

## Notes from Meeting Five

Thursday, December 17, 2020, 5pm–7pm, Online

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### Attendance

#### Working Group Members Present

- Kathleen Babeu, Social Services Director
- Dana Baldwin, Behavior Health Liaison
- Craig Freshley, Facilitator
- Greg L'Heureux, Finance Director
- Margarita Salguero-Macklin, Resident
- Timothy Sheehan, Police Chief
- Pedro Vazquez, Resident
- James Wilson, Fire Chief

#### Working Group Members Absent

- Aaron Amede, Resident
- April Caricchio, Councilor

### Objectives

- Understand the CAHOOTS model from Eugene, Oregon and the HOME Team model from Portland, Maine.
- Understand the array of organizations currently doing outreach in South Portland.
- Consider outreach best practices.
- Discuss the next meeting and next steps.

### Agenda

- 5:00      **Opening**
- Facilitator Craig Freshley will welcome everyone and explain the Zoom format and Meeting Agenda.
  - Craig will also remind us of some of our guidelines and where we are in the process of fulfilling our charge.
- 5:10      **Beginning to Explore Solutions**
- We will hear a presentation from each of these four people and have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss.

- Perdro Vazquez – The CAHOOTS Model
  - What we can learn from their experience.
  - How we might work with them going forward.
- Dana Baldwin – South Portland Lay of the Land
  - Overview or organizations currently doing outreach in South Portland
  - Dana’s view of the biggest needs
- Joe McNally – The HOME Team (not yet confirmed)
  - What the HOME Team does and how they might help South Portland in the future.
- Adam Rice – Social Services Practitioner (not yet confirmed)
  - What are the keys to successful outreach; in other words, how to approach people and assist them without escalation?

6:45      **Next Meeting Agenda and Future Plans**

- We will discuss and come to some conclusions about next steps.

6:55      **Closing Comments**

- Each member of the Working Group is encouraged to make a brief last comment such as a reflection and/or a hope for the future.

7:00      **Adjourn**

## Opening Remarks

Facilitator Craig Freshley made the following remarks.

- Welcome everyone to the Fifth meeting of the South Portland Police Services Review Working Group, December 17, 2020.
  - My name is Craig Freshley, the Working Group Facilitator
- First some important announcements about how this meeting will work.
  - Please note that this meeting is being recorded and that the recording will be publicly available. Chat comments will also be saved and will be publicly available. However, please don’t expect me to pay attention to chat comments during the meeting.
  - If you are using a nickname or an alias we really appreciate it if you can “rename” yourself so everyone can easily see the actual names of everyone who has joined us today.
  - This meeting has closed captioning available
  - I have posted the Agenda in the Chat and have also posted a link where you can find the full version of the Agenda and several other documents related to this effort.

- Although the general public is invited to watch, this is a meeting of Working Group members and public comments will not be allowed IN this meeting.
  - In the Chat I have posted and email address that anyone can send any comment to.
- To ground us, let's take a look at our charge and where we are in this process.

## Our Purpose

Our purpose is to present the South Portland City Council with recommendations as to whether there should be changes to how certain calls for service are responded to by the City of South Portland.

## Our Duties

As part of its duties, the Working Group shall:

- First answer the following question before embarking on other duties: “There is a perception that some calls for service are escalated into a worse situation due to the response of a uniformed, armed police officer, and that these scenarios could be handled more appropriately by different personnel, such as a social worker. Is there evidence in South Portland that these types of calls result in an escalated response and that the individual(s) in need of assistance do not receive such assistance?” (The Working Group should reach consensus as to what defines an “escalated response”.) Statistics and examples should be used to help answer this question. The response to this question, along with other considerations (i.e. cost savings, relief on stress to police officers, and resident health and welfare) shall serve as the basis for undertaking the following duties:
  - Research other models of providing a response to certain calls for service that either may not require the presence of a police officer or involve both a police officer and other professional, such as a social worker.
  - Evaluate whether these other models would be beneficial and/or necessary in South Portland.
    - If so, provide a recommendation to the City Council. This recommendation should include a review of all options studied; the problem identified in South Portland that is intended to be addressed; the selected option and how it will address the problem identified as existing in South Portland; and an estimate of the associated costs to implement such a program. The recommendation should also provide a measurable outcome(s) for the City to track so that it can evaluate the effectiveness of this new program in addressing the stated problem.
    - If not, provide a review of all options studied and explain why the Working Group believes a problem does not exist or is not likely to exist in South Portland that would necessitate the implementation of such a model.

