

City of Jacksonville

1st Floor - Council Chamber
117 W. Duval Street



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 10, 2022

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 - Excused Absence

CM Terrance Freeman-Excused Absence

CM Ju'Coby Pittman

CM Randy White-Excused Absence

Legislative Assistant: Juliette Williams

Research: Colleen Hampsey

Meeting Convened: 2:00 pm Meeting Adjourned: 3:10 pm

Attendance: CMs Salem, Boylan and Pittman
Excused: CMs DeFoor, Freeman and White

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

Call to Order, Introduction of Committee Members - Council Member Ron Salem

NE Florida Regional Council Presentation

Tyler Nolan, NEFL Regional Council Emergency Preparedness Planner, gave a presentation about an upcoming free overdose summit event on March 31, 2022 at World Golf Village. He said that the summit would include the focus on addiction stigma, mental health disorder/substance use disorder treatment, resources and available programs and related law enforcement actions. Dr. Pomm is slated to be one of the speakers at the event.

Mr. Nolan said that according to survey responses, roughly 41 million Americans over the age of 12 have a substance use disorder but just 4 million seek treatment. He also noted that according to CDC data, there were more than 100,000 overdose deaths between April 2020 and April 2021.

Florida Poison Control Presentation

Michael McCormick, Education Coordinator Florida Poison Information Center Network, gave a presentation about their services. He said that poisoning is the number one cause of unintentional death in the US, and he said that there has been a 200 percent increase in opioid deaths since 2000. There are three regional poison centers in the state -Tampa, Jacksonville and Miami - and the phone lines are staffed by medical professionals and trained toxicologists. The calls are confidential, as the staff are not designated as mandated reporters. Mr. McCormick spoke about the poisoning danger to children and toddlers from unsecured prescription medicines. The youngest patient they had a call for help from this year was 10 months old, and 16 calls were for children 6 years old or younger.

They also receive one call per month from older patients, over 70, who may make medicine mistakes or intentionally overdose. Mr. McCormick described safety measures, such as lock boxes/lock bags for pills and drug take back days for unused prescription pills.

CM Pittman asked about youth outreach, and Mr. McCormick said they have marketing and educational programs geared towards students.

CM Salem presented Mr. McCormick with a proclamation from the Mayor naming March 20-26, 2022 Poison Prevention Week.

Chief Rowley told the committee of an occasion where he called the poison control center to assist with three teen patients who had overdosed on cough/cold medicine and that they were very helpful.

Harm Reduction Subcommittee Report

CM Boylan offered an update on the safe syringe program legislation. Despite support from the medical community and the Sheriff, he has not received affirmation of support from the State Attorney and as such the legislation is now on hold. CM Boylan said he hopes to connect with Ms. Nelson and share the research that supports the effectiveness of SSP's and perhaps she will decide to support the program.

Mental Health Awareness Campaign

No update at this meeting due to CVP Freeman's excused absence.

Update on Project Save Lives

Dr. Pomm provided an update on Project Save Lives. He said that 4672 patients have consented to services since the program began (most with peer specialist services), there have been nine participant overdose deaths since the program began in 2017, and that they are in discussion to implement PSL in the Baptist South ED. Dr. Pomm spoke about nursing staff shortages in detox centers, and he said that there are more applications currently for peer specialists and the background check requirements may change to a shorter timeframe to permit more participation. He spoke about the lack of pregnant women in the program and expressed concern for that vulnerable population. Dr. Pomm also mentioned the issue with physicians and burnout and suicide rates, which are high.

Chief Rowley, JFRD, concurred with the assessment of nursing shortages, noting that JFRD staff are filling in those gaps in the jail right now. He also emphasized the essential role Gateway plays in the city as a safety net, as they are the only provider of detox services that permits walk-ins and that admits juveniles.

CM Salem offered assistance in negotiating a contract with Baptist South ED.

CM Pittman spoke about taboos associated with suicide and mental health issues, especially in children.

Report on Overdose Trends/Narcan Grant

Chief Rowley, JFRD, spoke about opioid trends, and said that the overdose response and transport trend line headed slightly downward in February as compared to last year. Dr. Pomm attributed the trend decline to a possible increased tolerance in users.

Laura Viafora Ray, was absent so Chief Rowley provided an update on the Safe and Healthy Neighborhood Project, and said that to date they have conducted 103 trainings and distributed 5620 Narcan kits. There have been 36 anecdotal self reports about overdose reversals/lives saved due to use of the kits.

Update on Opioid Lawsuit

Tiffany Pinkstaff, OGC, spoke about the lawsuit settlements with varied pharmaceutical companies. The City will be receiving settlement funds in the next few months (with some spread over an 18 year period) that may be used for treatment, educational and prevention measures (not retroactively).

Report on Data Collections

No report at this meeting.

Report from Sheriff's Office

Chief Gallaher, JSO, provided an update on law enforcement actions. Zones 2,4 and 5 have the highest incident rates. He said that 74 overdose death responses by JSO Homicide this year, with 10 cleared by drug charge arrests. He also mentioned a recent overdose manslaughter case that was prosecuted by the State Attorney's Office.

Report from State Attorney's Office

Tim Quick, SAO, spoke about their collaboration with JSO, and about the manslaughter conviction that just occurred. The individual has yet to be sentenced, but could be facing up to 20 years in jail. Mr. Quick reiterated that the opioid problem can not be solved through arrests and/or prosecutions alone.

Mental Health Offender Program

Dr. Bell and David Kilcrease, MHOP, extended appreciation for recent City funding to expand the program, and additional state funding in the next fiscal year. Dr. Bell mentioned several upcoming professional conferences where she will be presenting data and best practices related to MHOP.

CM Boylan asked about the geographic representation of participants, and whether they are all from the downtown area or throughout the city. Mr. Kilcrease explained that the point of entry is through the court system, so they can come from anywhere in the city though most are from the downtown area.

Comments from the Public (time permitting)

Carnell Oliver talked about the health care worker shortage and increasing the millage rate to fund public service grants and subsidize additional nurses as needed.

Adjourn Meeting

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research
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Posted: 3.11.22 5:00 pm