

**Opioid Abatement Funding Advisory Board  
Pinellas County  
April 5, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

The Opioid Abatement Funding Advisory Board (OAFAB) met in regular session at 1:36 PM on this date in the Clerk's Fourth Floor Conference Room at the Pinellas County Courthouse, 315 Court Street, Clearwater, Florida.

**Present**

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

**Others Present**

Abigail Stanton, Human Services Contracts Director  
Cody Ward, Assistant County Attorney  
Karen Yatchum, Human Services Director  
Shirley Westfall, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk  
Other interested individuals

**CALL TO ORDER / AGENDA CHANGES**

Chair Womack called the meeting to order at 1:36 PM; whereupon, staff indicated that there are no additions to the agenda.

**APPROVAL OF JANUARY 10, 2023 MINUTES**

Dr. Choe made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 10, 2023. The motion was seconded by Vice-Mayor Beckman and carried unanimously.

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND ACTION ITEM UPDATES**

Responding to a query by Ms. Stanton, the members confirmed that their alternates should be included on all OAFAB emails. Ms. Stanton related that the construction of the website is underway; that 15 out of 67 Florida counties have qualified for the regional funding; that an electronic transfer of funds in the amount of \$13,446,220.00 is expected to be received by the County from the State on April 7; and that the Clerk of the Circuit

Court's Finance Office is working on the financial structure and related requirements for the receipt and recording of the funding.

Attorney Ward related that at the prior meeting, the Board approved the bylaws, with the exception of reviewing possible staggered terms for the members, and noted that two-year terms are set forth in the interlocal agreement; and that staggering may not be necessary. Discussion ensued, including the possibility of amending the interlocal agreement at a later date. Responding to concerns by Chair Womack, Attorney Ward indicated that Chair and Vice-Chair can be re-elected for continuity; whereupon, Dr. Choe made a motion, which was seconded by Mayor Bradbury and carried unanimously, to approve the bylaws as written, without the terms item.

In response to a query by Chair Womack, Ms. Stanton indicated that rules of decorum and public participation would be incorporated in the bylaws.

## **PRESENTATIONS**

### Opioid Task Force

Referring to a PowerPoint presentation, Pinellas County Opioid Task Force Chair Marianne J. Dean, provided background information, statistics, costs, and the effects of substance abuse as it relates to the opioid epidemic and accidental drug overdose deaths in the nation, state, and county, noting that in Pinellas County in 2021, one person died every 14 hours. She explained the difference between Opiates and Opioids and what they do to the human body; and that many individuals who use substances are unaware of the presence of fentanyl in their drug supply.

Ms. Dean related that the Pinellas County Opioid Task Force is a collaboration of community partners responding to the sharp increase of opioid-related substance use and deaths; that their purpose is to guide community members and resources in an effort to confront the opioid epidemic; and that the following core strategies have been identified by the Task Force:

- Naloxone or other FDA approved medication to reverse opioid overdoses
- Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) distribution and other opioid-related treatment
- Support for pregnant and postpartum women
- Expand treatment for Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome
- Expansion of Warm Hand-off Programs and recovery services
- Treatment for incarcerated population
- Expand syringe services program

Ms. Dean indicated that the Task Force identified high priority community needs listed below, noting that capacity building is important so that programs and services such as treatment, detoxification, and sober living, be made available and operating when an individual seeks help. She related that the community needs to be made aware of the available services; that the information be made available to non-English speaking citizens; and that the first responders receive continuing education and training.

- Capacity building
- Criminal justice continuum support from pre-arrest through sentencing/adjudication; incarceration/revisit MAT
- Certified Community Behavior Health Clinic initiatives
- Treatment and Recovery Access for OUD/SUD
- Recovery housing and transportation with medication inclusion
- Women/mothers/children in recovery
- Young adult/student prevention and recovery

Responding to queries by Chair Womack and Dr. Choe, Ms. Dean, with input from Ms. Stanton, discussed the process related to identifying current resources available and the resources needed to avoid duplicated efforts and eliminating any possible gaps in services.

#### Central Florida Behavioral Health Network

Vice-President of Clinical Services, Central Florida Behavioral Network, Inc., Luis Rivas provided background information and services provided assisting the under-insured and uninsured related to substance abuse and mental health; whereupon, he presented data regarding the funds provided by State Substance Abuse and State Opioid Response programs to the following providers in Pinellas County:

- Agency for Community Treatment Services, Inc.
- Directions for Living
- Gulf Coast Jewish Family & Community Services, Inc.
- Operation PAR
- PEMHS
- Recovery Epicenter
- WestCare GulfCoast-Florida, Inc.

