**MAINE STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNCIL**

**September 13, 2022**

**9:30-12:30**

**Minutes**

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

**Minutes:** Betty LaBua (MaineHousing)

**Welcome:** Katie Spencer White, in the position of Co-Chair, opened today’s meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance. Cullen motioned to approve August’s minutes as written. Tracey H. seconded. July’s minutes were unanimously approved. A moment of silence wasobserved in honor of those who have passed away while experiencing homelessness.

**System Updates:**

* **Opioid Response:** Gordon Smith was unable to attend today’s meeting therefore Cullen gave an overview of his monthly report. The 2022 number of fatal overdoses January – July is 17.0% higher than during the same time in 2021.The cumulative proportion of males has risen from 71% in 2021 to 72% in the first seven months of 2022. The cumulative age distribution for 2022 compared to 2021 shows 2 deaths under 18 in 2021 and 1 death in 2022, no change in the proportion of those aged 18–39, a 1% decrease in those aged 40–59, and a 3% decrease in the proportion of those 60 and above. Out of the 399 cases for which military background was reported in 2022, 30 (8%) were identified as having a military background. Un-domiciled or transient housing status was reported for 46 (12%) of the victims. The largest totals of un-domiciled persons January – July 2022 were found in Cumberland County (20, 43%), and Penobscot County (11, 24%), with under 5 each in York, Androscoggin, Aroostook, Kennebec, and Somerset Counties. Mathematically, comparing the 46 with 6491 people experiencing homelessness, and comparing the other 353 people with the general public in Maine of 1,359,667 it appears (353 = 0.02596 of population; 46 = 0.70867% of homeless population) that people in the homeless population may be 27 times more likely to overdose than members of the general public. This is simply a correlative comparison; it does not purport to represent cause. All were encouraged to reference July’s nine page Overdose Report.
* **CDC Update:** Dr. Lisa Letourneau, from the Maine CDC, attended today’s meeting to update the council on COVID. The state is averaging 200-300 new cases daily and there has been a moderate upward trend in hospitalizations. The FDA has authorized the booster for omicron strains for all who were boosted at least two months ago. In closing, Lisa touched on communication challenges and asked for all to spread the message of the importance of vaccinating as a means to prevent serious illness, hospitalizations and death.
* **HUB Update:** Tara started today’s update by mentioning the Hub Key Improvement team continues to meet to review progress on the All Singles Scorecard and update their scorecard answers as they get a more complete picture of hub wide outreach capacity and coordination efforts. Hub coordinators are starting to draft outreach policies for their respective hubs. This is not an oversight function, but a way to make sure all providers are aligned in their understanding of outreach efforts for their hub. Hub Coordinators will also be creating a statewide By Name List Operation manual with support from MaineHousing. This will take some time and will be presented to SHC and the MCOC when it is ready for adoption. Hub Coordinators will report their 3rd month of HMIS homeless data for their community dashboards. Hub Coordinators will work with the MCoC Resource Committee and act as PIT Leads for the 2023 PIT count. Janice Lara-Hewey will do a presentation for the HCs next week and she will continue to be the lead for Hub 4 as the HC is vacant at this time. The update ended by mentioning the State Strategy Team meets next week to review progress on statewide goals and aims including progress from the smaller state action teams.
* **CES Update:** Erin K. presented the committee update. With the Board’s approval of Policy and Procedures, coordinated entry is moving from the design phase into its pilot period. Starting in October, Hubs 5 and 7 will pilot the four phases of the CES for two months. In order to ensure all providers understand the pilot two information sessions will be held via ring central.
* **MCoC Update:** The MCoC is addressing the following topics:

1. **NOFO and SNOFO-** The NOFO’s due date for the Continuum application is September 30, 2022. The selection committee’s ranking and scoring of projects will be reviewed and voted upon during the MCOC’s September meeting. All YHDP renewal grants will be non- competitive but still have to be submitted in ESNAPS. All SNOFO Applications must be submitted into ESNAPS by September 14th. A Bidders conference was held for all interested applicants.
2. The Resource Committee held a VAWA training on October 9, 2022. The recordings and materials are available on the Maine Homeless Planning Website.
3. The Board approved Coordinated Entry’s Policy and Procedures. The Board approved APAs and ROIs for HMIS participants.

