**Meeting Minutes: Maine CoC**

**Date: May 20, 2021, 1:00 – 3:00 PM**

**Location: Ring Central**

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 email [blabua@mainehousing.org](mailto:blabua@mainehousing.org) to let Betty know and she will edit accordingly.

**Attending via GoToMeeting:** Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing), Betty LaBua (MaineHousing), Norm Maze (Shalom House), Noelle Coyne (Safe Voice), Kate Easter (MCEDV), Bill Higgins (Homeless Advocacy for All), Chris Bicknell (New Beginnings), Alice Preble (DHHS), Sara Wade (DHHS), Erin Kelly (Preble Street), Tracy Allen (KBH), Cullen Ryan (CHOM), Awa Conteh (City of Bangor), Rota Knott (Tedford Housing), Kelly Watson (MaineHousing), Stephanie Primm (Knox County), Rachel Prentiss (Preble Street), Vickey Rand (CHOM), Donna Kelley (WCAP), Ginny Dill, (DHHS), Susanne Randall (Homeless Advocacy for All), Rebecca Hobbs (Through These Doors), Rebekah Paredes (New Hope for Women), Molly Sirios (BOL), Mike Shaughnessy (MaineHousing), Wes Phinney (YCSPI), Lauren Bustard (MaineHousing), Abigail Smallwood (City of Biddeford), Gerald Botta (Home Inc.), Julie Davidson (Caring Unlimited), Emily Flinkstorm (Fair Tide), Joe McNally (Milestone), Christina Dingus (MaineHousing), Jill Grazia (Shalom House), Boyd Kronholm (BAHS), Janice Lara Hewey (Catholic Charities), Melissa McEntee (Preble Street), Tara Hembree (MaineHousing), Sarah Gallagher (CSH), Katie Spencer-White (MMHS) Ann Martin (HUD), Marcie Dean (Next Step) Melanie Beaulieu (FVP),Sarah Derosier (CHCS), Brianne Brasslett (CHCS), Dan Hodgkins (Preble Street), Beverly H.(YAB)Theresa Dow (ACAP), Brian Bouthot (VOA), Rich Romero (OHI), Dave McCluskey (Shaw House),Johnnie Walker (Partners for Peace), Kari Bradstreet(HJP), Ken Capron (Memory Works),and Ali Lovejoy (Preble Street)

Stephonie Gregg (YCSPI) and Kari Bradstreet (FVP).

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

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**Maine**

**Continuum of Care**

1. **Member Introductions:**

Norm welcomed all in attendance.

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

MCOC Minutes from the April meeting were posted on the Maine Homeless Planning website.

***Mike S. made a motion to approve April’s minutes, Rich seconded. . No discussion. No objections. Passed unanimously.***

1. **Big Thinking Topics:**

**COVID 19 Continued Discussion:** Norm opened the discussion by asking for any updates concerning COVID 19. Katie provided her email address for anyone interested if designing the survey for *Lesson’s Learned*, *COVID 1 Year Later*. The CDC guidelines for the mask mandate is still in place for all healthcare settings, prisons and shelters. Katie noted for outreach and staff, it is up to the discretion of shelter administers to maintain a policy of health and wellbeing for all shelter staff and guests.

**System Redesign:** Sarah Gallagher, from CSH, started her presentation by defining the goal of the redesign as being: “To determine the inventory and resources needed to support the goal of ***homelessness as rare, brief and one time*** in Maine.” Next Sarah gave an overview of the following **core components** of the system redesign:

* Data Driven and Accountable
* Person Centered Design
* Balances statewide standards with a tailored, localized response
* Move from “Models” to “Systems” with the right array of interventions
* Build Thriving Communities that Foster Educational Connections
* Build Career Pathways and Integrate Healthcare and Ensure Food Security
* Addresses Race Equity

The **key take a ways,** after analysis derived from a variety of mythologies are:

* Reliance on shelter as the initial front door
* Most people enter from a setting where a short term intervention could prevent or end homelessness
* Low number of long term stayers across the system
* Over use of interventions with the poorest outcomes (ES and TH)
* There is a lack of permanent housing options on the back end but once in housing, returns to homelessness is low

Taking into account that Maine’s homeless population live in both urban and rural areas, nine hubs were introduced as part of the redesign structure. Service Hubs will provide the local foundation for the roll-out and operations of Coordinated Entry, including case conferencing meetings, management of the prioritization list and matching to housing resources. Sarah stressed the integration of CES into the hubs is essential. Sarah ended her presentation by stating the next steps are to establish a front door (211 or another point of entry) and launch the local service hubs.

