

Maine Recovery Council

October 10, 2024

Meeting of the Maine Recovery Council

October 10, 2024

Chair Kimball began the meeting by reminding Council members that their terms end on November 21st, and that all members will need to reach out to the person who nominated them to request reappointment or inform the appointer that they will not be seeking a second term.

Councilwoman Crafts made a motion to pass the September Council minutes as written, which was seconded by Councilman Smith. The motion passed 10-0-2.

AAG O'Neil reported to the Council about ongoing contracts. He provided a copy of the SSP redline contract for members to review. He reported that he, Mary, and the AG staff attended a meeting with the SSP providers last week to get feedback on the contracts. He was asked to make the language clearer around flex funding, specifically that flex funding could be used to purchase buildings or vehicles. The providers further requested that the language surrounding deliverables be reduced to broaden the uses of the money being allocated to the SSP. AAG O'Neil shared that his current goal is to have a solid contract template for SSPs completed in the coming days to circulate for review, noting that SSPs may need up to 30 days to review. He added that the reporting requirements in the contract still need some work to clarify how exactly the SSPs will report.

Related to contracts, the Council addressed the question of whether providers/organizations are expected to spend their full allocation within the two-year term of the contract. The Council came to a consensus that the organization spend the funds as needed, and if there is money left over at the end of the contract it should be returned to the Council unless the provider has made an explicit request to extend the contract term.

The number of sites managed by Needlepoint Sanctuary were reviewed. It was agreed there were 19 locations and each would be funded at \$75,000 (Vinsel/Ouellette, 14-0).

The Executive Committee met and reported out their recommendations. The first was for a contract extension for Mary Coyne effective November 1 to January 10 with an increase of \$4.00/hour and that in the interim the position of Coordinator would be restructured. The second recommendation concerned how to help Mary navigate on-boarding new Council members and restructuring her position. After discussion, the first recommendation was approved (Blackwell-Moore/Vinsel, 14-0). This necessitated a second motion to increase the Coordinator's line by \$8000 to cover the increase (Smith/Crafts, 14-0).

Pat then suggested working with Sara Yasner, who could provide coaching services. The commitment would be for 3-4 months at a rate not to exceed \$7740.00. Reservations were expressed. This was quick and Council members knew others who could provide the services. There was general agreement that

his was a quick turnaround, but there was a need to move forward. The motion to contract for executive coaching services with Sara Yasner was approved (Vinsel/Crafts, 12-2).

Mary presented the Coordinator's Report. She explained the progress she has made in organizing evaluations of the grants due October 25. She described the process of finding external evaluators and involving Council members through an on-line portal. After considerable discussion, it was determined to refer this to the Programs and Grants Committee and utilize their October 29 meeting for that purpose.

Pat moved the meeting along to this indirect cost policy. Ben explained that the Finance Committee could use the federal approved rate, the diminimus rate or a rate that had been negotiated with DHHS for unallocated costs. The diminimus rate of 10% would be capped at 15%. The motion to accept the Finance Committee's indirect proposal was accepted (Smith/Blackwell-Moore, 11-1).

Next was a presentation from the Prevention workgroup, headed by Liz Blackwell-Moore. The goal, she explained, was to provide recommendation for prevention funding priorities. Their vision included more than the standard definition of prevention as the act of stopping something. There ought to be opportunities for thriving, understanding the why and how or opioid use, identifying risk factors, layers of toxic stress. They advocated for a whole community approach of culturally relevant strategies that would lead to increased resilience. There is a lack of long-term sustainable funding for substance use prevention in the public perception. While assets were identified, gaps were also. One strategy recommendation was to extend the time to spend down the new funding. One to two years was not sufficient, four to five years was recommended. Funding directed at 18-25 year olds is needed, there is nothing allocated at this time to do the work.

The Council's reaction to the presentation was very positive. Gordon expressed a concern that a prolonged application process would not be helpful. Courtney said getting onto college campuses would be a good step as well as talking across the pillars already identified. Liz said there were models.

Pat reported the bylaws public meeting would be held in November and asked about Council membership. Three members have already indicated they would not be continuing: Dr. Kinna Thakerer, Rep. Lydia Crafts and Deputy Chief Eric Small. Others were asked to indicate their preference soon.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 pm.