

ESAC Emergency Meeting about Portland Shelter Licensing 3/8/21

Attendees:

Name	Organization		Name	Organization
Anna Brewer	Preble Street/HVJ		Dan Coyne	United Way of Greater Portland
Jim Devine	Homeless Voices for Justice		Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors
Ben Strick	Spurwink		Mary Cook	Opportunity Alliance/PATH
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland		Norm Maze	Shalom House
Ben Martineau	Homeless Voices for Justice		Oliver Bradeen	Milestone
Brain Townsend	Amistad		Rob Liscord	Maine Equal Justice
Cullen Ryan	CHOM		Peter McLaughlin	People's Housing Coalition
Donna Yellen	Preble Street			

- Dan began the meeting by asking whether we should consider this issue for action without having gone back to other attendees of prior ESAC meetings and without having done more community engagement. The group decided to consider the issue.
- Conclusion from sub-group on shelter licensing: ESAC should oppose the proposed shelter licensing ordinance
 - Despite the work that has been put into the draft ordinance so far, that does not mean that the City should go forward with the licensing
- Points on why we are opposing ordinance from sub-group:
 - Demonizes people experiencing homelessness (focuses on criminal aspects, rather than the needs of clients)
 - Arbitrary limits on number of beds and spacing between shelters
 - No real system for grandfathering in existing shelters, which threatens the operations of existing shelters
 - 1987 city decree to that “there shall be no one experiencing homelessness outside in the City of Portland”
- Sub-group presented draft letter to the HHS Committee in opposition to the shelter licensing

Motion: To submit the draft letter on behalf of ESAC to the Health and Human Services Committee

- *Every organization in attendance voted in favor, with two abstentions from the City and United Way*
- HVJ will submit to HHS Committee on behalf of ESAC