

Updated: October 4, 2021

**OCCC Meeting Minutes
September 1, 2021
5:15 – 6:45 pm
Via Zoom**

In Attendance:

Jama Acuff, Barbara Allen, Robin Bartko, Mark Donovan, Beth Harbinson, Sean Hughes, Cindy Johnson, Mimi Mathews, Debbie Nix, Teron Powell, Laura Torres, Joan Webb Scornaienchi, Shereen Bentley

Barbara Allen called the meeting to order at 5:22 pm and thanked everyone for supporting the IOAD which was a very successful event.

Beth announced a series of Zero Hours and Octsoybarfest events.

Shereen shared about

- HCHD engaging orgs in HoCo who have low levels of vaccine compliance to increase trust and knowledge. LEAD launched today connecting individuals who have mental health or case management needs ID'd by police with support instead of incarceration.
- Opioid press event re Rockburn Park. 2 individuals were in active overdose. Family members flagged down park rangers who, being recently trained on naloxone, were able to admin Narcan and circumvent a fatal overdose. There will be a Sept 14 - 11 am press event to publicize.
- Partnering with Veteran Affairs to show documentary "Bastards Road" following the story of a vet who walked across the US. September 17 7:30 – 9 at Chrysalis in Merriweather. Barbara asked what Chrysalis was in Columbia? Debbie shared that it was **Merriweather Park at Symphony Woods**.
- Working on PSA related to youth suicide prevention and opioid response. Will be shown at movie theaters prior to showings.
- 2 campaigns re opioid response:
 - talk to your doctor. Marketing company is managing this to gauge who sees these ads.
 - Safe storage and disposal of medications.

Debbie asked if PSAs were able to be shared to send out. Laura also asked for these for the hospital.

Beth asked how large an event needed to be to have a pop-up vaccine clinic. Shereen said that it did not matter. She will put someone in touch with Beth to potentially have them at Oksybarfest.

LEAD – Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion

Barbara and Teron serve on the board for this initiative. Teron learned last night that it launched today at the circuit court. JCAB – Joint Community Advisory Board. Topics include harm reduction, SSP (syringe services) and LEAD. SSP takes place Tuesday and Thursday, 10 am – 2 pm, in front of the health department.

Barbara mentioned that the LEAD presentation to Wegmans was good. Their asset management folks (who deal with shoplifting and things like that) were in attendance. First question from them was from someone who said, "Where was this program when I was a police officer?" This set the tone for a very

positive conversation. Conversation with Rich Gibson led to the fact that we need to let the community know we are rolling out this program.

Other questions dealt with cross jurisdictional issues and availability. The reception from Wegmans was very positive.

Please think of large organizations where they have a lot of in and out. Beth suggested Barb Nicholas at the mall. Debbie suggested the Chamber of Commerce and any ties to the building industry who have lots of theft. Flora Betro would be a good contact there.

Jama was at the kickoff meeting for LEAD and said it was well done. She thinks this will cut back on folks that come to the jail who don't need to be there. She is very glad to see this program in action. Hopefully will defer **people with mental health issues** as well but they need to be competent enough to sign an agreement.

Barbara said the organization also needs to be willing to allow this diversion and for them not to be charged. It does allow them to be financially compensated for damage or theft that might have occurred. There are qualifications about who can be part of this program. Barbara will invite Justine to explain more about this program to us at a future meeting.

There is a program like this in Chicago (45 years old) and one in Florida (also several decades old) that are more complex and comprehensive. Ultimately, they do not work without other support systems being in place; this is the path HC is moving with it's LEAD program.

IOAD

Was an adventure. The church moved us outside at the last minute due to COVID. We had an outside plan ready to go. We then moved to an inside plan but ultimately held the event outdoors with just a few light sprinkles.

LOTS of things going on. NARCAN training, Jama created beautiful sunflower arrangements, Mimi offered a heartfelt closing prayer and Josh Huff-Edsall provided a beautiful musical backdrop.

