**Municipal Data Across Sectors for Healthy Aging (M-DASH)**

**City of Eastport**

**Task Force Meeting**

**October 5, 2021 – 10a.m.-12noon**

By Zoom

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86305778054?pwd=eVZ3Y015dUZNZTlpZ2dwR2dtanJ3QT09

Meeting ID: 863 0577 8054

Passcode: 896225

Present: Jess Maurer, Anne Shroth, Larry Clifford, Effie Rorke, Paige Atkinson, Dale Basher, Betsy Fitzgerald, John Freeland, Lynn Rutledge, Cammi Duschene, Jeanne Peacock, Jami Aleksiev, Emily Roscoe, Debbie Pottle, Al May

**Agenda**

**I.** Welcome, Introductions, and Updates

II. Eastport Island Fellow: Paige Atkinson

a. Preliminary Work Plan

Paige Atkinson is drafting a survey/checklist that can be used during energy efficiency assessments (could use some input on this). She’s also developing an outreach plan that will be used to identify eligible participants for a pilot project of approximately five homes.

Remaining questions:

* What is our specific target population? Whom do we need to reach?
* What should our service priorities be?
* What’s the best way of reaching potential pilot project participants?

b. Project Work Group

Who will be Paige’s immediate advisors? This question wasn’t addressed in the meeting, although it was suggested that Kate/Jeanne (primarily) provide input on outreach strategies.

III. Home Repair -- Work Group

Group agrees that we need to convene a formal work group on home repairs; a committee that can further connections/partnerships and determine what’s possible (as a resource for Paige).

Dale Basher informed the group that the U.S. Dept. of Energy has fairly strict guidelines around energy assessments and home repairs. The weatherization program at Downeast Community Partners (DCP) involves both quantitative and qualitative data – a complex process. This analysis really needs to happen before any repairs are made. Dale mentioned that DCP (fiscal agent) is partnering with Maine Seacoast Mission (MSM; volunteer corps) on an existing program that was funded by C.F. Adams Foundation. In this scenario, home repairs are made before any weatherization investments occur.

Dale will speak with DCP’s Executive Director (Rebecca Palmer) about him devoting time/energy to the project (advising the task force, facilitating connections, etc.). If permission is granted, he and Paige will set up a meeting with MSM to talk about collaboration, then establish workflows/processes for expanding MSM’s program into the Eastport area. Paige will then assemble a team (task force) to: 1) recruit volunteers, and 2) identify five pilot sites.

It was pointed out that weatherization projects in Maine typically don’t cover roofs, walls, doors, etc. Potential issues (e.g., a leaking roof or mold) need to be identified and mitigated before any weatherization takes place. Jessica Maurer recommended that we grow slowly; focus on low-hanging fruit, to start (most volunteers/contractors won’t even touch roof work). Addressing easy repairs related to safety (early on) will prevent larger, more expensive problems down-the-road. Dale agrees wholeheartedly.

Dale to come up with a rough estimate of the number of older persons’ homes in the Eastport area that are in need of repair (i.e., those that were “deferred” for weatherization work due to structural issues/problems). There is currently no established/consistent process for making referrals for home repairs due to all of the variables and players involved.

Al May asked if it would be possible to work with students attending Washington County Community College (WCCC) on some combination of housing assessments, energy audits, weatherization/energy improvements, and home repairs. Dale thought this would be helpful, so Larry/Paige will follow up with the Dean of WCCC.

It was decided that Paige should hold off on aggressively recruiting local volunteers for the project until the program is further defined/fleshed out. The first step (if Rebecca signs off on the Dale being involved) is to coordinate a meeting with MSM to discuss the project parameters, including how to house volunteers driving up from Massachusetts and Rhode Island. It was suggested that the best time for scheduling home repairs might be the shoulder seasons of spring and fall.

Lynn Rutledge and others are available to assist with outreach/volunteer recruitment involving area churches and service groups (like the Rotary Club of Calais). Al May raised the question of project supervision…how will we ensure that repairs/improvements are done to-code? It was mentioned that this responsibility typically falls on a sponsoring organization (e.g., Habitat for Humanity) or, in the case of M-DASH, a licensed professional who is recruited for the project.

IV. ETIPP Project – Update

ETIPP is in a bit of a lull at the moment; the real work (implementing a microgrid for Cohort 2 participants) is about to start. Information re: energy loads/energy use should help inform M-DASH weatherization projects. Dale is going to send information re: Revision Energy’s solar energy farm on MDI to Emily Roscoe.

V. Next Steps

Dale to meet with Rebecca on Thursday (October 7) to solicit input on the project and garner a verbal commitment from Downeast Community Partners. (Larry to provide Dale a list of talking points/questions for that conversation).

Larry and Paige will then form a work group for home assessments/repairs, with guidance from Dale and the task force.

Resources:

1. <https://windowdressers.org/>
2. The American Lung Association periodically has a grant program to replace wood burning and pellet stoves with something more efficient/cleaner. They also have referrals for mold remediation. I’m not sure which of these programs are still active but Paige might check?
3. The Rotary in Calais has a history of doing volunteer projects, both locally and internationally.  Charlie McAlpin is the contact person at the Rotary of Calais: cmcalpin@emec.com

Next Meeting: December 7, 10a.m.-12noon