

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes October 15th, 2009

<i>Bob Duranleau</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
<i>Dee Clarke</i>	Preble Street Homeless Voices for Justice
<i>Doug Gardner</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Service Department
<i>Cindy Namer</i>	MaineHousing
<i>Nancy Berg</i>	2-1-1 Maine
<i>Alex Thorn</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Healthcare for the Homeless
<i>Mike Russell</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Public Health Division
<i>Aaron Geyer</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
<i>Angela Havlin</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept, Social Services Div, HPRP
<i>Josh O'Brien</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept, Social Services Div, Oxford Street Shelter for Men
<i>Jon Bradley</i>	Preble Street
<i>Kendra Danse</i>	Youth Alternatives Ingraham
<i>Ginny Dill</i>	Shalom House
<i>Jeff Tardif</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept, Social Services Div, Family Shelter
<i>Beth Eilers</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Healthcare for the Homeless
<i>Christina Griffin</i>	Preble Street Women's Shelter
<i>Susan Baxter</i>	Avesta Housing
<i>Aaron Shapiro</i>	Cumberland County
<i>Linda Janson</i>	MAPS Shelter Services
<i>Amy Regan</i>	Preble Street Homeless Voices for Justice
<i>Leah Bruns</i>	PROP
<i>Jennie Soares</i>	Preble Street – HPRP
<i>Kathy Pratt</i>	Maine Department of Health & Human Services, ICM Program
<i>Donna Yellen</i>	Preble Street
<i>Kimberly Curry</i>	United Way
<i>Andrea Gardner</i>	PROP
<i>Sister Miriam Callnan</i>	McAuley Residence
<i>Daniella Cameron</i>	Preble Street Lighthouse Shelter
<i>Diane Geyer</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Healthcare for the Homeless
<i>Stacy Carpenter</i>	Youth Alternatives Ingraham – The Bridge
<i>Amy Grommes Pulaski</i>	City of Portland, Planning & Development Dept., Housing & Neighborhood Services
<i>Silver Shea</i>	Family Crisis Services
<i>Heather Treadwell</i>	Family Crisis Services
<i>Cullen Ryan</i>	Community Housing of Maine (CHOM)
<i>Susannah Harnden</i>	Youth Alternatives Ingraham
<i>Missy Leeman</i>	Milestone Foundation
<i>Tom Allan</i>	Milestone Foundation
<i>Elizabeth Szatkowski</i>	Youth Alternatives Ingraham
<i>Heather Rhoda</i>	Frannie Peabody Center
<i>Mary-Ellen Welch</i>	Midtown Community Policing
<i>Dan Knight</i>	Portland Police Department
<i>Lori Martin</i>	PROP

I. Introductions

Bob Duranleau, ESAC Tri-Chair, welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made. Bob reviewed changes in the agenda and added Homeless Voices for Justice (HVJ) to the beginning of the agenda due to the fact HVJ staff had to leave early to prepare for the TABOR Rally. Also, Sheldon Wheeler was unable to attend the today's meeting. He will attend the November meeting.

II. Housing Replacement Ordinance – Amy Regan & Dee Clarke

Amy attended the City Council Housing Committee meeting regarding the Housing Replacement Ordinance. She stated that the building located at 660 Congress Street has been purchased and will be used for an arts project, but in turn will be removing housing from the market. Amy asked that ESAC take a position on the Housing Replacement Ordinance. The Housing Replacement Ordinance states that when there is a development that will take rental housing off the market in Portland the purchaser must replace the units or put money into a housing replacement fund so rental housing in Portland remains consistent. The 660 Congress Street development is currently being considered for exemption from the ordinance. The building's original building plan had two (2) family units; however the building's floor plan is for seven (7) units. If the new owners were to replace the units within the building itself they would only have to replace the two (2) units on the building's original plan; however, if they decide to replace the units in another location or put money into a housing replacement fund they would have to replace seven (7) units. Heather asked how much money they would have to put into the fund. Amy stated that they would have to replace \$57,000 per unit. The stipulations of the ordinance state that if the project is considered special merit, and meets a comprehensive plan, then it can be considered exempt. Amy stated that with homelessness on the rise now is not the time to be removing seven (7) housing units and not replacing them. The Housing Committee heard over an hour of public comment, and the issue has been passed on to the City Council. Amy stated that two (2) counselors are for passing the exemption and one (1) is against it. Heather asked which counselors voted for the waiver. Amy stated that John Coyne and David Marshall voted to pass the ordinance exemption. She is hopeful that they can encourage other city counselors to vote against this waiver. Currently there is a 3.6% vacancy rate in rental housing; those in favor of the exemption from the ordinance suggest that this number reflects the fact that there is enough rental housing in Portland. Those against the waiver disagree and stated that 3.6% is not enough. Tom asked how much of the rental stock 3.6% represents. Amy stated that she does not have this information. The building's developer is arguing that a massive amount of money would have to be put into renovations due to the condition of the building. The building has been vacant for two (2) years as it has not been up to code and it would cost too much money to get it up to code. Amy stated that stipulations such as the developer's argument are written into the ordinance. The Ordinance speaks to the condition of the building not being a consideration, as highlighting the poor condition of the building would unintentionally deter buyers. Amy stated that the developer's idea is great, but exemption is not beneficial and should not be passed. The issue with the building is pitting the arts and housing against one another. However, the Ordinance allows for the arts, housing, and historic preservation to exist harmoniously and symbiotically. Donna mentioned that they feel there are different arrangements that can be made so that the end result benefits everyone. She stated that the developers came to ask for this waiver without preparing a budget, which is widely unheard of. Additionally, the counselors asked if the developers had looked into historic tax credit financing for aid; however, they opted not to pursue that kind of assistance. Jon proposed to make a motion for ESAC to take a stand against this exemption and support the enforcement of the Housing Replacement Ordinance. The majority of present ESAC members voted in favor of enforcing the ordinance. Amy and Heather offered to write the letter from ESAC, and Bob stated that he would have the ESAC letter completed prior to the Monday, October 19th City Council Meeting.

