

City of Jacksonville

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



Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 11, 2021

2:00 PM

Council Chambers 1st Floor, City Hall

Special Committee on the Opioid Epidemic, Vaping & Mental Health Resources

CM Ron Salem, Pharm.D., Chair

CM Michael Boylan

CM Randy DeFoor

CM Terrance Freeman

CM Ju'Coby Pittman

CM Randy White

Legislative Assistant: Juliette Williams

Research: Colleen Hampsey

Meeting Convened: 2:02 pm

Meeting Adjourned: 3:29 pm

Attendance:

Council Members Salem, White, DeFoor, Freeman and Boylan

Excused: CM Pittman

Also: Kealey West, Office of General Counsel; Trista Carraher, Council Auditor's Office; Colleen Hampsey, Council Research

Call to order, Introduction of Committee Members

The committee members introduced themselves for the record. CM Salem said that CP Newby has named CM Boylan to be the committee vice-chair.

Teen Anti-Vaping Campaign Update

Ms. Jones provided an update on the teen anti-vaping public awareness campaign, and said that the engagement on social media has been successful. Despite the impact of COVID-19 on the campaign (in person or school events not permitted) they met and exceeded the City's stated goal, the digital advertising was seen by tens of thousands of middle and high school students, the content hub averaged 65 visits/day, the Facebook videos were watched all the way through 65,000 times. Additionally, Facebook and Instagram Videos generated 171,922 impressions, Facebook & Instagram users watched the complete video 65,062 times, Facebook & Instagram users watched at least half of the video 143,485 times, more than 41% of Videos served to people on Facebook & Instagram were watched to completion. Snapchat Video & Display Ads generated 1,193,959 impressions.

CM Salem asked about reductions in vape usage, where it is happening if at all, and how to measure the effect of the campaign on usage. He also requested that the campaign final report be shared with Daily's President & CEO Aubrey Edge, as they donated half of the funds. CM Freeman asked if demographics were captured in the campaign, and Ms. Jones said they will be included in the final report.

CM DeFoor asked about the impact of COVID on the respiratory system of a teen who vapes, and noted that it should increase the risks of the disease. She also asked about continuing the campaign for another year.

CM Freeman asked about resources to support teens who want to quit vaping, and Ms. Jones said that there are some helpful links in the videos/ads but that the campaign focused on awareness more so than nicotine addiction treatment.

Harm Reduction Subcommittee Report

CM Boylan spoke about the Safe Syringe Program legislation he has been working on and a recent stakeholder meeting on the issue. Safe Syringe Programs are community-based programs that provide access to sterile needles and syringes, facilitate safe disposal of used syringes, and provide referrals for services as needed. Research indicates about SSPs: people who use an SSP are more likely to enter treatment for substance use disorder and stop injecting than those who don't because referrals and health care resources are available through the SSP; access to sterile injection equipment can help prevent infections like HIV, Endocarditis and Hepatitis C; SSPs do not cause or increase illegal drug use, and they do not cause or increase crime; SSPs protect the public and first responders by providing safe needle disposal and reducing the presence of needles in the community.

CM Boylan has been coordinating with key stakeholders, and the Dawn Lockhart from the Mayor's Office. JSO has been working with program related folks from Miami and the SAO, on how to implement the program if/when approved. CM Boylan will hold a noticed meeting in the upcoming weeks to further discuss the legislation with his colleagues.

CVP Freeman- Update on Hearts 4 Minds campaign

CVP Freeman presented an update on the Hearts 4 Minds, a campaign to raise awareness about the importance of mental health, break down the stigma of mental illness and connect people to providers. The first mural was finished in May at the 121 Financial Ballpark (Jacksonville Shrimp), and is of a dragonfly made of handprints with QR codes to connect to resources if needed. CVP Freeman said that the campaign is partnering with LaVilla Middle School and Douglas Anderson School of the Arts on future creative projects, working on creating content for commercials, and building community relationships with JaxChamber and the Jax Human Rights Commission.

