

HOWARD COUNTY

Opioid Crisis Community Council

February 5, 2020 5:15 – 6:45 pm Columbia/Ellicott Room,
George Howard Building
3420 Court House Drive Ellicott City, MD 21043
Call in: **605.468.8005 code: 195587#**

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Barbara Allen, Ana Park, Laura Torres, Corey Bryce, Beth Schmidt, Liesele Wood, Roe Rodgers-Bonaccorsy, Cindy Johnson, Katie Dant, Flora Betro, Robin Bartko, John Way, Sean Hughes, Teron Powell, David Sabat, Theresa Collins, James LeMon, Mark Donovan, Rev. Mimi Mathews and Bruce McDonald (ultimately phone problems didn't work for Bruce).

Meeting was convened by Barbara Allen at 5:15 p.m.

Introductions were made.

Minutes- Review

Reading of the last minutes with a motion to accept; it was approved.

Announcements/Discussions

Discussion about extending the OCCC for another year: This has been approved. Carl DeLorenzo, as representative from the COEX, is excited about the OCCC being extended another year. He will be making changes to the Executive Order.

- Budget: OCCC has a \$9,700 budget. Needs to be developed across the five committees along with priorities. This should be included in a strategic plan for focus over the coming extended year.
- We discussed other changes the Council suggests including have a judge and others join our efforts, Cindy Johnson agreed to speak to any interested judges. (NOTE: In trauma informed communities training, judges participated in efforts to keep kids out of the court system.
- New executive order language is due before March 15. Cindy and Sean H. to work with Barbara on the wording.

LEAD Program: Roe spoke about this program in Howard County. As part of going forward, funding is expected to include the possibility of hiring three people.

There is an expense expungement workshop Saturday, February 8, helps remove criminal records at the Owen Brown Interfaith Center.

New Oxford house opens March 1st. This is a nine woman recovery house, 4th women's house in Columbia. Weekly rent is about \$175; it's in Oakland Mills area.

Providers are experiencing confusion and lack of appropriate payments as **the ASO changes from Beacon to OPTUM.** (ASO processes Medicaid payments to providers) This is hurting clients in need as

well as providers keeping their doors open. Governor Hogan stepped in requiring OPTUM to make some form of payments to help the situation.

A state level recovery house workgroup is being created. BHA's program is Maryland Certification of Recovery Residencies (MCOORR) There are two classifications: certified and non-certified. Certified houses qualify for residents to receive MDRN funding. Non Certified cannot. Key issues include certified house managers requiring residents to alter their MAT dosage levels. This is against the law. Also there are certified houses setting quotas as to how many of their beds are considered "MAT beds". Quotas in certified housing is not allowed by law as well. Stigma regarding MAT continues.

Delphi has not determined a location as yet. The OCCC is ready to help provide education when a location for this residential treatment center is identified. Barbara remains in contact with Delphi, as well as the pressure from the COEX to get this settled as agreed upon.

Harm reduction programs are going forward in various areas around the state including St. Mary's and Washington counties. This can include clean syringe distribution, safe consumption sites and much more. These are relatively low cost programs. Overdose Prevention Sites have been operating in Europe and Canada for as long as 20 years. These programs save lives and save the general public millions in tax payer dollars. An OPS can have these components:

- Sign in area
- Consumption room – provided swab, sterile syringe, tie off. Sometimes there is education about best way to inject to reduce damage to body.

Observation and counseling room – observation to insure no one overdoses on the medicine they bring to the OPS. After injection and assuring they are stable (no overdosing), there are counselors to offer support – budgeting, child care needs, health care, etc.

Harm reduction has been practiced in many ways including the use of seatbelts, no littering, etc. Philly is the closest to having this in the US. A bill was passed in PA last year; now that the time for implementation nears, there is some backlash. This is all a part of meeting those who suffer this disease where they are. As practiced outside the US these forms of harm reduction are highly effective to reducing stigma. A book for more information is **Fighting For Space**.

The Help Hope Howard website is being discontinued. All printed materials need to have this removed prior to any reprinting.

Program recommendation is an event to thank and honor first responders. The HC ROSC has agreed to partner with OCCC to make this first one happen. ROSC – Recovery Oriented System of Care focuses on events including the annual softball game (May), the International Overdose Awareness Day (August), and the annual Recovery Walk in September which is Recovery Month for the US.

Trauma informed communities – a recent webinar offers excellent overview of three counties in Ohio which has been hit hard by the opioid epidemic including large outbreaks of HIV and Hep B and C. Any community effort must include a good balance of agencies, community non-profits and community members. This webinar included discussion of the need for non-retraumatizing those in need of services; it also noted that one of the biggest requests for support is for grief counseling. For anyone interested Barbara has a lot of links to resources. and info can be use good quotes trauma informed community responses.

The OCCC members could offer community trainings using the five Regrounding Our Response presentations. Many in Howard County including those on the OCCC and peer recovery specialists are trained as master presenters in five key topical areas.

Meeting adjourned 6:48.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Way

APPROVED