

Opioid Abatement Funding Advisory Board  
Priority Planning Workshop  
Pinellas County  
May 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes

The Opioid Abatement Funding Advisory Board (OAFAB) met for a Priority Planning Workshop at 9:04 AM on this date at the Juvenile Welfare Board, 14155 58th Street North, Clearwater, Florida.

Present

Chief Ian Womack, City of St. Petersburg Fire Rescue  
Dr. Ulyee Choe, Vice-Chair, Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County Director  
Kathleen Beckman, City of Clearwater Councilmember  
Sandra Bradbury, City of Pinellas Park Mayor  
Kathleen Peters, County Commissioner

Others Present

Brett Schlatterer, City of Pinellas Park Fire Chief, alternate member  
Krista McIlhaney-Isaacs, Health Services Section Manager  
Abigail Stanton, Human Services Contracts Director  
Cody Ward, Assistant County Attorney  
Karen Yatchum, Human Services Director  
Katie Poviones, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk  
Other interested individuals

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Womack called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM.

**APPROVAL OF APRIL 5, 2023 MINUTES**

Deviating from the agenda, Chair Womack noted that the minutes were distributed to the members and asked if there was a motion to approve them; whereupon, Commissioner Peters made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of April 5, 2023. The motion was seconded by Dr. Choe and carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Attorney Ward indicated that the County's anti-lobbying policy prohibits individuals from lobbying the Board privately or in a public meeting; that lobbying is defined as influencing

or attempting to influence a decision of the Board in connection with the competitive selection process; and that those who wish to provide public comment should keep that in mind to preserve the integrity of the process. Thereupon, Chair Womack reviewed the procedure for public comment, and Will Atkinson, Clearwater, and Marianne Dean, St. Petersburg, appeared to be heard.

## **OVERVIEW OF NEIGHBORLY SYSTEM AND COMPETITIVE APPLICATION PROCESS**

Referring to a PowerPoint presentation titled *Overview of Facilitated Solicitation Process*, Ms. Stanton discussed Human Services' competitive solicitation process and its objectives. She presented the processes that the Department currently manages and provided an overview of the various steps within competitive solicitation. Ms. Stanton elaborated on the opioid abatement solicitation process and its associated objectives for the County and the Board, noting that the goal for today's meeting is to identify funding priority areas; that staff will prepare a finalized list of the identified priorities for the Board's meeting in June; and that the Board may then recommend the list for approval to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) prior to its submission to the State.

Ms. Stanton indicated that approximately \$12,700,000.00 of funding is available; and that staff suggests for the Board to establish a minimum award amount; whereupon, she presented the following staff recommendations to the Board:

- Start with very large, impactful, multi-faceted programs, and consider multiple solicitation rounds.
- Allow organizations to apply under more than one priority area and/or more than one application.
- Establish an initial one-year project term with renewals and potential funding increases for successful programs.

In response to queries by the members, Ms. Stanton, with input from Ms. Yatchum, provided clarifying comments regarding data reporting to the State, collaboration between applicant organizations, the scoring process and timeline, and various other topics. Attorney Ward indicated that the County can use the opioid abatement funds towards needle exchange programs; and that the programs may become ineligible for the opioid abatement funding if the State task force deems so at a later date.

During discussion, Chair Womack, Ms. Beckman, and Mayor Bradbury expressed concerns towards setting a minimum award amount, and Ms. Stanton, with input from Ms.

Yatchum, explained that doing so is recommended in an effort to fund robust programs with the ability to be highly impactful and provide wraparound services to the community; and that the Board can later choose to fund smaller programs to fill any identified gaps in programming.

## **FACILITATED PRIORITY AREA DISCUSSION**

Ms. McIlhane-Isaacs referred to *Schedule A* of the interlocal agreement and provided information regarding the core abatement strategies, and discussion ensued regarding priority areas for funding, with the members agreeing to use the first year of funding to focus on community planning via the proposed study and the formulation of a strategic plan while responding to emerging needs.

Commissioner Peters suggested prioritizing the expansion of capacity for warm hand-off programs and recovery services as well as Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), and Dr. Choe and Ms. Beckman concurred. In response to a query by Dr. Choe, Ms. Yatchum noted that the County will focus its allocated jurisdictional funds to the Pinellas MATTERS (Medication Assisted Treatment & Emergency Referrals) program; whereupon, discussion ensued regarding the priority areas, data collection from organizations which receive funding, and prevention efforts.

*Ms. Bradbury left the meeting and Chief Schlatterer replaced her at 11:24 AM.*

Responding to queries by Chair Womack, Ms. Yatchum clarified that staff is expecting the payment schedule for the abatement funds from the State soon; and that staff can evaluate whether the funds can support additional positions or functions once the schedule has been received. Discussion ensued regarding administrative funding eligibility for programs applying, evidence-based measurements, and the goals and costs of a potential study of the programs and services offered for opioid-related treatment by the County.

In response to concerns expressed by Ms. Beckman and Chair Womack regarding establishing a not-to-exceed amount for the study, Ms. Stanton indicated that staff could utilize the cost of a previous study completed for the County to estimate the expense; that it may be beneficial for the Board to establish funding parameters for the priority areas and services to ensure the number of applications received is reasonable; and that smaller organizations could partner with larger agencies for more ambitious program applications.

Discussion ensued regarding the priority areas, ensuring that programs are servicing the demographics with the most need, incentivizing partnerships between organizations, and

application/scoring details. Commissioner Peters related that the Board could choose to prioritize the community planning and utilize leftover funds for program applications, and Chair Womack recommended to establish the funding priorities without setting a minimum or maximum funding request. During discussion, Attorney Ward noted that capital expenditures are not an approved use for the abatement funds.

Commissioner Peters remarked on the importance of funding programs while the study is being completed in an effort to curb the number of deaths related to opioids in Pinellas. In response to queries by Ms. Beckman and Chair Womack, Ms. Yatchum provided clarifying comments regarding the funding allocations, negotiating funding for programs with applicants, and the purpose of establishing a minimum funding award amount; whereupon, Ms. Stanton indicated that a formal vote is not required today; that staff will present a document at the next meeting, inclusive of today's discussions of the funding priorities; and that the Board may vote in June to recommend the priority areas to the BCC for approval prior to their submittal to the State.

Responding to a query by Chair Womack, Ms. Yatchum clarified that providers will respond to the solicitation with data to justify the gaps in current opioid treatment in Pinellas that their programs aims to address.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The members agreed to schedule the next meeting for June 7, 2023.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:29 PM.