Update on Project Save Lives

Dr. Pomm was unavailable so Chief Rowley presented an update on Project Save Lives. PSL is now in operation in 7 emergency departments in the city and to date there have been nine known drug-related deaths among program participants. UF Health Main ED is the busiest site in the program. 172 individuals consented to services in July 2021, 3471 have since the program began in 2017. The vast majority of participants (more than 80 percent) opt to receive peer recovery support as opposed to traditional in patient treatment.

Report on Overdose Trends/Narcan Grant

Chief Rowley, JFRD, spoke about overdose response data trends which are continuing to increase. In July 2021, there were 446 OD dispatches, 518 doses of Narcan given, and 491 patients transported as overdoses. As a comparison, in 2019 there were 323 OD dispatches, 290 doses of Narcan given, and 346 patients transported as overdoses. Chief Rowley spoke briefly about patient demographics, which have shifted slightly over the last year. The majority are still men, but the numbers of minorities experiencing overdoses have increased since 2014 (8% Black in 2014, 16% Black in 2021).

Laura Viafora Ray, JFRD, provided an update on the Safe Healthy Neighborhoods grant, which enables JFRD to distribute Narcan and training to individuals and organizations for free. Since the grant program began, more than 90 training sessions have occurred, and 4725 kits have been given out. Anecdotally, there have also been 33 voluntary reports from those who have used the Narcan to stop an overdose death. The program is in its fourth year and they are working to build more relationships with the hospitality industry and conduct Narcan trainings in conjunction with bartender's responsible vendor trainings. The program also participated in a recent Walmart Wellness event in the 32210 zip code and plans to do more similar events.

Report on Data Collection

Dr. Billelo was not in attendance but CM Salem explained that she is tracking outcome data for PSL participants as compared to those who refuse PSL services.

Update on Opioid Lawsuit

Tiffany Pinkstaff, OGC, provided an update on the Opioid lawsuit. The settlement with the big three Pharmaceutical Companies is being finalized and will be voted upon by relevant Attorneys General. Roughly \$1.6 billion is expected to go to the State of Florida over a period of 17 years to offset costs of future damages. The percentage coming to Jacksonville is not determined yet. There is also another pending case against other defendants and pharmacies.

CM DeFoor asked if doctors were being held accountable in the lawsuits, and Ms. Pinkstaff said that individual physicians are not named defendants at this time.

Report from Sheriff's Office

Asst. Chief Gallaher, JSO, spoke about overdose homicide enforcement aspects. The highest amount of JSO overdose death responses occurred in 2021 so far in zones 4, 2 and 5. There were 40 JSO OD death responses in July 2021, 36 in July 2020. To date in 2021, there are 94 active cases under investigation, and 42 have been cleared through arrest (31 for drug charges, 11 homicide/manslaughter).

Report from State Attorney's Office

No report from SAO at this meeting.

Mental Health Pilot Program

Judge Mahan was in attendance to speak about the MHOP program and expressed optimism for the outcomes thus far. He noted that lives are being changed and money is being saved. Dr. Bell, Sulzbacher, said they have 14 participants in the program currently and 6 more being assessed. Dr. Bell spoke about measures of success and about the first participant who has multiple mental health issues and was in and out jail frequently who was just placed in permanent housing. Mr. Kilcrease, Sulzbacher, spoke about the decline in costs for police bookings, incarceration and Baker Act referrals. He also listed the MHOP participants demographics: 57% Black males, 21% Black female, 14% White males, 7% Hispanic males.

There was some discussion of creating a MHOP trust fund for private donations. CM DeFoor spoke about the need to continue funding for this program and extended appreciation to Judge Mahan.

Comments from the Public (time permitting)

One attendee spoke in opposition to medically assisted treatment for opiate addictions and promoted Christian rehab instead in the face of rising numbers of overdoses.

One attendee spoke about his struggle with addiction that began with prescription pills.

One attendee talked about street outreach and Narcan distribution, and about debunking a video showing police officers overdosing after coming in physical contact with fentanyl which is questionable.

Adjourn Meeting

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research
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