



THE CITY OF AUGUSTA

MARK S. O'BRIEN, MAYOR

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To: Task Force Members, Council, and City Manager
From: Mark S. O'Brien, Mayor, City of Augusta *MSO*
Date: August 15, 2024
Re: Establishment of the Augusta Task Force on Homelessness

Pursuant to my authority to appoint members to ad hoc committees, this memorandum serves to establish the City of Augusta Task Force on Homelessness.

The City of Augusta Task Force on Homelessness is created for the purpose of establishing a program that coordinates services for the unhoused in Augusta. The Task Force on Homelessness will be a team of appointed individuals, agency representatives and stakeholders brought together to work in coordination with one another to improve the efficiency and delivery of services to our unhoused population.

The City of Augusta will participate and share in the financial support of the Task Force on Homelessness.

A facilitator will be hired to:

1. Identify and invite all the stakeholders to the meetings.
2. Interview all the stakeholders to determine what they have to offer.
3. Facilitate the meetings to:
 - a. Inventory services;
 - b. Identify gaps in services;
 - c. Develop a sustainable service and housing plan;
 - d. Recommend short-term, medium-term, and long-term strategies to implement;
 - e. Identify current and potential funding sources; and
 - f. Produce a document that will be a strategic plan to improve the unhoused situation in the greater Augusta area, which document will be shared with the City of Augusta, Kennebec County, Maine State Housing, the Department of Human Services, and others.

I have selected Wick Johnson to chair the task force. The task force will be staffed primarily by Amanda Bartlett of Developers Collaborative as the group's facilitator. She will be assisted by research intern Oscar Herrera, a second-year student at Brown University studying Economics and Urban Studies.

The following individuals are hereby appointed as task force members (note that service providers will be engaged in the process in roles outside of task force membership):

- Wick Johnson, Chair
- Earl Kingsbury, Director of Community Services, City of Augusta
- Patsy Crockett, Kennebec County Commissioner
- Michael Frett, Hallowell City Councilor
- Nancy Fritz, Retired-Former Governor's Director of Homeless Initiatives and Director of the Statewide Homeless Council
- Nicole Frydrych, Maine Homeless Response System Coordinator
- Justin Healey, Recovery representative
- Matthew Kennedy, Maine Bureau of Veterans' Services
- Steven McDermott, Regional representative from Winthrop, currently working for The Genesis Fund (formerly served in the Governor's Office and at MaineHousing working on recovery housing and homelessness)
- Sen. Matt Pouliot, Pouliot Real Estate
- Jon Reynolds, Mobilize Recovery
- Jennifer Riggs, CEO, MaineGeneral Community Care
- Ehrin Simanski, Lisa's Legit Burritos

Relying upon broad community and stakeholder input, the charge to the task force is to inventory existing services, identify gaps in services, research best practices, and to pull recommendations and strategies into a usable plan document that includes potential sources of funding and that leads to successful outcomes for people experiencing homelessness in our area.

The task force shall establish the times and places of its meetings. Meetings shall be open to the public and notice of such meetings shall be posted. The task force may invite such others as may be knowledgeable about subjects under discussion to provide information for its consideration.

The tentative schedule is as follows:

- August: Introductions/Work Plan Adoption/Needs Data
- September: Public Input Month- Listening Sessions throughout the month
Concerns/Issues/Ideas
- October: What we learned in August/Inventory/Gap Analysis/Themes
- November: Best Practices - Research and Presentations
- December: Recommend No Meeting Due to Holidays - Work Continues on Strategy/Plan Document
- January: Draft Strategy Discussion
- February: Regional Input - Local/Regional/State Perspectives and Potential Funding
- March: Final Plan