



City of Auburn, Maine

60 Court Street | Auburn, Maine 04210
www.auburnmaine.gov | 207.333.6601

BOARD/COMMITTEE/WG MEETING MINUTES

Homelessness Committee – Draft Minutes

June 16, 2026 | 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

Auburn Resource Center @ 121 Mill Street, ARC Conference Room

Attending Committee Members: Tim Cowan, Bill Lowenstein, David Bilodeau, Cecilia Natale, Jennifer Eugley, Peggy Walton, Tom Hibbert, Dawn Comeau, Rebecca Austin

Excused Absences: George Sheats, Angela Blier

Attending Ex Officio Members: Jennifer Edwards, Tim Cogle, Sasha Anastasoff, Steve Almquist

Excused Ex Officio Absences: none

Attending Guests: Mayor Jeff Harmon, Lauren Caffé (Auburn's Long Range Planner), Erica West (Spurwink)

Agenda Items

1. Call to order & Review of Agenda – 9:31am
2. Review and approval of 5/17/26 meeting minutes
 - Motion to accept by Bill, 2nd by Celia, all in favor (minus Rebecca, who abstained because of being absent that meeting)
3. Excused Absences of Committee Members for today's meeting – Angela, George
 - Motion by Bill, 2nd by Rebecca, all in favor
4. Review of Auburn Comprehensive Plan's Community and Housing sections with City of Auburn's Long Range Planner, Lauren Caffé. Committee to provide feedback to Lauren
 - Introductions
 - (Dave entered at 9:34)
 - Plan in its final stages; you have a portion of it in front of you today (housing & community sections)
 - Last summer, engaged community with where they thought the City should be in 20 years
 - Each section has goals, policies, objectives & then broken down into actions
 - Comp Plan committee of about 20 people started the brainstorming, then ran by City staff and compared with current/future City plans
 - Seeking the perspective of this committee to note any changes/additions
 - Dave: clarification on H 1.1.5 – does the 1 in 10 housing units meet state definition of



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affordable housing (maybe fine tune wording)

- Jeff: focus on Objective 3 - Eliminate chronic homelessness and rehouse individuals who become unhoused within 90 days
- Sasha: clarify definitions of "homeless" (ie. couchsurfing/doubled-up, which doesn't meet HUD definition of homelessness)
- Rebecca: remember people still in housing that's unsafe but haven't left yet (in our expanded definition of homeless); Jeff: this could fit into "at risk of losing housing"; Lauren: is there a definition of "housing instability"? Rebecca: "unsafe" can refer to a wide range of situations like DV, lead paint, etc.
- Bill: is there a definition of "adequate housing"? Dawn: there are standards of "safe" & "sanitary" to pass a housing quality inspection for someone to be able to live there; also, how many persons per bedroom can be determined by different landlords, housing authorities and vouchers limits
- Tom: what is Auburn's plan for adding housing units? Tim Cowan: Council voted in a resolve last night that includes a goal of 1300 new units by 2030, Com Dev plan focuses in on types of housing, based on the need that was identified in Auburn Housing Needs Assessment
- Jeff: Comp Plan may require an additional objective for people at risk of losing housing and definition of adequate housing ("preventative"); Sasha: brought up that the grant with school dept of preventing homelessness showed that prevention is far less expensive than getting people rehoused
- Dave: also applies to the increased # of elderly folks at DIC because of people being priced out of their housing
- Bill: affordable (subsidies) vs. attainable housing (market rates); Jeff: Comp plan uses language of "cost burden standard"
- 1.3.1 Dave: is this building zoned for emergency warming center? Jeff: City has broad policy for using buildings like APL, Norway Savings Bank Area, etc. in emergency weather situations; City would need to work on where a residential shelter could have an allowable use as a warming/cooling center
- Lauren: Objective 1 being informed by housing study; Objective 2 is zoning/regulatory (identifying growth areas/minimum # of units per area for higher density housing)
- Jeff: Obj 1 & 2 drives expanding # of dwelling units (they're the first ones that fall off, and the need for units is growing)



