY19 accordingly.

***Joe McNally made a motion to ask HUD to postpone the NOFA indefinitely and continue to fund projects that were funded in FY19. Seconded by Awa.*** Discussion. Cullen explained that there is a letter drafted. There is language for each continuum to make some adjustments that would be made locally. Rebecca stated that she would like there to be some flexibility to fund projects that may not have been funded last year. Norm asked if there is way to account for Fair Market Rents. Cullen states there was some additional resources in the COVID Stimulus package. They discuss APR deadlines. It is suggested to email Lynn Morrow. ***No further discussion. No abstentions. No one objects. This passed.***

The Project Committee was supposed to meet. No one showed up. This will be rescheduled.

Data committee is scheduled to meet next week.

Next Month Agenda Item suggestions

* Big Thinking Topic- COVID-19
* Temporary solutions that are being put in place, there is no permanent solution. There is a great deal of energy and resources being invested in addressing this crisis, but when we come out, what’s next?
  + There could be a great increase in homelessness

Norm extends his gratitude to everyone doing this work. We are learning a lot. Thank you for all you do.

**Next Meeting:** **April 16, 2020, 1PM to 3PM**