## Schedule

Black = Dates

Red = Done

Green = To do

Meeting	Date	Tasks
ONE	October 21, 2020	Select facilitator.
TWO	November 17, 2020	Guidelines. Define Escalation.
THREE	December 3, 2020	Look at data and stories for evidence.
FOUR	December 10, 2020	More data and stories to define the problem.
FIVE	December 17, 2020	Beginning to explore solutions.
SIX	January 7, 2021	Consider other models
SEVEN	January 14, 2021	Consider resident health and welfare
NINE	January 21, 2021 (if needed)	Consider cost savings
TEN	January 27, 2021	Consider relief on stress to police officers
COUNCIL	February 16, 2020	Develop recommendations
		Prepare our report

## Guidelines Reminder

- Guidelines are in the Meeting Minutes of November 17, 2020
- All notes are at: <https://bit.ly/3f95eFO>

## Problem Statement

The group discussed the following problem statement (tentatively agreed to at the December 10 meeting) and there seemed to be some momentum around the changes in red. Craig said he would ask the group about this again in the future.

- Intended or not, there are ~~rare~~ instances of escalation when South Portland uniformed officers respond to calls.
  - Sometimes the escalation is due to the prior experiences and/or the emotional state of the resident.
  - Sometimes the escalation is due to ~~mismatched inappropriate~~ deployment due to lack of resources.
  - Sometimes the escalation is due to police response.
  - We have seen no evidence that South Portland police officers deliberately escalate situations and no evidence of inappropriate shows of force.
- It's not reasonable to expect the Police Officers to respond to every social service call. There might not be so much escalation if professionals other than uniformed police didn't respond to every call.
- Needs for crisis response are likely to increase in the face of decreasing support for social services and lack of financial resources among residents.

## Beginning to Explore Solutions

### Pedro Vazquez, Working Group Member

- All about the CAHOOTS model from Eugene, Oregon
- Dispatchers trained to recognize when to send CAHOOTS and when to send police or fire
- CAHOOTS staff are trained in de-escalation and non-violence
- Two staff go at a time – a medical person and mental crisis professional
- CAHOOTS results are very impressive
- CAHOOTS costs \$2.1m annually (relative to \$90m police budget in Eugene)
- The calls that CAHOOTS addressed resulted in fewer police calls and a savings of \$8.5m annually
- CAHOOTS is getting national attention with a potential act of Congress
- Several other cities in the country are reviewing or piloting this model
- CAHOOTS is unique because they think of themselves as a public safety agency
- Chief Sheehan - We have seen in South Portland that the outreach to the hotels relieved city services
- Transportation is a huge need

## Dana Baldwin, Working Group Member

Dana outlined some key outreach services in the City

- City of Portland Patient Care Navigator can offer services in the region including South Portland
  - Needle exchange
  - Education
  - Connecting people with resources
- Amistad
- Maine Access Points
  - Syringe access services
  - Overdose prevention
- Cumberland County Crisis (Opportunity Alliance)
  - Helps with crisis plans

## Kathleen Babeau, Social Services Director

- General Assistance is a band-aid.
- Opportunity Alliance and Preble Street are key resources. Through These Doors. Many others too.
- Housing is a huge need.