Laura also loved the music and heard from others that it was a nice addition. Having the Lieutenant Governor and the County Executive there were a good addition. She thought this really did put them more in touch with things up close and personal and that it sent a good message to participants that they are not less than. They took the time to say we respect your journey.

Barbara took the LG around (they work together on several committees, commissions, and programs) to meet and greet. Walking around he was excited to see the vax site where he ran into someone from his church there. It brought things home for him. He was excited to see this in action. He took his first Naloxone training last night. He also met the Howard House guys; that the LG took time to talk with them gave them a big boost. Many told Barbara they had been incarcerated and thought it was a good event. The LG's team also were interactive with people. An opportunity to raise awareness with them as well.

Thanks to Mark Miller for taking the time to come and take photos as well.

Laura aske how many were vaccinated last night. 20 and many others who received information about boosters.

COVID tests on site are offered by the clinic but also had take home tests available. Another nice feature of the pop-ups.

Cindy was the recipient of lots of disinfectant and hand sanitizer. Grassroots may also need some of this. Howard House also took some supplies and Josh took some for the Homeless Shelter where he works. My Life Foundation donated water and Howard House took the leftovers. Prayer Flags were saved by Barbara for future display.

Thanks to EVERYONE who made it work. Lem and Jean Satterfield were unable to make it. Heather and Felicia Asbury were there to talk about couples in recovery. Loved the story of relationships that were like an A (one falls, the other does too) and the H, where each were strong especially when the other was having a tough time. Couples also came to speak about bereavement. Mimi provided the closing prayer, and everyone came up to light candles and speak their loved one's names. The darkness was a beautiful backdrop to this close.

Beth mentioned that shortening the event might be better, perhaps moving the event to a total of 2 hours. Taking time away from the beginning (perhaps 30 minutes). Barbara mentioned the event history and moving to NOT have vendor tables. Instead, this year we had info tables with everyone's info on them. Barbara also wants to move the timeline of the program to one hour. Cindy agreed the program could have started earlier but that everything that was part of the program was important.

September 14th is the next meeting of Commission to Study Mental and Behavioral Health, 4 – 6 pm. To submit testimony, go to the LG's site. Will be live streamed.

Robin mentioned her reading of the book Atomic Habits. Interesting story of a congressman who visited Vietnam. Was shocked at the number of heroin addicts. When then came home they were not. Change in environment was what helped. Barbara suggested listening to Johann Hari who does a TED talk about environment and building a system of support in recovery.

Debbie shared that David had difficulty in recovery until he moved. The importance of building a network AWAY from home was vital.

Barbara said the OCCC needs to focus on its NEXT STEPS and make decisions on what we want to accomplish. Do we need to reform committees?

- Carl told us we have to come up with a plan and budget for funds to complete projects. Barbara will send follow up information to committee members and seek feedback from the full OCCC.
- Cindy suggested we sponsor Drug Court to go to training.
- Beth suggested committees come back to the group with their ideas to fund and asked Barbara to direct chairs to meet and do so for the next meeting.
- Robin asked who is taking the lead on the Prevention Committee from the Health Dept **now** that Liesele has left. Shereen said they are close to a hire and to stay tuned. For the time being, Kaymisha will stand in as chair for the Prevention Committee. (NOTE: Committee chairs can be any member of the OCCC.)

Robin asked the average age people start using. Mark said somewhere between MS and HS. Robin wants to create videos on social media about prevention targeted at this age. On **TikTok**.

Barbara said it is frustrating to fight the battle to get more into the schools to reach this age group. Now we have money going into BHA for specific 12- to 18-year-old programs. Barbara will forward info about this to the group. LOTS of questions re programs coming from education vs BHA.

Barbara will resend committee descriptions to members and asked people to join committees and to recruit others who may want to be part of this solution.

October 28th First Responders Day – Barbara has asked Carl to fund this event so we can start planning.

6:57 PM - Motion to adjourned made, seconded and agreed upon.

Respectfully submitted: Beth Harbinson

DRAFT