**NOFA:** There will be a NOFA at some point this year, the question as to when, is still unknown. Scott reported both the PIT and the HIC have been submitted. Chris clarified that the funding for YHTP projects is for just two years.

1. **Legislative Updates:**

* **Federal:** Cullen reported that on 4/9 President Biden released his “budget blueprint” previewing his full FY 22 budget request. The President’s blueprint proposes a $9 billionor 15% increase to HUD’s budget from FY 2021. If enacted, the budget would provide substantial federal investments in affordable homes and increase the availability of housing assistance to families with the greatest need. Cullen brought attention to HUD’s announcement that it was withdrawing the proposed rule, published in the *Federal Register* by the previous administration, which would have weakened the Equal Access Rule.
* **State:** Cullen mentioned there are a plethora of bills that are being watched by Homeless policy committee. The updated status of these bills are as follows

**LD 211-**An Act To Support Emergency Shelter Access for Persons Experiencing Homelessness- Passed to be engrossed as amended by the House then the Senate on 4/28, the bill now faces votes for enactment in each Chamber.

**LD 48-**Resolve, To Require the Department of Health and Human Services To Request a Waiver Relating to Support Services and To Provide Funds To Prevent Homelessness, –This bill is now dead. At the 4/9 Work Session the Committee opted instead to send a letter to DHHS asking for report-outs from the Medicaid IAP as this is very closely related to this bill.

**LD 360** Resolve, To Reduce Barriers to Recovery from Addiction by Expanding Eligibility for Targeted Case Management Services This bill is now dead.

1. **SHC Update:**

Stephanie updated the committee by highlighting the key topics addressed during May’s Council meeting. The System Redesign continues to integrate planning with CES. In June, CSH will give their final presentation bringing the redesign into the next phase of how to structure and support the hubs. The council is addressing the quandary of encampments in terms of how to both handle their current needs and how to prevent growth. MaineCare’s Michelle Probert gave a presentation on IAP, which allows for health and housing to be combined for our state’s most vulnerable populations. A facilitated planning meeting may possibly be scheduled in July.

1. **Long Term Stayers:**

Cullen reported the Portland area LTS group has successfully placed a total of 331 people with a success rate of 94%. No reports from the Bangor, Ellsworth and Brunswick areas.

1. **COC Board Update:**

**Coordinated Entry Committee-** Kate gave the committee update. The current focus of the committee is on the assessment phase through which much time is being be dedicated to identifying a new and equitable assessment tool. An in-depth look at the Boston System provided an example of an aggressive approach which could be adapted for Maine’s system. Once the assessment phase has been drafted, there will be an informational “road show” for stakeholders to learn the new system and give feedback before the final version is brought to the Board this summer.

1. **Youth Action Board Update:**  Beverly H. updated today’s meeting by noting some members of YAB attended the Point Source Rural Youth Virtual Conference on May 18th and 19th, 2021. Conference topics addressed the steps needed to ensure safe and stable housing for rural youth, PIT analysis, YHTP, equity and youth leadership.
2. **Standing Committee Updates:**

* **NOFA-** Did not meet. Will meet next month.
* **Monitoring:** Mike said monitoring continues with the anticipation of the NOFA.
* **Resource Committee-**Norm mentioned the on June 4, 2021 from 9-11 there will be a training titled, Equal Access to Housing in HUD Programs Regardless of Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity & Introduction to Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Expression. There will be a Safe Spaces training on June 18, 2021.

1. **Next Meeting Agenda:**

* Big thinking topic: Continued Discussion – COVID-19 One Year Later: Lessons learned throughout the pandemic, strengths discovered, and what we can carry forward to the Continuum post-pandemic
* All were invited to email Betty, Scott or chairs agenda suggestions.

**Next MCOC meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2021 from 1:00-3:00 pm**