

# **City of Jacksonville**

*1st Floor - Council Chamber  
117 W. Duval Street*



## **Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, September 19, 2019**

**2:00 PM**

**Council Chambers 1st Floor, City Hall**

### **Special Committee on the Opioid Epidemic**

*CM Ron Salem, Pharm.D., Chairman*

*CM Michael Boylan*

*CVP Tommy Hazouri*

*CM Brenda Priestly-Jackson*

*CM Randy White*

*Legislative Assistant: Juliette Williams*

*Research: Colleen Hampsey*

Meeting Convened: 2:04 pm

Meeting Adjourned: 3:50 pm

**1. Call to Order & Introduction of Committee Members - CM Ron Salem**

Councilman Salem welcomed the group, called for introductions and reviewed the agenda. The agenda included an update on Project Save Lives, the Opioid lawsuit, Opioid Trust Fund and overdose trends. Additionally, E-cigarettes and vaping were listed on the agenda in response to recent public health risks associated with usage. CM Hazouri asked if the vaping issue could be included in the purview of the committee, as it was not mentioned in the standing committee charge memorandum. Peggy Sidman, Office of General Counsel, said that CP Wilson will be amending the charge to expand the committee's scope.

**2. Update on Project Save Lives - Dr. Raymond Pomm**

Dr. Pomm provided an update on Project Save Lives (PSL). To date, there have been three overdose related deaths for participants since the program began in 2017 and 298 individuals have completed the program. Negotiations are in progress to expand PSL into additional emergency departments, UF Health and Baptist North. Dr. Pomm commented on the presence of fentanyl derivatives found in other illegal drugs, like cocaine and methamphetamine, and how that expands the demographics of users.

**3. Report on Overdose Trends - JFRD, Chief Rowley and Chief Castleman**

Chief Castleman, JFRD, presented an overdose response update to the committee. In the past few months there has been a 17 percent increase in JFRD overdose responses. JFRD has been awarded a SAMHSA grant which will cover some of the costs of Narcan doses. Chief Rowley said that there has been a 71 percent decrease in overdose responses for PSL participants and that all Narcan recipients receive information about resources, even if they decline to participate in Project Save Lives. Assistant Chief Gallaher, Jacksonville Sheriff's Office, provided a law enforcement update. Assistant Chief Gallaher said that overdoses do not necessarily occur in the same locations where drugs are purchased and that overdoses occur throughout the city, but are highly concentrated in certain areas (near 103rd St, in zip codes 32210 and 32244).

**4. Update on Opioid Trust Fund - Office of General Counsel**

Peggy Sidman, Office of General Counsel, was asked about the Opioid Trust Fund. The fund currently contains \$5,000, which was donated by a group of doctors from St. Vincent's Hospital. CM Salem said that there needs to more promotion of the fund, particularly in the business community, to increase donations. Former Councilman Gulliford was in attendance and echoed the sentiment, noting that the City alone cannot stop the opioid problem. Mr. Gulliford emphasized the need for corporate donations.

CM Salem asked for an update on the City's opioid lawsuit. Tiffany Safi, Office of General Counsel, said that the City's litigation against opioid producing pharmaceutical companies was remanded to federal court and is currently stayed while the judge hears selected bellwether cases and considers a global settlement resolution. Ms. Safi also noted that one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the lawsuit just declared bankruptcy this week which could impact outcomes.

**5. Discussion: E-cigarettes and Vaping Epidemic - CM Ron Salem**

Before opening the discussion on E-cigarettes and vaping, CM Salem said that the City is not considering any legislation on the issue at this point, but the committee is interested in learning more about the possible public health concerns. Ms. Sidman was asked about what powers municipalities have to regulate E-cigarettes/vape products in light of potential state preemptions. Ms. Sidman mentioned that two cities have taken action to ban certain vaping products already, Gainesville and Fort Lauderdale, but the limitations have not gone into effect yet. Ms. Sidman also mentioned an informal AG opinion requested last year by former Councilman Crescimbeni about regulating nicotine products. The informal AG opinion indicated that there are federal preemptions on nicotine products, since they are regulated by the FDA, and that could impact local regulations depending on the scope.

**6. Comments from the Public (Time Permitting)**

Public Comment: There were several members from the audience who chose to make public statements. A few attendees spoke about the health benefits associated with vaping, as contrasted with conventional cigarette smoking. One attendee talked about the vaping health concerns which have been reported by various news outlets. One attendee spoke about the dangers of banning legal substances and how that could increase the presence of black market vape products which are not regulated and could cause public health risks. One attendee emphasized the need for responsible retailers who do not allow sales to underage individuals. Public comment cards are on file.

Before the meeting adjourned, CM Priestly Jackson questioned the appropriateness for this committee taking on any issues outside of opioids. CM Boylan agreed, but CM Salem said that the committee needs to learn more about the public health risks and that the committee will continue to explore the issue. With no further business, CM Salem adjourned the meeting. The next meeting will be in November 2019.

**7. Adjourn**

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research  
CHampsey@coj.net  
Posted 9.23. 2019 5:00 pm