



MAINE STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNCIL

January 12, 2021

9:30-12:30

Minutes

Virtual Location

<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1494236342?pwd=MHE2NW9vMnV6WWhrNjEzZjlodzZ6dz09> Or Telephone: 1(646)3573664

Members: Stephanie Primm (KCHC, SHC Chair), Donna Kelley (WCAP, RII), Cullen Ryan (CHOM, RII), Cheryl Harkins (HVJ, RI), Ginny Dill (DHHS-OBH, RI), Josh D'Alessio (PCHC, RIII), Tracey Hair (HOME, Inc., RIII), Lauren Bustard (MaineHousing), Alice Preble, (DHHS/OCFS), David McCluskey (Shaw House, RIII) and Donna Yellen (Preble Street RI)

Guests: Betty LaBua (MaineHousing), Tracy Allen (KBH), Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing), Melanie Buber (HSA), Shirley Caron (HAS), Rota Knott (Tedford), Kelsey Brown (HUD), Jamie Blackburn (CSH), Kelly Watson (MaineHousing), Jenny Stasio (TTD), Bill Higgins (Homeless Advocacy for All), Anna Smith (CSH), Sarah Gallagher (CSH), Chris Bicknell (New Beginnings), Sara Wade (SAMHS, DHHS), Vickey Rand (CHOM), Anna Brewer (HVJ), Christina Dingus (MaineHousing), Erin Kelly (Preble Street), Joan Bautista (Preble Street), Shawn Yardley (Community Concepts), Joe McNally (Milestone), Katie Spencer-White (MMHS), Mike Shaughnessy (MaineHousing), Melissa McEntee (RGH), Meredith Pesce (Amistad), Anne Pringle (Friends of Deer Oaks), Norm Maze (Shalom House), Boyd Kronholm (BAHS), Kenneth Capron (Memory Works), Abigail Smallwood (City of Biddeford), Wes Phiney (YCSPI), Teague Morris (Senator King's Office), Noelle Coyne (Safe Voices), Richard Hooks Wayman (VOA), Emily Flinkstrom (Fairtides) and Johnnie Walker (Partners for Peace), Rindy Fogler (City of Bangor, Kate Easter (MCEDV)

Minutes: Betty LaBua (MaineHousing) and Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing)

Welcome: Stephanie opened the first meeting of 2021 by welcoming everyone in attendance. Cullen motioned to approve December's minutes. Cheryl seconded. December's minutes were approved.

CSH Update: Sarah Gallagher started the 75 minute CSH Update by inviting anyone to ask questions or voice concerns in regards to the planning and implementation of the HUB model for the system redesign. The following questions were raised and concerns voiced:

- Q-Has the service model/HUB model been implemented in other states with rural areas?
A-Yes, many states have, for example Alaska.
- Q-How will the plan address the fundamental issue of the lack of affordable housing?
A-Increasing the pipeline of affordable units is part of the plan.
- Q-How will work between Service HUBS face the systematic challenges of the inequality of shelters and affordable housing?
A-By developing a shared understanding, a deeper use of data and by creating networks to share responsibility. Sharing data shows transparency.

- Q-Were people from rural Maine part of a focus group?
A-Yes, people from both urban pockets and rural areas were interviewed.
- Q-How can the HUB model take less responsibilities from shelters and not add more?
A-By harnessing data for a localized system, for example mapping HUD's SPM of the length of shelter stays can show what localized response is needed for the state's most vulnerable population.
- Q-In rural areas, how can one lead agency take over and handle the responsibility of such large areas?
A-Form a coalition to co-lead with one or more agencies.
- Q-Will there be funding to support lead agencies?
A-Yes, policy changes and funding needs will be drafted.
- Q-Will the redesign change the way people enter shelters?
A-CES in conjunction with the redesign will change how people enter shelters by creating a more streamlined system.
- Q-Why is there a missed focus on the causes of homelessness and re-homelessness such as lack of supportive housing, mental health issues and access to job training?
A-First the landscape of HUBs needs to be approved then the details of the redesign can be conceptualized including the concerns of the causes of homelessness.

Following the question and answer session, consensus was reached by the majority in attendance to approve the concept of HUBS that are both flexible and adaptive with a strong focus on not building a rigid and static system. Cullen made motion to accept HUB model. Josh Seconded. Ken opposed. Motion passed by the showing of hands. Next members voted. Cullen motioned to adopt a HUB model as a concept with work to be done on the details of boundaries. Tracey seconded. No members opposed. No discussion. Motion passed.

The following people volunteered to join a small group to work on the boundaries of the HUBs: Katie Spencer-White, Tracey Hair, Donna Kelley, Noelle Coyne, Mike Shaughnessy, Erin Kelly, Meredith Pesce, Cullen Ryan, Chris Bicknell, Rota Knott, Josh D'Alessio, Emily Flinkstorm, Jenny Stasio, Norm Maze, Kate Easter, Lauren Bustard, Stephanie Primm, Alice Preble and Ken Capron.

Council Updates:

- **Regional Updates:**
 - Region I-** Cheryl reported HVJ celebrated turning 25 this month. HVJ members have been busy meeting with the City Council and with CSH. Preble Street has been approved to shelter 40 additional guests. Nominations to the council will be voted on at the end of January.
 - Region II-**Cullen reported placing people in homes with rental subsidies continues to be difficult. Alice added names of nominees from their region have been submitted.
 - Region III-**Dave mentioned the numbers of youth entering the shelter system are increasing. The numbers of people unsheltered are also increasing. The folks living in tents on the Bangor waterfront were displaced.

- **Legislative Updates:**

State: The 130th Legislature has convened with 1,800 pieces of legislation to be decided upon. A list reviewed by Rob Liscord and Frank D'Alessandro with Maine Equal Justice Partners on Housing and Homelessness Legislative Priorities (Housing, Homelessness, GA and Food Insecurity) can be found on the Maine Homeless Planning website.

Federal: Cullen stated on 12/27 former President Trump signed a package passed by Congress which included an FY 21 omnibus spending bill, funding the government through 9/30/21, including T-HUD. HUD received \$49.6 billion - more than \$12.4 billion above the president's request, and \$561 million above FY20 enacted levels, excluding Federal Housing Administration receipts. It largely funds HUD programs at or above levels proposed by the Senate in November, though not as high as levels proposed by the House. The spending bill likely provides enough funding to renew all existing voucher contracts for rental assistance. Beyond rental assistance, the spending bill provides level funding or moderate increases to all programs.

Also, on 12/27, former President Trump signed a package passed by Congress which included the 4th stimulus bill. The package is a bipartisan \$900+ billion economic relief bill.

- **Maine Housing Update:** Lauren said the Provider Grant Agreements for ESG shelters will extend to the end of April. Hotel capacity in Portland, Bangor, Waterville, Presque Isle and the Mid-Coast area will be increased.

COVID Related Issues:

- Dr. Letourneau was unable to attend today's meeting however, she will be attending the next MSN meeting on Thursday, 1/14/21.
- Shelter staff are in level 1B for vaccines and scheduling for this tier will begin in February.
- Cullen noted the massive increases in the number of LTS are comprised of people who do not fit the traditional definition of LTS but are lingering in homelessness over 180 days due to COVID related issues and will not need long term support after the vaccine and increased resources are made available.

Stephanie adjourned the meeting by wishing everyone a Happy and Better New Year!!!

Next Meeting is scheduled for February 9, 2021