**MAINE STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNCIL**

**January 11, 2022**

**9:30-12:30**

**Minutes**

**Virtual Location** [**https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1494236342?pwd=MHE2NW9vMnV6WWhrNjEzZjlodzZ6dz09**](https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1494236342?pwd=MHE2NW9vMnV6WWhrNjEzZjlodzZ6dz09) **Or Telephone: 1(646)3573664**

**Members:** Cullen Ryan (CHOM, RII), Cheryl Harkins (HVJ, RI), Lauren Bustard (MaineHousing), Alice Preble (DHHS/OCFS), Emily Flinkstrom (Fair Tide, RI), Tracey Hair (HOME Inc. RIII), Donna Kelley (Waldo CAP, RIII), David McCluskey (Community Care, RIII), Donna Yellen (Preble Street, RI), Steph Primm (KCHC, Chair)and Josh D’Alessio (HEAL, RIII)

**Guests:** Betty LaBua (MaineHousing), Scott Tibbitts (MaineHousing), Rota Knott (Tedford), Bill Higgins (Homeless Advocacy for All), Vickey Rand (CHOM), Erin Kelly (Preble Street), Boyd Kronholm (BAHS), Noelle Coyne (Safe Voices), Richard Hooks Wayman (VOA), Kate Easter (MCEDV), Ginny Dill (OBH/DHHS), Mike Shaughnessy (MaineHousing), Tara Hembree (MaineHousing), Erin Healy (Community Solutions), Emily Meade (WMCA), Wes Phinney (YCSPI), Lisa McLaughlin (HSA), Katie Spencer-White (MMHS), Theresa Dow-O’Leary (ACAP), Juanita Carbone (WMCA), Lisa Letourneau (Maine CDC), Jenny Stasio (TTD), Kobi Perry (WMCA), Abigail Smallwood (City of Biddeford), Meredith Smith (CHCS), Rindy Folger (City of Bangor), Julian Sherman (Hope House), Katie Buckner (HUD), Kelly Watson (MSHA), Amelia Lyons (Dept. of Ed.), Sarah Michniewicz (Portland Resident), Janice Daku (RCAM), Chris Dingus (MaineHousing), Sara Wade (DHHS), Awa Conteh (City of Bangor), Ann Martin (HUD), Norm Maze (Shalom House), Amber Michaud (ACAP), Morgan Seeley Williams (ACAP), Amber Robillard (KBH), K. Nate Voisine, Aaron Geyer (City of Portland), and Colleen Hotchkiss (Northern Light).

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

**Welcome:** Stephanie opened today’s meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance. Donna Yellen motioned to approve December’s minutes. Bill H. seconded. December’s minutes were unanimously approved. A moment of silence was observed in honor of those who have passed away while experiencing homelessness.

**CES Update:** Erin K. reported there were several feedback sessions, including two with frontline staff, held during the month of December on the assessment tool of CES. The committee will meet for a two hour session on January 18th to integrate community feedback on the assessment phase into Maine’s CES draft. The committee’s current focus is on drafting the access portion. Erin ended the update be mentioning 25% of the EHVs have been leased up!

**HUB Update:** With the nine service hubs launched, the system redesign’s focus has pivoted towards the RFP for the Hub Coordinator positions for they will play a key role in synchronizing Built for Zero and CES. After outlining the conflict of interest provisions, Lauren gave her email address and Erin shared a google form for folks to sign on as volunteers to serve on the scoring team. In addition to SHC volunteers, the team will consists of Stephanie, Erin and a few MSHA staff members. The RFPs will be reviewed and decided upon on the 20th and 21st of January. By January 28th the awards will be announced followed by a target hire date of March 1, 2022. The six month action cycle for the national Built for Zero Collaborative is scheduled to begin in May, 2022. Erin ended today’ update by mentioning there will be an optional zoom question and answer meeting on January 18th on *How to Build a Hub Team.*

**Council Updates:**

* **Regional Updates Region I**- Since the region has not met since the December Council meeting there were no updates made.

**Region II**- Since the region has not met since the December Council meeting there were no updates made. Their next meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2022.

**Region III**- Since the region has not met since the December Council meeting there were no updates made. Their next meeting is scheduled for January 12, 2022.

Anecdotally, all regions shared difficulty in staffing critical programs and concerns with the numbers of people living outside in the cold weather.