**Council and Committee Updates:**

* **Regional Updates Region I-** The region continues to struggle with the effects of the lack of affordable housing, increased evictions and increasing numbers of unsheltered homeless. The need for a regional approach to support individual towns who feel they are working alone was conveyed during the meeting. Cheryl H. pointed out both the HVJ and HA4A has been busy with outreach and with Capitol Hill Day.

**Region II**- The region has noticed an uptick in the number of elderly people seeking shelter and an increase of people being discharged from hospitals into homelessness. Landlord outreach continues as a way to combat the lack of available units.

**Region III-** Tracy H. noted there continues to be an alarming increase of people living outside, for example there are 37 people living in the woods in Ellsworth. Time limits on hotel stays and lack of housing are two ongoing issues. Bruce Kronholm has been elected to replace Josh D’Alessio.

* **People With Lived Experience**

The committee continues to meet the last Friday of the month. They are recruiting people with current experience and hopes to have PWLE participants attend all CoC meetings with compensation.

* **Maine Shelter Network**

The Network discussed how the increase in discharges from hospitals and older adults adds a medical burden to the shelters and is taking its toll on staffing. Donna Yellen extended an invitation to the Open House for the recuperative care program opening soon in Portland. Located at 934 Congress Street, it is a community partnership between Greater Portland Health, Preble Street and the Maine Medical Center to provide Medical Care, Behavioral Health and Social Services.

* **Homeless Policy Committee Update:**

**Federal:** No new updates in regards to the T-HUD budget. The following two updates were referenced;

1. On 8/16 President Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act, a reconciliation package that includes roughly $433 billion in new spending over the next 10 years on climate, energy, and health provisions. However, the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 excludes housing investments that advocates fought strongly to include. Despite housing being a key driver of inflation, the bill doesn’t address limited housing supply, increasing rents, or increases in homelessness across the country. 2. The Senate is scheduled to return from August recess on 9/6, with the House following suit on 9/13. Congress will have until 10/1 to either enact an FY 23 Budget, pass a Continuing Resolution or risk a government shutdown..

**State:** As of 5/9 the Legislature Adjourned Sine Die therefore no updates were reported. The Maine Homeless Policy Committee Priorities and strategies for the 131st Legislature will be forwarded to Greg Payne.

**Housing Updates:**

* **Greg Payne Governor’s Senior Advisor on Housing Policy:** Greg Payne was unable to attend today’s meeting. A copy of The Council’s Six-Month Strategy document was sent to Greg and received positive feedback with the mention of positive funding.
* **MSHA:** Lauren explained proposed revisions to The Homeless Solutions Rule and the ESG funding formula as follows:

45 % Operations Share: Bed counts will come from the P G and A with built in accountability.

45% Stabilization Share: Payments will be based retrospectively with 4 quarterly payments.

10% Performance Share: Will be based on six month cycles of data quality maintenance.

A draft of the revisions will be presented to the CoC in September, a public hearing on September 20th followed by a public comment period. The amount of funding the Federal government will provide for ERA will determine how long the program will run. If additional funding is not granted, the program will conclude at the end of 2022.

**Service Updates:** There was not a service update this month.

**Strategic Discussions: Inflow and Outflow** With the mention of exits to permanent Housing being 90% lower in April 2022 than in 2021**,** the unknown status of ERA and cold weather approaching,this month’s strategic discussion encompassed the need for warming centers and the growing number of encampments. The City of Biddeford is looking into viable options for a warming center. A shelter at the South Parish Congregational Church is planned to be open from November through April, as an overnight warming center from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. BAHS will reopen its warming center for the 5th year. Teague added the following to the chat: *Just as a reminder, I do weekly policy e-mail updates on low-income issues. If you'd like to be added to my distribution list, please e-mail me at teague\_morris@king.senate.gov.* Beverly let folks know that True Colors United and Youth Point Source has some wonderful videos about certain activities and topics related to homelessness. For more information about shelter villages and managed communities, Donna Alger suggested joining her group, Bangor Friends of Affordable Housing and

Penobscot County Cares.

General agreement over the fact there is too high a demand for the amount of available services. The discussion ended with a reminder providers can connect with Emergency Management Services.

**New Business**

* The Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter Walk to end Homelessness, either in person or virtually will be held on September 24th at 9 am. The link to register and donate was shared in the chat.
* World Homeless Day is on Monday October 10th.

**The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 11, 2022.**