## Joe McNally, The HOME Team Director

- If you want to do a ride along, just ask
- The HOME Team started in 2010 to handle layouts and “lifestyle” calls
- Now we are a lot more proactive and do a lot of follow up care
- We had 10850 encounters last month
  - 3100 resulted in some sort of transport
    - Safe place
    - Hospital
    - Medical appointment
- We took 220 calls last year directly from dispatch
- “We’re the cheaper call”
  - For certain types of calls we are must more cost effective than a traditional police car or firetruck response
- A lot of times people just need a smile and a sandwich
- When we build rapport with folks they are more likely to ask for help
- We believe in helping someone get what they think they need
- Sometimes we have an NP and sometimes a psychiatric NP
  - This allows us to offer real medical care
- We see every person as a person – rooted in dignity, compassion, and love

- We could design a great approach but if people don't know about it or how to call, they won't
  - We work with businesses to help us with publicity
- We charge the city but we also got \$114k last year from CDBG
- HOME Team Annual budget is about \$250k
  - Most of our expenses are salaries and benefits

### Adam Rice, Peer Support Specialist

- Adam shared the benefit of prevention and relationships
- Adam has worked with many others to perform a "mutual aid effort"
- We are constantly collecting blankets, coats, hats and gloves
- We find it useful to collaborate with that community to find solutions for them
- Sometimes there are escalated responses in institutions such as hospitals
- Working to help youth before homelessness becomes chronic is critical
- Filling little needs can be so helpful
- Also, education about communicable diseases is important
  - We make sure people are using needles safely
- More funding is needed for scholarships
- Would be good to facilitate even more collaboration and prioritizing across the community
- We are setting good examples here in South Portland
- Advice
  - Listening
    - These are people who just want to be heard
  - Establish relationships
    - Involve the community in crafting solutions

### Discussion

- Marvel at the amount of goodness in our community
- We also need to look at 24/7 care, not just emergency care
  - Portland has a 24/7 shelter
- There always has to be a safety net
  - And the safety net needs a safety net
- We could have a 24/7 crisis care center
  - Like an urgent care with access to professionals who could help with all types of needs
    - Even help with filling out applications
    - Provide a place for observation
  - Such a center would be very expensive
- The population that CAHOOTS serves is about the same population as Cumberland County
- It would be good if we could get grant funding like CDBG

- Perhaps we should engage the hospitals as partners because they see a significant benefit from services such as HOME Team and CAHOOTS
- Could connect with UBER Health
- We are already paying the price of not meeting these needs
  - We are losing people because their needs are going unmet
- CAHOOTS offers a workshop for \$125
- Something we don't talk about enough is the trauma that first responders experience
- We should challenge the residents of South Portland to get fully behind this
  - People wouldn't mind paying more taxes

## Next steps

- Ride-Alongs
  - With The HOME Team are encouraged
    - Contact Joe
  - Ride-along with police officers are not possible right now due to COVID
    - "Although usually we're all about ride-alongs."
- Idea to set up a CAHOOTS interactive workshop
  - Pedro will look into
    - When are they booking?
    - How many people are needed to make a workshop meaningful?
- Chances of the HOME Team going 24/7?
  - Our detox is 24/7 but otherwise we don't get too much call for 24/7
  - If there was a need we could provide that service
- Adam Rice is happy to talk further with anyone
- People would love to participate in crafting solutions
  - Involve "clients"
  - This point is critical
    - We need to assess the need directly
- We have to dig in
  - We need a needs assessment
  - What needs to be built?
  - What type of calls/services?
  - Who would run it?
  - Who would fund it?

## Closing Comments

- Thanks to the guests
- Outreach to indigenous community and immigrant community is critical
- Thanks to Joe and Adam

- We have talked about getting more positions like Dana's
- Next meeting on January 7
- Happy Holidays everyone!

## Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:00pm

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## Chat

Here is the record of Chat from the meeting:

17:16:02 From Adam Rice, Peer Support Specialist, Guest To All Panelists : what about ineffective?

17:56:59 From Joe McNally, The HOME Team Director, Guest : jmcnally@milestone-recovery.org

18:44:32 From sascha braunig : To the finance director: there was also a discussion of state funding at the city council meeting with state legislators

18:59:41 From James Wilson - Fire Chief To All Panelists : (Meant this for everyone) I concur with Chief Sheehan that we need to find a way to get the HOME team into SP as an everyday option.

19:03:13 From Adam Rice, Peer Support Specialist, Guest To All Panelists : thanks!! if we can help with the needs assessment at all, id love to. im reachable at whitefawkes3@protonmail.com or 2073324533