Dee and Amy mentioned that there is a General Membership meeting at Preble Street this morning where they will be making anti-TABOR signs for the rally at Lobsterman Park (in front of the Nickelodeon Theater) today. Currently the polls indicate TABOR leading. She added that the Governor recently stated that the State must make budget cuts and that it is need of more revenues. If TABOR passes it would prevent increased revenues, thus keeping the State on the same track of little to no resources. Beth asked what advertizing has been done for the anti-TABOR campaign. Cullen mentioned that TABOR has a great deal more advertizing campaigns, but www.maineandobetter.org is a resource for those opposed to TABOR.

III. *September Bed Usage Statistics – Bob Duranleau*

Bob reviewed the monthly shelter statistics for September 2009:

	<u>September 2008</u>	<u>September 2009</u>
Adolescents	8 Individuals	11 Individuals
Adults	232 Individuals	251 Individuals
Families	<u>76 Individuals (30 Families)</u>	<u>81 Individuals (30 Families)</u>
Total	316 Individuals	343 Individuals

Adolescent Shelter

The total adolescent bed nights for September 2008 were 262 while the total bed nights for September 2009 were 326. These figures indicate an increase of 64 bed nights, or 24% between September 2008 and September 2009. Sixteen (16) individuals stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

Adult Shelters

Adult Shelter bed nights usage increased by 8% in September 2009 compared to September 2008. Total bed night usage during September 2008 was 6957 while it was 7539 during September 2009, a difference of 582 bed nights.

During the month of September, there were 110 intakes at the Oxford Street Shelter for Men. An Intake or New Arrival is defined as an individual that has not stayed at the Shelter for a period of three (3) months or longer. Based on self-reporting, 54 individuals stated they had never been homeless before in September.

Oxford Street Shelter for Men Support Services team placed 52 individuals into permanent housing, with no individuals returning to the shelter within 90 days of housing placement.

Preble Street Women's Shelter served a total of 126 women during the month of September, including 30 new intakes. Based on self-reporting, 16 of these 30 intakes stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

The Shelter placed 14 individuals into housing, with 1 woman returning.

Family Shelters

There was a total of 2425 bed nights used for all Family Shelters in September 2009 as compared to 2289 bed nights in September 2008. This represents an increase of 6% in Family Shelter bed usage between September 2008 and September 2009.

The Family Shelter placed 20 families for a total of 60 individuals into housing in September.

The Family Shelter received 30 new families (intakes) for a total of 103 individuals in September. Based on self-reporting 13 families for a total of 41 individuals stated they had never been homeless before in September, of these 3 families for a total of 12 individuals were refugees.

Dee asked if anyone had an approximated number of people that sleep outside each night. Josh mentioned that this information is hard to gauge, and that the Point in Time survey is conducted at coldest most inclement time during the year that is not necessarily conducive to the most accurate information on this matter. Bob provided the 2-1-1 Housing/Shelter Calls handout. For Cumberland County there was a total of 450 Housing/Shelter Calls from July – September of 2009, compared to 421 last year, an increase of 7%. Calls for Housing/Shelter in Cumberland County represent 9% of

the total call volume. For all Counties there was a total of 1,269 Housing/Shelter Calls from July – September of 2009, compared to 1,162 last year, an increase of 9%. Call for Housing/Shelter in all Counties represent 8% of the total call volume. Nancy stated that there was a huge spike in people losing their housing and not being able to pay their mortgages, and in turn expects the number of Housing/Shelter Calls to be on the rise.

