



MINUTES

Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness

Minutes- April 11, 2024 meeting

Committee Members Attending: Sasha Anastasoff; David Bilodeau; Tim Cowan; Jen Edwards; Elizabeth Fowler; Belinda Gerry; Bonnie Hayes; Bill Lowenstein; Bruce Noddin; Leslie Torkelson; Marianne Veilleux.

Committee Members Excused: Peter Floyd; George Sheats;

Guests Attending (for presentation about the warming center): Kevin Boilard; Linda Scott; Tanya Sands; Kimber Sands; Jamie Caouette; Megan Parks

Meeting Location: Auburn Community Senior Center, 48 Pettengill Park

- Meeting called to order at 6:00pm
- Introductions- committee members, followed by guest presenters
- **6:13 PM – Guests presented about the 2024 Lewiston Warming Center at Calvary Church in Lewiston**
 - Kevin did not have a PowerPoint presentation finalized, but sent along finalized data a few days later (see attached). Kevin verbally highlighted several numbers. I've confirmed these numbers from the Powerpoint provided.
 - Opened on 2/13/24; 32 individuals utilized that night. During the month of February, averaged 47 individuals per night. In March, averaged 64 guests per night. From April 1-10 average guest count was 81. Peak night saw 93 guests. The average over the 8 weeks was 62 guests per night.
 - 241 unique individuals served over the 8 weeks. Of these 109 individuals stayed 10 or more nights, 59 stayed 20+ nights and 32 stayed 30+ nights. Some individuals stayed all 55 nights.
 - Served several couples as well as singles. No children stayed there. They did refer some young people who were eligible based on their age to New Beginnings warming center. They did have 1 family with several children reach out after losing their housing. They were offered space at the warming center but did not utilize the resource.

- **Intake and Outtake forms used to collect information**
 - 62% were chronic homeless (more than 12 months); some of these had been homeless for more than a decade
 - 81% were from the L-A area (based on the question of where they last resided)
 - Ages ranged from 19-to-78 years, with an average age of 45 years. 68% of individuals served were 19-50 years old and 32% were 51-78 yrs old. 13% of the individuals served were 19-30 yrs old.
 - 66% did not have a case manager, but 96 % DID have MaineCare
 - 74% did not have a voucher
 - 70% male, 30% female
 - Where were they staying before the warming center opened? 47% anywhere they could; 32% on the streets, 11% with family/friends; 8% in tents; 2% (other/jail).
 - Note: This may have looked different if the warming center opened earlier in the winter, including the % of individuals in tents.
 - In the "Anywhere I Could" category, locations included may be building hallways, basements, etc.
 - Kevin estimated that 35-45 individuals would be strong candidates for a housing first / ready for an opportunity.

- **Other notes from Kevin's presentation:**
 - Individuals need to be connected and be able to stay connected easily to resources. What PSDIC is doing on Wednesday mornings is helpful, but only available on Wednesday mornings.
 - Tents in Auburn located further away from L-A line/bridge, making the walk to resources over in Lewiston longer.
 - Barriers to housing mentioned included: fear of being alone in there own place (apartment) where they can't have friends stay, chronic homeless high utilizers need more resources and time, and the episodic homeless individuals (referred to as the silent voices in the back) don't always get the support they need to get housed.
 - Issuing no trespasses just moves people from one location to the next. It also creates a barrier because individuals stop trusting police and outreach teams if every time they see them, they are getting issued notices for trespassing.
 - Need to look at year-round solutions.
 - Team running a warming center or shelter needs to be trauma informed, experienced in de-escalation, able to partner well with public safety, practice good neighbor relations (neighborhood clean ups), and understand mental health and substance use challenges.

- **Group is proposing a 24/7 program with stepped levels**
 - Those who have daily living skills and are ready for housing
 - Those who have challenges that need more support. Cannot force services on people, but a 24/7 program could continue to offer resources so the support was available when people request
 - Would have a workforce development component

- **Needs:**
 - A building. Layout matters. Ideally multi-level and/or multi room.
 - Ideal location within a mile of the bridge between the two cities
 - Capacity of 45-50 to make sure wrap around services could be managed well
 - Zoning considerations
 - The group does have a building in mind in Lewiston
 - A coalition to secure funding, to include county and state funding
 - Collaboration with providers in L-A will be critical for success
 - Transportation options
 - Copy of the guest presenters plan for the committee to review, as it had been shared with both cities previously

Guest presenters departed

7:50 PM Review/Approval of minutes for 3/28/24 meeting –

Bill motioned. Bonnie seconded. All in favor.

Questions:

- For an RFP, what would be the scope of services?
- Need estimated cost to set up and run
- What funds (municipal, county, state, feds, private donors) should be looked at?

Meeting adjourned at 8:12pm

