

**Town of Brunswick, Maine**  
**Shelter Task Force**  
**Wednesday, May 2, 2018**  
**4:00 - 6:00 PM**  
**85 Union Street - Room 206**

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**Meeting Minutes**

- Task Force:** Councilor James Mason (Chair), Councilor Kathy Wilson, and Councilor Alison Harris
- Staff:** John Eldridge, Jared Woolston
- Others Present:** Jane Millett, Councilor; Gif Jamison, Director of Operations at Tedford Housing; Courtney Neff, NorthWest Brunswick Neighborhood Association; Doug Morrell, past board member of Tedford; Craig Phillips, Executive Director of Tedford Housing; Clark Labbe, resident; MaryBeth Burbank, NorthWest Brunswick Neighborhood Association; Patricia Richter, NorthWest Brunswick Neighborhood Association; Carl Richter, NorthWest Brunswick Neighborhood Association

There is a newly created webpage for this group through a link on the Town's homepage. John Eldridge will post the charge of the Task Force, minutes, list of members, meeting schedule and other documents.

John Eldridge stated that the first item that they were tasked with was to purpose of this meeting was to create a definition of "shelter" by working with ordinances from various towns around the state, including Portland and Lewiston, and other documents..

Chair Mason arrived at 4:12 pm.

**Chair Mason:** We will start with a definition for our ordinances by seeing what others have done, to start getting an idea about the types of uses that are going to be in the town. Our goal is to propose a working definition. After creating a definition, we can think about how it will be applied to the town. The answers we get there may change our definition.

The Task Force would like more information on comparable towns, and would like to read their ordinances and any information on the process of creating them. They request that all information be added to their website. They would like John to check with Maine Municipal Association (MMA) for resources.

The Task Force invited Craig Phillips, Executive Director of Tedford Housing, to give a presentation about the history, current buildings and plans of his organization. Mr. Phillips presented 2 (two) documents; the first was a 2013 research project by the Board of Directors, and the second document includes answers to questions proposed to them by the Pleasant Hill Neighborhood Group.

Mr. Phillips and Mr. Jamison provided information and responded to questions that had been provided previously by the Pleasant Hill Neighborhood Group. He also responded to questions from the Task Force.

Kathy Wilson asked if surrounding towns, whose residents had used Tedford's facilities, have contributed to Tedford's upkeep. Mr. Phillips responded that currently they receive funds in the range of \$500 from Arrowsic, Bowdoin, Georgetown, Harpswell, Phippsburg and Woolwich, as well as "in kind" services from Brunswick such as public safety services. Tedford has not approached the towns of Topsham and Bath since 2011, although of the total numbers at the shelter, Brunswick has 30%, Bath has 25%, and Topsham 18%. The places mentioned above each have only 3-6% of residents. Kathy Wilson wanted to clarify that a greater number of people came from Bath, Topsham and Portland, and asked if those towns had been approached for funding, or to participate in the plan. Mr. Phillips responded that they had not been approached in the last 6 (six) years. He would guess that part of that is because there is not a lot of money to be tapped into there, and they would best use their time writing applications for various foundations' support, and they receive around \$100,000 yearly, including \$70,000 - \$80,000 from United Way.

Jim Mason asked why the organization was in Brunswick. Mr. Phillips responded that they had been in Brunswick for 30 (thirty) years, and for what resources do exist, they exist in Brunswick. There are agencies, churches, schools, healthcare, restaurants and organizations that they are involved with and have relationships with. This is a service center. Sweetser and Midcoast Health are here to provide behavioral health and inpatient crisis care.

#### **Public Comment:**

**Jane Millett**, Councilor District 6, asked if Tedford also had funding from the Cumberland County Commissioners, which Mr. Phillips stated is correct. She also wondered what the impact of Tedford's population is on the schools and the school budget, and what would it be going forward with the size and facilities that they're proposing. Mr. Phillips responded that he cannot give a researched answer, but that most of the families they are working with are already going to schools in the three-area district. Ms. Millett asked if they stay in the same district, and if not, if the schools are required to transport them to another district. Alison Harris responded that where a child starts the school year is where they spend the school year, so that is required of the school district. Mr. Jamison corroborated that information.

**MaryBeth Burbank**, NorthWest Brunswick Neighborhood Association, asked the Task Force if Brunswick's Comprehensive Plan recommended anything relative to this issue. Alison Harris stated it is addressed in the Comprehensive Plan, but minimally. Jared Woolston said it talks about diverse housing as a planning goal, and included a statistic about homelessness around the 2008 time frame, but doesn't discuss it in a geographical sense. It is contained in Policy Area 5. They talk about the growth area, but not any specific zoning district.

**Jane Millett**, Councilor District 6, wanted to clarify, that with the number of beds Tedford is proposing, and asked whether they would be the largest shelter in Maine. Mr. Phillips said he believed Waterville would be comparable, and certainly Portland. Their current proposal has 30 (thirty) single, adult beds and, 12 (twelve) units for families, which have 4

(four) beds each. He believes this is close to the Waterville number. The original plan for the family units had 6 (six) beds per unit. The final number is subject to input.

**Courtney Neff**, NorthWest Brunswick Neighborhood Association, was surprised when Mr. Phillips mentioned that these are our neighbors and immediate neighbors, that among the singles, over a 3-year period of time, 25% were from Brunswick and 37% were from other Maine towns or outside of Maine. Mr. Phillips responded that it was not unusual, and what they're trying to help people understand that people come to Brunswick usually for a job or family, and circumstances somehow change which results in becoming homeless. Very few people are coming to Brunswick just for the Cumberland or Federal Street facility. If someone's homeless, it's their mission to serve people.

**Chair Mason** would like to clarify numbers, which are different from the sheet he has. The sheet says 11% of families are from outside of Maine in the last 3 (three) years. Mr. Phillips confirmed that number. Mr. Mason read from his sheet that 11% of singles were also from outside of Maine, and 17% were from other Maine towns.

**Alison Harris** said the numbers depended on how the information was captured.

**Clark Labbe**, Brunswick resident, asked a question, and Mr. Phillips responded.

**MaryBeth Burbank**, NorthWest Brunswick Neighborhood Association, asked Mr. Phillips a question about the possibility of a shelter in Bath. Mr. Phillips mentioned that Bath had wanted to do that several years ago, but Tedford had advised their group and Bath Housing against it, stating that in the shelter business it is difficult raising money, and having enough grants to go around.

**Courtney Neff**, NorthWest Brunswick Neighborhood Association, had a question regarding a statement from the President of the Board of Tedford Shelter at a recent Town Council meeting about each community taking care of their own homeless, and how does this agree with Mr. Phillips statement that Bath was advised not to build its own shelter?

**Chair Mason:** Suggested that the conversation should refocus on facilities.

**Kathy Wilson:** This Task Force will be looking at definitions and Brunswick's zoning of shelters, not the Tedford Shelter.

**Alison Harris:** They are one provider, but we need to speak with more providers.

Jane Millett provided an article about housing and the homeless from the Falmouth Forecaster.

A short discussion relating to questions about the Town's issues of zoning and homelessness, and the Town's financial support, were addressed by John Eldridge.

**Chair Mason:** Goal is to create definitions next week by receiving suggested definitions from John Eldridge, as well as definitions from other towns, before the next meeting to give the Task Force time to review. Mr. Eldridge will talk to MMA about resources.

**Adjourn** The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:00 PM