

OPIOID CRISIS COMMUNITY COUNCIL (OCCC)

KICKOFF MEETING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4, 2018

Meeting was called to order by Chair Barbara Allen at 5:18 p.m. 28 members and two guests were present.

Ms. Allen welcomed all participants. County Executive Allan Kittleman also thanked members of the committee for their participation. Mr. Kittleman stressed that he would like to see positive action from the committee and welcomed any feedback to his office.

Caryn Lasser, County Executive's Deputy Chief of Staff, then introduced herself as formally seen as the contact for "all things opioid" within the County Executive's office. The creation of the OCCC extends and further identifies the breadth of support for the opioid epidemic in Howard County.

Ms. Allen described her philosophy as to get away from "yes, but" to "yes, and", encouraging positive and progressive thinking on issues. Asked members to please write up a two-paragraph description of why they are servicing and what they bring to the OCCC.

Members went around the table and introduced themselves, many describing their own personal experience with opioids and other addictive drugs, and how it affected their lives and others around them. A number of committee members have been actively working in the field of addiction and/or treatment for many years.

Ms. Allen then described two attributes of an effective group, e.g. the diversity of background and experience, and the safety aspect, where people feel free to express themselves without fear of adverse consequences. She also made the point that, once a decision is made, there is no need to revisit it ("don't beat a dead horse").

Executive Order - Ms. Lasser discussed the Executive Order which established the OCCC, noting that opioid addiction was a very serious problem, and would take a tremendous effort to address it. She also mentioned the newly established website HoCoOpioidHelp.com and encouraged members to visit the site. Said this should be an effective vehicle for communications, to reach people who need and want info on the problem, and to identify available resources, to better utilize what is already there. Stressed that we need to make connections with County organizations, create sub-committees, bring in community members, and develop action plans. The Executive Order is being amended to reflect an expiration date of September 30, 2019; a new one will be shared as soon as it is completed.

Term – Ms. Allen advised that the Council is currently authorized for only 18 months. Will look into extension of mandate if necessary. Members were advised to visit the state opioid site, <http://beforeitstoolate.maryland.gov>.

Parameters/Scope – The scope of the Council will evolve over time. Some examples to consider: 1) A bill was introduced in the state legislature to investigate the value of ibogaine for treatment of Opioid Use Disorder. It was determined this was beyond the scope of Maryland. So the Council would not consider anything similar. 2) A bill was introduced to eliminate the Certificate of Need for establishing

medical programs (including detox and treatment for SUD). While the bill will not pass this session, the Council may decide that the need for such services is better realized by eliminating or changing the existing regulations. Then the Council would pass along this information through the proper channels.

Budget issues could be somewhat met by identifying funds from groups represented by OCCC members.

Group procedures – Committee must determine who is entitled to vote (organizational reps only, advocates, others), and what constitutes a quorum. Suggested number was 25, if total voting membership is 36. Group agreed that when conflicts of interest are recognized by individual members, they must be able to recuse themselves from the vote. There was disagreement on some of these issues, and it was decided to place this topic on hold for the moment. Caryn Lasser will obtain legal guidance for additional information.

Structure – Probably will be some committees formed. Suggested ones include Data Collection/Reporting, Events, Focus Group – Asian, Senior Citizens, Faith based and an OCCC Education committee. Jason Manning has agreed to track themes where the Council needs information to make better decisions.

An immediate need is to tackle the Opioid Misuse & Prevention Program (OMPP). This program comes down through Governor Hogan's opioid declaration of emergency and is managed within the HoCo Health Department. In order to better serve the grassroots element of our county, the OCCC is an excellent group to oversee this.

Roe Rodgers-Bonaccorsy, HoCo Local Addiction Authority, talked a bit about the Opioid Misuse & Prevention Program (OMPP). Described some ongoing efforts, including education to providers, sterile syringe program, med lock boxes, save-a-life posters, and anti-stigma events such as a softball tournament in May and a recovery walk in September. Noted that the FY19 program was currently being developed.

Ms. Allen says there will be many opportunities for action. For example, the Council needs to find out what is happening already in schools and other organizations (if anything) and improve on existing programs, including local area, other counties, and at state level.

Feedback - Ms. Allen requested feedback on voting procedures, asked to think about needed committees, and send ideas in to her. She suggested we could possibly put together committees who can work on topics in between monthly meetings.

Homework - Ms. Lasser assigned homework for committee members before next meeting, including to explore and come ready to discuss the website (HoCoOpioidHep.com), provide two-paragraph background information to Barbara, and to read the forthcoming amended Executive Order. Also would like members to provide suggestions on any other organizational changes they might have in mind.

Next meeting was proposed for Wednesday, May 9 at 5:15 p.m. in the Columbia/Ellicott Room of the George Howard Building. June's meeting date is proposed for June 13, location to be determined.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.