**MAINE STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNCIL**

**May 10, 2022**

**9:30-12:30**

**Minutes**

**Attendance:** A complete list of attendees and the agencies they represent is attached.

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

**Welcome:** Scott opened today’s meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance. Cullen Ryan motioned to approve April’s minutes. April’s minutes were unanimously approved. A moment of silence was observed in honor of those who have passed away while experiencing homelessness including Kari Morissette, the Executive Director of the Church of Safe Injection.

**HUB Update:** Tara started today’s update by mentioning Hub Coordinators for Hubs 2 (Matthew Jarrell) and 3(Amy Holland) started last week and will be starting their work on connecting with providers and other groups within their communities Hubs 4-9 have already begun the work and are currently networking to gain a feel for what the provider landscape is as well as what the outreach capacity is in each of their respective hubs. Hub 1 providers are engaged and working together and YCCAP continues to work to fill their Hub Coordinator position. Hub Coordinator training and onboarding is happening with 9 Hub Learning Cohort meeting biweekly, 1:1 Coaching sessions for each hub coordinator biweekly, training on Quality Data, HMIS, and Coordinated Entry. The Built for Zero Hubs 1, 2, 6, 7, 9 have Hub coordinators and Hub partners/providers attending the BfZ Learning Session in Chicago on the 11th and 12th of April where they will determine goals to kick off their first 6 month action cycle. Hubs 3, 4, 5, and 8 will be meeting the first week of June for a half-day session to plan out their 6 month action cycle in a parallel track with support from MSHA and Community Solutions. During the first week of June the State Level BfZ team will also meet for a half day strategy retreat to determine goal setting and it’s first 6 month action cycle.

**CES Update:** In order to flush out details needing to be addressed in the drafting of an ROI for case conferencing and for designing a training curriculum two sub committees were formed. Erin noted the committees have met a couple of times and will present the documents for review and approval during the next two CES meetings. The committee reached consensus on access and will continue to work on attaining consensus on prioritization and referral.

**CDC Update:** Lisa described the recent surge in Maine as the “*Same song different verse,”* further detailing the situation in Maine by noting even though there is a substantial rise in hospitalizations there is an insignificant increase in ICU cases. Lisa emphasized the importance of masking (high quality and not cloth) indoors, getting vaccinated/boosted and social distancing as the best proactive measures in congregant setting amongst high risk populations to prevent severe illness, hospitalizations and death. In terms of treatment, there is currently a sufficient supply of medication for treating COVID available at pharmacies throughout the state. The update ended with the reminder COVID is still serious for older people and people with underling medical conditions.

**MCoC Update:** Cullen gave today’s update by pointing out the MCoC is addressing the following topics: the low outflow with increased inflow into shelter system, the switch to regional coverage for DHHS funding for Youth grants, the decrease in exits to permanent housing, land lord matching, debriefing the NOFO application and reviewing the PIT Count.

**PIT Count:** Scott started a synopsis on this year’s PIT/HIC by first bringing attention to the total number of people reported in Emergency Shelter situations: 2022 was more than three times higher than the number reported in 2021 due to the inclusion of ERA and GA Hotel/Motel data, and by noting MCOC did not conduct an Unsheltered PIT Count in 2021, therefore the previous figure was carried forward by the HDX. Scott further explained the increased unsheltered efforts resulted in more returns in 2022, but many could not be used since 66 were not literally homeless, 42 surveys were too incomplete to count, 38 were duplicates or already recorded, and a few were on different, unapproved, forms. After reviewing the count by groupings of populations, Scott pointed out HUD wants to see HMIS Coverage Rates of 85% or better. With ERA and GA not entering data into HMIS, Maine’s HMIS Bed Coverage Rate of 27.7% will need to be explained and may cause the loss of points on the NOFO. In terms of the HIC, when comparing data from 2021 and 2022, there were significant increases in the number of ES Beds, for households both with and without Children. There were also increases in the number of Rapid Rehousing Beds for both types, while TH Beds decreased slightly. The number of ES and TH Beds for Unaccompanied Youth also increased significantly. A full and detailed summary of this year’s PIT and HIC reports will be posted on the Maine Homeless Planning website.

.**Council Updates:**

* **Regional Updates Region I-** The region spent their meeting discussing the standing issue of the shortage of affordable housing, the need for long term solutions regarding the lack of day space and what to do regarding the items people have accumulated while being sheltered in hotels. Cheryl H. updated the council on work being done by Homeless Voices for Justice by pointing out their first newsletter will be issued in June. The Red Bank Village apartment complex in South Portland with 50 section 8 apartments has been sold and purportedly rents will be increased by at least $100.00 a month.

**Region II**- The region’s May meeting is this coming Friday (5/13) therefore no updates were given.

**Region III-** Tracy H. noted the region will be meeting tomorrow and will be discussing the high numbers of people still sheltered in hotels, the Hub Coordinator role, the seasonal housing crisis and the growing numbers of seniors experiencing homelessness.

**Legislative Updates:**

* **Federal-** Attention was brought to American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and FY23 Budgets. Currently ARPA funding does not blend well with the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit for the creation of affordable housing. Efforts are underway to correct this, with the hope that bipartisan legislation will be introduced correcting this oversight/error. After further review of Biden’s FY 23 Budget, Cullen explained the Forthcoming Budget Reconciliation Bill introduced on 4/6.Senators Dianne Feinstein and Alex Padilla sent a letter to congressional leadership calling for the inclusion of robust housing investments in any future budget reconciliation package. The letter urges leadership to ensure that the targeted housing investments in the House-passed Build Back Better Act remain in any future reconciliation bill.
* **State-** On 4/25/22 The House and Senate adjourned until the call of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. Cullen screen shared the Policy Committee’s Bill Tracker to highlight the status of bills that have passed the House and or Senate, bills signed by the Governor into public law and bills that are now dead.

**MSHA:** Diversion will continue under a different funding source with added flexibility with spending guidelines. Lauren asked for anyone interested in shared housing to email her and she will put together a training on the topic

**MSN:** During their April meeting, the network discussed the depopulation of hotels, the lack of shelter beds and how best to balance the conversation concerning the need of shelter beds with the need for housing placements.

**Meeting Format and Leadership Structure:**

The following three candidates accepted their nomination for a Co-Chair position.

Noelle Coyne, Katie Spencer White and Cullen Ryan. All nominees, regardless of the outcome of the vote, will be forwarded to the office of the Governor in a manner to be determined, and will be available for official appointment by the Governor. Notwithstanding this, the Governor may decide to appoint someone not on this list. The vote was conducted within the following guiding principles:

* 1. Voting members will be allowed to vote, one vote per agency, one vote per Regional Council Member, for a total of 14 votes.
  2. The (Interim) Chair will have the casting vote in the event of a tie.
  3. The two highest vote earners will be the new (interim) co-chairs (see Position Description)
  4. If a single person earns all 14 votes, a second round of voting will be held.
  5. State agencies with more than one regular attendee will be asked to confirm their voting member in advance of the vote.

After the members who were not able to vote at today’s meeting have cast their votes by emailing Betty, the results will be mailed to everyone on the SHC mailing list. Co-Chairs will take over for the June meeting and will continue in an “acting” position pending official appointment by the Governor.

**Closing of FEMA Shelters & Impact on Shelter System:**

Over 50 people attended a session held on May 5th to strategize for the aftermath of the closing of FEMA Shelters and the impact on the Shelter System. Katie reported that shared housing, master leasing, and rapid rehousing, were some of the ideas shared as possible ways to alleviate the crisis. How best to apply these ideas as well as others will be on the June SHC meeting agenda.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 14, 2022.