* **Legislative Updates: Federal-**Cullen shared his screen to bring attention to both the FY 22 budget and the Senate FY 22 HUD Budget. On 12/3 Congress passed and the President signed another short-term Continuing Resolution to keep the government open through 2/18/22. The CR maintains current federal funding levels. And, on 12/16 President Joe Biden signed a debt ceiling increase into law, preventing the first-ever U.S. default. The measure lifts the government’s borrowing limit by $2.5 trillion, which is expected to allow the U.S. to cover its obligations into 2023. On 10/19 the Senate Appropriations Committee released its FY 22 THUD bill. Overall, the bill increases funding for HUD programs in FY22, although at levels lower than those proposed in the House. The Senate bill funds HUD at $65.4 billion, or $5.7 billion above FY21 enacted levels. Unfortunately, the Senate bill does not include the major expansion of rental assistance proposed by both President Biden and the House.
* **State-** The 130th Legislature second regular session runs from January 5-April 20, 2022. Cullen provided a session tracking document as a resource to keep informed of the current bills, their sponsor, their title, their status & committee and any notes pertaining to status or action needed. As a means to further assist readers, the font is colored coded for all carried over bills. The policy committee will draft a list identifying 3-5 most important bills in order to be able to send a unified message to lawmakers of core priorities. The discussion of the ranking will be on the council’s February agenda.
* **MSHA-** Lauren started today’s update by giving an overview of the COVID hotels. The Quarantine/Isolation hotel in Scarborough has increased its bed capacity to 80. The FEMA hotel in Lewiston currently has 18 rooms. Negations are underway to obtain hotel rooms in Bangor, Portland and Augusta. The Navigator Pilot project’s RFP will be issued in a couple of weeks. The PIT count is taking place on the night of January 25, 2022, with Service Based follow-up days on the 26th, 27th, and 28th. This year there is a new site, [www.mainepit.org](http://www.mainepit.org), designed to both assist in volunteer sign up and volunteer trainings. Scott mentioned volunteers are needed in both Franklin and Oxford Counties.
* **MSN:** The network has not met since the last council meeting. Their top agenda item for their January 13th meeting will be how best to address the growing number of COVID positive clients.

**Chair Update:**

Stephanie announced that for health reasons, she will be stepping down as Chair of the council. She has appointed Katie Spencer White as Interim Chair. Numerous accolades were shared by people in attendance for Stephanie’s hard word and gifted leadership. In February, the work on the process of how leadership of the council should evolve will begin.

**SHC Retreat Recap:**

Katie shared the following raw data from the SHC retreat divided into the categories of what practices should be continued, what practices should be introduced and what practices should be stopped. The practices were summarized as follows:

Practices to Continue:

Advocacy – be present with policy makers

Collaboration across sectors and with other groups (e.g. COC, MSN)

Remote Connectivity for greater inclusivity

Center lived experience

Consensus model

Practice to Start:

ADVOCACY

Develop & implement a comprehensive communication & legislative strategy

Use of data to drive decision making

Develop a strategic plan

Review Governance for greater efficiency & inclusion

Focus on Equity

Focus on strategy over implementation

SHC as a deliberative body

Be in the room with policy makers

Center lived experience

Resource allocation

Focus on housing development

Practices to Stop:

 Current updates – consent agenda

 Current purpose and authority of working groups

 Current governance, i.e. Roberts Rules of Order for Consensus building

 Current lack of identifying unique work of this body to prevent duplication

This data will be incorporated when answering questions on how best to move the council forward.

**CDC Update:**

Lisa Letourneau from the Maine CDC, emphasized the importance of masking, getting boosted and social distancing as the best proactive measures to prevent severe illness, hospitalizations and death. The number of daily cases are estimated to be two to five times higher than what is being reported. With the amount of false information on vaccines still being circulated she asked for everyone to keep the clarifying message strong that the only reason for not getting inoculations is if you are allergic to an ingredient in the vaccine or if you are COVID positive.

**Meeting Format:**

The continued discussion on how to improve the format of the council’s monthly meeting led to the voicing of these considerations:

* Divide the meeting into a 2 hour collective meeting and an one hour meeting for committee work
* Send out written updates before council meetings
* Develop a better way to share and connect all three regions
* Adopt a co-chair model with a steering committee
* Devise a timeline for new format
* Define and understand governances
* Update who members are
* Schedule a project planning for the members

Meeting format will be on the agenda in February.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 8, 2022.