

# City of Jacksonville

1st Floor - Council Chamber  
117 W. Duval Street



## Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 10, 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: 2:06 pm Meeting Adjourned: 3:06 pm

Attendance: Council Members Salem, White, Pittman (2:18 pm) and Boylan; CVP Freeman  
Excused: CM DeFoor

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

**1. Call to Order, Introduction of Committee Members Council Member Ron Salem**

**2. Harm Reduction Subcommittee Report Council Member Boylan**

CM Boylan provided an update from the Harm Reduction Subcommittee on the safe syringe program (SSP). The legislation is in the drafting stages with the Office of General Counsel, and Inspire to Rise is slated to administer the program. As designated in state statute, no City money may be used for the program. The goals for the SSP are harm reduction through decreasing the risk of HIV and hepatitis, connecting substance users with resources as needed, and decreasing improperly disposed of needles.

Laura Viafora Ray, JFRD, spoke about the other Florida counties with such programs, particularly the successes from the program in Miami.

CM Boylan said that the Jacksonville Medical Society has offered their support.

CM Salem asked if the JFRD Chief and the Sheriff were in support. Mark Rowley, JFRD, said that he will speak to Chief Powers directly prior to the next meeting. CM Boylan said that Sheriff Williams is aware of the SSP legislation.

Dr. Pomm asked how Project Save Lives could be involved, as far as patient referrals.

CM Boylan said all of that will be worked out when the SSP is up and running, and that it has to operate as a stand alone program because of the City fund restrictions.

**3. Mental Health Awareness Campaign CVP Terrance Freeman**

CVP Freeman spoke about the Hearts 4 Minds mental health awareness campaign. There is a new commercial in the works and more signage with QR codes going up around the city. He also mentioned an upcoming event at UNF. Sheryl Johnson, Hearts 4 Minds founder, is looking for possible grant funding to assist with staffing to help with the volume of work she is balancing along with her other full time job.

**4. Update on Project Save Lives Dr. Raymond Pomm, Gateway**

Dr. Pomm provided an update on Project Save Lives, and said that there have been 9 overdose deaths for participants since the program inception in 2017. He mentioned the ongoing effects of the COVID 19 pandemic, as far as limiting treatment bed availability. There was also a PSL patient that tested positive and then had to be expelled from the center, to protect other patients.

Dr. Pomm spoke about people taking pills laced with fentanyl without their knowledge, roughly 25 percent of the overdoses in the emergency departments.

PSL is still in negotiations to begin operations in Baptist South Emergency Department.

**5. Report on Overdose Trends/Narcan Grant Chief Mark Rowley, JFRD  
Laura Viafora Ray, JFRD**

Chief Rowley, JFRD, presented the most recent overdose data, which is trending downward. He said that roughly 72 percent of the OD dispatches are opioid related cases. In October of 2020, JFRD was dispatched to 414 overdose calls, in October 2021 it was 396. In October 2020, 436 doses of Naloxone were administered, in October 2021 418 doses. He said he is cautiously optimistic about the trend line.

Laura Viafora Ray, JFRD, gave an update on the Safe Healthy Neighborhoods grant, which is in its final year. They have distributed 6000 Narcan kits and offered 109 training sessions. Anecdotally, there have been 39 self reported instances of the kits saving lives, including one location (a store off Moncrief Road) where the store owner has used his Narcan supply to save multiple individuals.

**6. Update on Opioid Lawsuit Tiffany Pinkstaff, Office of General Counsel**

No update at this meeting.

**7. Report on Data Collection Lori Bilello, UF Health**

No update at this meeting.

**8. Report from Sheriff's Office Chief Steve Gallaher, JSO**

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 25 JSO OD death responses in October 2021, 21 in October 2020. To date in 2021, there are 77 active cases under investigation, and 55 have been cleared through arrest (38 for drug charges, 17 homicide/manslaughter).

Ms. Viafora Ray asked about the scant overdose response numbers from the beaches, and Asst. Chief Gallaher said that JSO is not always called for those because they may be handled by the local beach police forces.

**9. Report from State Attorney's Office Timothy Quick, State Attorney's Office**

No update at this meeting.

**10. Mental Health Offender Program Cindy Funkhouser, Sulzbacher**

Cindy Funkhouser, Sulzbacher, gave a presentation about the continuation of MHOP. At the Sulzbacher annual "Transformations" event, a video was shown that told the story of a man impacted by the program. Through MHOP, he was able to get his life stabilized, stop the cycle of arrests-release-re-arrests, and be placed in permanent housing in a new tiny home community. CM Salem recently introduced legislation, that if passed will appropriate more funds for the program through the Sheriff's Trust Fund, and MHOP is looking to expand to more offenders.

### **11. Comments from the Public (time permitting)**

**Ms. Fox spoke about the need for more mental health resources, especially on college campuses, the effects of the pandemic, suicide risks, and the long wait time for mental health services. CM Salem said he would pass her contact information along to CVP Freeman. Dr. Pomm told her about an integrated care clinic where those in need may be seen immediately without appointments.**

**Mr. Oliver spoke about criminal justice reform, pre-trial intervention programs and public safety.**

### **12. Adjourn Meeting**

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research  
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Posted: 11.12.2021 5:00 pm