

City of Jacksonville

1st Floor - Council Chamber
117 W. Duval Street



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 12, 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

CM Nick Howland

CM Ju'Coby Pittman

CM Randy White

Legislative Assistant: Juliette Williams

Research: Colleen Hampsey

Attendance: Chair Salem; CMs White, Howland, Boylan and Pittman

Meeting Convened: 2:03 pm

Meeting Adjourned: 3:04 pm

1. Call to Order, Introductions
2. Harm Reduction Subcommittee Report

CM Boylan

CM Boylan provided an update on harm reduction. He said that the Safe Syringe Program has been put on pause due to the lack of support from the State Attorney. CM Boylan said that he hopes the program can be implemented at some point.

3. Mental Health Awareness Campaign

CVP Terrance Freeman

No update at this meeting.

4. Update on Project Save Lives

Dr. Raymond Pomm, Gateway

Rico Bodin, Gateway, provided an update on Project Save Lives in Dr. Pomm's absence. Since the program began in 2017, there have been 4975 participants who consented to services, the vast majority to peer specialist services. To date there have been nine PSL participant overdose deaths. Mr. Bodin said that they have had better engagement with pregnant women, with three who consented to PSL services this month. He also talked about the high levels of alcohol use and multi-substance abuse they are seeing among new patients, and he mentioned the need for more affordable housing options.

5. Report on Overdose Trends/Narcan Grant

Chief Mark Rowley, JFRD
Laura Viafora Ray, JFRD

Chief Mark Rowley, JFRD, spoke about opioid overdose trends. He said that overdoses make up 66 percent of JFRD's calls. In April 2022, JFRD transported 400 patients as overdoses and administered 401 doses of Naloxone. In April of 2021, 472 patients were transported as overdoses and 446 doses of Naloxone were administered. Chief Rowley noted patient demographic shifts, in that in the early stages of the opioid epidemic the patients were predominantly male and white. Chief Rowley said that the percentage of black patients has almost doubled from what it was a few years ago. CM Pittman asked about causes for that shift and Chief Rowley said that in his estimation it may be attributed to recreational users taking fentanyl laced drugs without their knowledge. He also commented on the stigma related to addiction treatment in some communities.

This was Chief Rowley's last meeting with the committee, as he is adjusting his position with JFRD in order to begin a Psychiatric/Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Residency Program. Chief Rowley has been an integral member of this committee since it began in 2017. CMs Salem, Boylan, White and Pittman made statements in support of all he has done for the City and the community, and they wished him the best with his new endeavor.

Laura Viafora Ray, JFRD, gave an update on the Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods Project. She said that 8185 Narcan kits have been distributed since the project began, with more than 200 training sessions conducted. Anecdotally, Ms. Viafora Ray said there have been 64 lives saved with the kits (voluntary and self-reported). When asked about project continuation after the grant funds expire in September, Ms. Viafora Ray said that they have reallocated some of their remaining funds, they are hoping for City funding in the next FY budget, and are working on securing other grant funds. She also mentioned that she participated in the drafting of a best practices guide, based on the Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods Project, to be published this summer.

6. Update on Opioid Lawsuit

Tiffany Pinkstaff,
Office of General Counsel

Tiffany Pinkstaff, Office of General Counsel, gave an update on the opioid lawsuit settlement process. She said that the City will receive \$48 million from the settlement with manufacturer Johnson & Johnson and the “big three” distributors McKesson, AmerisourceBergen, and Cardinal Health. This settlement agreement resolves their liabilities in over 3,000 opioid crisis-related suits nationwide. Participating states may receive their first payments between April and July of this year, and the funds will be disbursed over an 18 year period.

Ms. Pinkstaff said that the Florida AG agreed to a \$65 million settlement with Endo Health Solutions, Inc., to fund resources for mitigation efforts in the state and address allegations regarding the opioid manufacturers’ roles in the national opioid crisis, with a portion of \$1.6 million to be paid to the City.

She described a third settlement for \$870 million for opioid abatement from CVS Health Corporation, CVS Pharmacy, Inc., Teva Pharmaceuticals Industries Ltd. and Allergan PLC for the State of Florida, with \$20.5 million to be received by the City. Finally, Ms. Pinkstaff spoke about the agreement with Walgreens, who did not settle at first but went to trial and then settled for \$683 million includes \$620 million to be paid out to the State of Florida over 18 years, as well as a one-time payment of \$63 million for attorneys’ fees. The City will receive \$17 million from the Walgreens settlement over 18 years, to be used for future treatment, prevention and mitigation strategies (funds may not used retroactively for damages incurred).

Ms. Pinkstaff took a moment to thank Asst. Chief Rowley for his testimony at the Walgreens trial in Pasco County, which she described as extremely thorough and supported by solid data. She noted that his shared personal and professional experiences had a visible impact on the jury and other attorneys in the court room.

7. Report from Sheriff’s Office

Chief Steve Gallaher, JSO

JSO's Overdose Homicide Division has responded to 150 total cases this year, with 42 of those cleared by arrest (35 for drug charges, 7 for homicide arrests). The highest rates of overdose deaths occur in zones 4 and 2.

8. Report from State Attorney’s Office

Timothy Quick, State Attorney’s Office

Mr. Quick spoke about a recent indictment for an overdose homicide that occurred in January in Mandarin.

9. Mental Health Offender Program

Cindy Funkhouser, Sulzbacher
David Kilcrease, Mental Health Court Coordinator

Cindy Funkhouser, Sulzbacher, shared a video from the recent MHOP graduation. At the event, six participants and several staff members celebrated their momentous MHOP completion.

Public Comment

Kevin Duane, Panama Pharmacy, spoke about the role of a community pharmacy in outreach, syringe disposal and distribution of medically assisted treatments. Katie Armstrong spoke about the City's partnership with Lakeview Health.

The next meeting will be held after the new council leadership is installed this summer.

Adjourn Meeting

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research
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Posted: 5.18.2022 5:00 pm