

**Opioid Abatement Funding Advisory Board
Pinellas County
June 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

The Opioid Abatement Funding Advisory Board (OAFAB) met in regular session at 2:03 PM on this date at the St. Petersburg College EpiCenter, 13805 58th Street North, Clearwater, Florida.

Present

Chief Ian Womack, Chair, City of St. Petersburg Fire Rescue
Gayle Guidash, alternate Vice-Chair, Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County
Assistant Director
Kathleen Beckman, City of Clearwater Councilmember
Sandra Bradbury, City of Pinellas Park Mayor (late arrival)
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

Chair Womack called the meeting to order at 2:03 PM and requested that those in attendance introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MAY 10, 2023 MINUTES

Commissioner Peters made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of May 10, 2023. The motion was seconded by Ms. Guidash and carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Carlos Cruz, Largo (submitted documents)
Tina Miller, Dunedin (submitted documents)

Amanda Marker, Clearwater
Veronica Burnam, St. Petersburg
Paula LaRue, St. Petersburg
Joseph Emmett, Clearwater
Kathryn Gillette, St. Petersburg (submitted documents)
William Atkinson, Clearwater
Joshua Dirscher, Clearwater
William Loch, Clearwater
Jason Gwalthney, Clearwater
Christine Von Staden, Clearwater

During public comment, Attorney Ward related that discussion related to plans for funding will be conducted at a later time and should not be presented during public comment.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF REGIONAL OPIOID ABATEMENT FUNDING PRIORITY LIST

Ms. Stanton introduced Sara Gordils and noted that she will be leading from the Human Services perspective moving forward; whereupon, referring to a document titled *Pinellas County Regional Opioid Abatement Funding Priority List* dated June 2023, Ms. Gordils provided background information and an overview of the Board's purpose and goal. Thereupon, she presented the following priority list based on the Board's recommendation at the previous meeting:

1. Community/Strategic Planning – leadership, planning, and coordination
2. Evidence-based data collections and research analyzing the effectiveness of the abatement strategies within the State
3. Expansion of warm hand-off programs and recovery services
4. Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) distribution and other opioid related treatment
5. Pregnant and postpartum women
6. Expanding treatment for neonatal abstinence syndrome

Responding to queries by the members, Ms. Gordils, with input from Ms. Stanton, provided clarifying comments and related that the priority list needs to be submitted to the State by July; that the immediate need is to identify any changes to the list before it is submitted to the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) next week for approval; that the Board will continue to review the list quarterly to make sure it aligns with the programs being funded and the needs identified in the strategic assessment; and that the document

mentions the Board's recognition of the necessity to conduct both a strategic assessment and respond to the immediate needs of the community.

Responding to a query by Commissioner Peters, John Hopkins All Children's Hospital Vice President of Government Affairs and Chief of Staff Katherine Gillette confirmed that the parameters provided for Nos. 5 and 6 of the aforementioned priority list are broad enough to cover services needed.

Following discussion, Commissioner Peters made a motion to approve the priority list. The motion was seconded by Mayor Bradbury and carried unanimously.

SOLICITATION DISCUSSION

Referring to a document titled *Regional Opioid Abatement Funding Competitive Application Instructions*, Ms. Stanton briefly reviewed general funding eligibility information and submission guidelines, including that proposed programs and services must meet the needs of the community and align with the priority list; and that multiple rounds of competitive solicitation may be issued.

She stated that an objective for the County is to seek proposals from qualified consultants or experts to guide and execute an evaluation and gap analysis of the current state of the opioid epidemic and abatement programming in Pinellas County to include specific recommendations, guidance, and examples of best practices for use in competitive solicitations for services moving forward.

Ms. Stanton reviewed key dates and deadlines, noting that August 1 is the tentative application release date; that the application would be open for approximately one month; and that the review committee would then have a few weeks to evaluate applications before submitting final recommendations to the BCC towards the beginning of the next fiscal year.

Ms. Stanton discussed guidelines related to proposal components and requested feedback from the members regarding the proposed application instructions; whereupon, lengthy discussion ensued, with input from Mses. Yatchum, Stanton, and Gordils, regarding the gap analysis including its strategies, processes, goals, assessments, key actions, and next steps. The members provided input and discussed various topics related to the solicitation process, including application scoring, timeline, document language, budgets, partnering amongst organizations, lack of available workforce, a system to measure outcomes and successes, and status updates.

At the request of Ms. Beckman, several service providers present expressed their willingness to collaborate and partner with other entities to fill the needs of the community.

Referring to a query by Commissioner Peters, Ms. Stanton indicated that the approved uses provided on the priority list are broad enough to allow for flexibility when scoring, thus enabling members to rate applications that serve populations with the most need accordingly; whereupon, discussion ensued regarding the minimum award amount.

NEXT MEETING

The members agreed to schedule the next meeting for September 28, 2023, at 8:30 AM, in the Palm Room of the Communications Building located at 333 Chestnut Street, Clearwater; and that training by Ms. Gordils on the Neighborly Scoring System will be conducted individually with the members.

NEXT STEPS

Following discussion, Ms. Stanton reiterated that staff will move forward with the two solicitations for the gap analysis and for the approved uses under MAT and wraparound services; whereupon, she discussed the aforementioned tentative timeline for application launch and review and noted that additional meetings to review applications may be scheduled if an over-abundance of applications are received. In response to queries by the members, she indicated that there will be a multi-stage review process during which staff will vet all applications for compliance.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:18 PM.