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- Lauren: anything with an * is required by the state to be part of our Comp Plan
- Bill: in H1.1.7 – what’s the definition of “seniors”? Jeff: driven by definitions that each agency uses (Dawn: generally 62 or older, or meeting the state definition of disabled; but often there’s a building quota that have to be over 62)
- Discussion about “older adults” as a better term than “seniors”
- Lauren: moved on to Community Section, policy #2 (page 68) C 2.1
- Jen Edwards: City did their own assessment, but there are other assessments to consider (like Maine Shared Health Needs Assessment), draw some good data from what’s already available; identify gaps, educate the community about this available data, look at how needs change in 3-year cycles
- Celia: from fall 2026 to spring 2027 is a period of engagement with stakeholders/community groups (sectors & populations) in the process of the assessment (stakeholder forums, listening sessions, focus groups, interviews, community survey distributed, etc.); City should definitely use that data
- Tim Cowan: ideally, get continuous, ongoing feedback from all groups concerned; we generally focus on collecting data at the County level; greater focus on qualitative data as well as quantitative data; school district provides some Auburn-specific data
- Bill: suggestion to include recovery needs (not just substance use treatment) (Dempsey Center focuses on that need well); recovery resources speak to the wellness of a community; Jen Edwards: Healthy Androscoggin/Rowan has some data on recovery needs
- Lauren: add language about the frequency of data collection? Jen Edwards & Celia: it’s always shifting, so maybe not necessary
- Bill: do we name the PIT survey here – should we? Lauren: could add it
- Lauren’s info in case anyone has additional thoughts/questions later: Lauren Caffé, Long Range Planner, (207) 333-6601 x 1334, lcaffe@auburnmaine.gov
- Lauren: students who don’t graduate, how could ASD and other City depts help with needs like housing, employment, etc.
- Celia: young adults needing life skills, can some of these services touch students before they get to the point of dropping out or graduating (life skills class)
- Sasha: a few ethical points, how do we meet these goals when there aren’t enough resources (ie. school counselors/social workers for mental/behavioral health needs); putting a # on our graduation rate (95%) pushes staff to find loopholes to maintain it;



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perhaps change “maintain” to “achieve” by certain measures; mention budgeting to bridge gaps in counselling services (like during the summer)

- Jen Eugley: is the lack of counselors & mental/behavioral health staff/resources a lack of positions funded or not being able to fill those positions? Sasha: both; Jeff: funding positions is only part of it, there can be a philosophical difference about what services should be included in education
 - Steve: are there outside resources to refer students to? Could a program like PSY help fill gaps?
 - Celia: Objective 6 - 1.6.2 & 3, scam education
 - Send any additional comments to Lauren up until July 1
5. Regular update on Auburn Resource Center (Mayor Harmon/Jennifer Edwards)
 - Jeff: Auburn Resource Center Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting (6/18/26) – starting at 1:30pm & Building Hope Documentary Screening & Panel with Spurwink at 3pm – (with popcorn!)
 6. Regular update on Drop-In Center (Jen Eugley) – time didn’t allow
 7. Regular update on Warming Center/Shelter (Dave Bilodeau) – time didn’t allow
 8. Regular update on Auburn Comp Plan (Councilor Cowan) – time didn’t allow
 9. Discussion of any carry-over items from the May meeting – time didn’t allow
 10. Discussion of items for next month’s agenda – time didn’t allow
 11. Public Comment (none)
 12. Motion to adjourn at 11:00am by Bill, 2nd by Tom, all in favor

Resources:

1. Ad-hoc Committee’s report: [Addressing Homelessness in Auburn, Maine](#)
2. 2025 Auburn Housing Study: [PowerPoint Presentation](#)

Upcoming Meetings for Homeless Committee:

- July 21, 2026 9:30 AM – 11 AM



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Homelessness Committee – Subcommittee

06/16/2026

Auburn Resource Center @ 121 Mill Street, ARC Conference Room, 11AM – 12PM

Committee Members Present: Dawn Comeau, Jeff Harmon, Cecilia Natale

Purpose of the subcommittee: The purpose of this subcommittee meeting is to discuss the furnishing needs for the opening of Hampshire Commons.

Notes:

Continued discussions regarding the furnishing needs, fundraising, and procurement strategies for Hampshire Commons

- An account code for the project and a bank account at Androscoggin Bank has been established. Androscoggin Bank Execs put \$15,000 into the account in support of Home For Good.
- Community Development Team working with Grant Manager, Katie Boss, to develop a list of funding sources and will do applications
- Will need to get a loan from Auburn City Council to front the funds so the ordering of furniture can begin
- Action item: Jeff to talk to council about setting aside \$25,000 from undesignated funds; will talk to Carl about doing the same in Lewiston
- Action item: development team and Grant Manager to create a "pitch document" for use when talking to area businesses for support and donation
- Discussed storage units to hold items ahead of being able to get into the units, maybe the new storage facility at the intersection of Center St/Turner St
- Discussed monetary donations from individuals – would it be tax deductible? If people donate directly to the city, then it can't go into the Home For Good account