IV. *Homelessness Prevention & rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) Updates –*

Angela mentioned that they have been working with the HPRP team a great deal to get ready to begin seeing clients. She stated that HPRP will have a table at the Fall Homeless Outreach Housing Opportunities & Resources Fair tomorrow, Friday, October 16th. The plan is for a few staff members to man a table, providing information to those attending the fair, and for the remaining staff to be conducting initial screenings at the HPRP offices located at 194 Lancaster Street. Angela mentioned that they will be completing trainings next week with MaineHousing, and beginning the week of the 26th they will begin open hours from 8:30-9:30 a.m. with the Preble Street HPRP staff and 5:00-6:00 p.m. with the Social Services Division HPRP staff. Currently, they are attempting to figure out what times will work the best for holding open hours. Additional times will be open for consumers at the Oxford Street Shelter for Men and the Preble Street Women’s Shelter. HPRP program flyers were handed out. Please see contact Angela Havlin or Jennie Soares for additional flyers. The HPRP Referral Hotline opens tomorrow, Friday, October 16th. The hotline will be updated continuously to reflect up-to-date hours. Additionally, the HPRP program will be presenting at November 18th Mainstream Resources training. If anyone has any questions about the program please contact Jennie or Angela or call the information line: (207) 828-4774

V. *Fall Homeless Outreach Housing Opportunities & Resources Fair – Doug Gardner*

Fall Homeless Fair: Bob mentioned that the Fall Homeless Outreach Housing Opportunities & Resources Fair is from 1:00-4:00 p.m. tomorrow, Friday, October 16th in the Salvation Army rear parking lot, accessible via Oxford Street between Elm Street and Cedar Street. Flyers for the fair were handed out. Vickey added that there will be over thirty (30) providers participating in the fair, and asked that everyone get the word out to stimulate greater consumer attendance. She mentioned that there will be food, coffee, and hot chocolate for all attendees. Josh stated that they have backpacks, socks, gloves, and other giveaways for consumers participating in the event. They hope for a large turnout, and thanked everyone for their help in putting the event together. Kendra thanked Vickey and those involved in planning the event.

VI. *Emergency Shelter Overflow – Committee Report – Bob Duranleau & Josh O’Brien*

Bob stated for the past two (2) months numbers have been very high, thus it was decided to develop the Emergency Shelter Overflow Plan. Numbers went down after plan was developed; however having the plan in place prior to its need is beneficial. The overflow plan would require using the soup kitchen area at Preble Street, moving consumers who do not require as much close supervision to the overflow space. With the Women’s Shelter upstairs, Oxford Street staff would be in communication with the Women’s Shelter staff to make arrangements for opening up the overflow space. Mats and other supplies would be transported using the new Oxford Street Vehicle, and the overflow shelter would be operational in one half hour should the need arise. Due to high volume and the possible need to utilize the overflow plan, Oxford Street staff is encouraging people to arrive at the shelter earlier, as they cannot put the Emergency Shelter Overflow Plan in place at 1:00 AM, when they have been seeing the highest numbers, as it would be difficult to call in staff for coverage. The shelter is encouraging consumer to come to the shelter around the 9:00-11:00 p.m. time frame in order to ensure adequate staffing can be made available should the need for the overflow plan arise.

VII. *H1N1 – Shelter Best Practices – Mike Russell –*

Mike handed out an overview of H1N1 basics, covering different statistics and practices. He provided another handout from the Center for Disease Control’s (CDC) website, offering the newest