Responding to queries by the members, Mr. Revis related that he would provide the Board with a copy of the State Statute that includes a glossary of terms and definitions; and that the data exchange between facilities and services is currently not available due to HIPPA protection laws. Discussion ensued regarding performance measures and how they relate to funding.

### Pinellas County Human Services

Referring to a PowerPoint Presentation, Human Services Department Director Karen Yatchum reviewed the statistics for overall accidental drug-related deaths and opioid deaths for the years 2017 through 2022 and informed the members of substance abuse initiative programs, noting that a goal of Overdose Fatality Reviews is to share information and come up with strategies for making changes in the community. She indicated that Human Services will be working with the cities of Safety Harbor, Tarpon Springs, and Oldsmar with regard to the opioid settlement funding, noting later in the meeting that those three cities have allocated their funds to the County.

Ms. Yatchum described several County-funded programs, including Pinellas MATTERS (Medication Assisted Treatment & Emergency Referrals), the steps taken to work with Bayfront Hospital, and the plan to roll the program out to multiple hospitals each year.

Ms. Yatchum related that Human Services goal is to promote low barrier or no barrier access to recovery and treatment and listed the current opportunities:

- Medication Assisted Treatment
- Introduction in the Emergency Department
- Streamline emergency access to treatment
- Certified peer recovery specialists
- Coordinated access
- Emergency and Jail Deflection Programs
- Naloxone distribution and allocation
- Infectious disease elimination
- No-cost medications for Opioid Use Disorder
- Integrated treatment and tele-health

Ms. Yatchum also reviewed the following future strategies:

- Standardized screening and assessments
- Home and community-based treatment
- Integrated induction
- Increased MOUD – treating physicians
- De-stigmatized treatment uptake
- Reduced disease transmission
- Performance measures with ODS
- Four major dimensions of recovery including overall wellness, a safe and permanent place to live and recover, meaningful participation and normalized life outside of drug use, and a sense of community.
- Pinellas MATTERS, the standard of care at all hospitals

Dr. Choe reiterated the importance of identifying where the local and state funding will be going to eliminate duplicated efforts.

Responding to queries by Chair Womack, Ms. Yatchum related that a new training video will soon be rolling out to all EMS staff; and that both Pinellas MATTERS and the Quick Response Team provide peers and assessments to determine appropriate treatment; whereupon, she discussed the program cost and challenges

Human Services Section Manager Quality & Planning Krista McIlhane-Isaacs reviewed the substance abuse dashboard created utilizing data collected from different entities and explained the process and capabilities, noting that the dashboard includes very specific information such as the number of EMS transports, suspected overdose transports, and the number of times Narcan has been administered. She related that the data can be sorted by days of the week, times of the day, gender, race, city, and zip code; that trends can be identified; and that it can monitor the prescription drug program. She indicated that the expectation is that this data will show that the programs and initiatives will end up reducing the amount of deaths, overdoses, and the use of Narcan.

Responding to queries by the members, Ms. Yatchum related that a steering committee with multiple fire and law enforcement representatives will determine how this information will be disseminated to the public; that the dashboard will not be made public at this time; and that it was important to convey to the Board the time and effort that the Human Services team has dedicated to the opioid epidemic; whereupon, discussion ensued.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Womack reviewed the procedure for public comment; whereupon, the following individuals appeared to be heard:

Dan Zsido, Seminole  
Dianne Clarke, CEO of Operations PAR  
Will Atkinson, Clearwater  
Jennifer Mulvey, Clearwater  
Allen Canning, Clearwater  
Shelby Meaders, Executive Director for Florida Harm Reduction Collective  
Alexa Mutchler, Program Director for Florida Harm Reduction Collective  
Amanda Bonham-Lovett, Program Director PERC  
Michael Jalazo, CEO/Executive Director of PERC

During public comment, discussion ensued regarding funding, grants, programs, and services.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Ms. Stanton related that the May strategic planning meeting will focus on creating the mission and vision statement and identify priorities; and that prior to that meeting, she and Attorney Ward will develop the funding agreement and provide guidance of the funding requirements; whereupon, discussion ensued as to what the members would like to accomplish at the meeting.

## **NEXT MEETING**

Ms. Stanton related that the next meeting will be held on May 10, 2023, at 9:00 AM, at the Lealman Exchange; and that she will inform the members should the location be changed.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:29 PM.