guidance for shelters regarding precautions. Mike stated that currently Maine is seeing regional activity regarding H1N1, remaining one step below widespread. Bates College had an H1N1 outbreak, expecting a total of at least 100 cases, with approximately seven (7) cases already confirmed. Mike stated that three quarters ($\frac{3}{4}$) of all H1N1 cases in Maine have been individuals age twenty-five (25) and under. As far as isolation of H1N1 cases goes, is only truly effective for the first few cases, and only for a few couple weeks at most. The CDC and other providers are continuously coming out with new guidance on masks. Currently there is a lot of conflicting information regarding the use and types of masks and their effectiveness. There is a widespread shortage of masks, both the paper surgical and the N-95 respirator masks; even EMTs and hospitals are experiencing this shortage. Dee stated that she has heard that only certain masks work. Mike stated this is the information that is out there. Some say paper surgical masks aren't as effective as N-95 masks, while others say that the N-95 masks are uncomfortable and hard to wear. Different groups are recommending different things in regards to preventative equipment. The CDC is trying to encourage people to use protective measures, such as masks, as a last resort. There is a hierarchy of preventative steps for H1N1: first, eliminating potential exposures, next is engineering controls such as partitions for screenings, administration control such as encouraging use of sick time policies for those who are experiencing symptoms, and the last measure is utilizing protective equipment. It was asked when the H1N1 vaccines will be available. Mike stated that they are scheduled to be here in a few weeks; however they will only be available for priority groups at first. Priority groups include: pregnant women, healthcare workers, individuals twenty-four (24) and under, adults with preconditions, caregivers for children less than six (6) months old, emergency service providers and healthcare workers in hospitals. It was asked why H1N1 effecting people under age twenty-five (25). Mike stated that currently there isn't an exact answer as to why this is the case. Prevention methods have become challenging as different information and guidance is released daily. As more information becomes available they will be updating the CDC H1N1 website. The H1N1 virus is a moving target right now, but the CDC is at least monitoring it and getting new information on a daily basis. Beth mentioned that the flu vaccine given out this Friday at the Fall Homeless Outreach Housing Opportunities & Resources Fair is for the seasonal flu not H1N1.

VIII. Other Business –

Bob mentioned that there is a CoC meeting tomorrow, Friday, October 16th from 9:00 - 11:00 AM with Anne Gass, for a work session discussing Exhibit 1, and encourages CoC members to attend.

Silver stated that Family Crisis Services is moving on November 9th, and that there is an Open House from 4:00-6:00 p.m. on Thursday, October 29th. She added that they are very excited for the move. They will have the same number of beds; however, the location is larger with there will be additional space to spread the beds out more. The new location will allow for common areas, information sessions, bringing in community based providers as well as networking.

Amy Grommes Pulaski stated that this year is another five (5) year consolidated planning year. She stated that they will be setting priorities for the next five (5) years. They have started working with the homeless section. She added that the housing plan is taking a more regional approach, working with Cumberland County. She will be sending information to Bob to see if any ESAC members would like to involved in the process.

Beth mentioned that Healthcare for the Homeless has primary care available every day for consumers. There is no longer an extended waiting period. She added that they have Psychiatric and Mental Health practitioners available as well. They offer open access, for adults only, Thursday mornings from 8:00-11:30 a.m.

Aaron mentioned that a group of people went to Augusta for the MaineCare public hearings. He asked if ESAC wanted to draft a letter eliminating the one (1) case manager rule, extending the

transition time out of the shelter, and changing the fifteen (15) minute billing increments. They would like to propose that homeless persons receive exemption from the TCM rule change, so they don't have to choose between housing or mental health case management. Everyone was in agreement to draft a letter supporting these changes. Cullen added that there is strength in numbers, stating that it would be even more beneficial if the individual agencies weigh in as well. Elizabeth added that anyone can go on the website and comment as a public citizen. The comment period ends on Friday, October 23rd at midnight.

Elizabeth mentioned that another change to the MaineCare rules is the way that Private Non-Medical Institutions (PNMI) is going to be administered. The PNMI change will be the change that affects MaineStay the most, as it initiates a new approval process for entry into the program. Prior to the rule changes APS, a managed care company hired by the State, handled this process. The MaineCare change now has the process run through the Intensive Temporary Residential Treatment Team (ITRT), and since going through ITRT takes such a long time, access is being restricted for homeless youth. Through APS, proving medical necessity was a very timely process, which isn't the case with ITRT. Jon mentioned that staff at the Teen Center is having a difficult time getting individuals into MaineStay because ITRT has become such a barrier. Elizabeth mentioned that they want to advocate to keep MaineStay available and assessable in a timely fashion. She proposed that ESAC draft a proposal for homeless youth to be exempt from these changes so that they can get the services they need without the barriers. All members voted in favor of supporting this initiative. Elizabeth stated that she would draft a letter, and Bob stated that he would have the letter completed prior to the Friday, October 23rd deadline.

Bob mentioned that Sheldon Wheeler will give a presentation on State of Maine housing subsidies at the November 19th meeting.

NEXT MEETING:

Thursday, October 19th, 2009

8:30 – 10am

Refugee Services Area

190 Lancaster Street

Please contact Robert Duranleau, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division at 775-6315, extension 224; John Shoos, United Way at 874-1000, or Dee Clark, Preble Street at 775-0026; if you should have any agenda items for the next meeting.