

**Substance Abuse Advisory Board
Pinellas County
November 20, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

The Substance Abuse Advisory Board (SAAB) met at 9:01 AM on this date in Room 2-304 at the St. Petersburg College Epicenter, 13805 58th Street North, Clearwater, Florida.

Present

Megan McGee, Vice-Chair, City of St. Petersburg Police Department (alternate)
Major Paul Amodeo, Largo Police Department
Sandnes Boulanger, Operation PAR, Inc. (alternate)
Tim Burns, Pinellas County Human Services (alternate)
Marianne Dean, Pinellas County Health Department (alternate)
Michael Hasty, Clearwater Police Department (alternate)
Dawn Holcomb, Department of Corrections
Melissa Reid, Department of Juvenile Justice
Ashley Roura, Office of the Public Defender, Sixth Judicial Circuit (alternate)
Marlaina Satcher, Juvenile Welfare Board (alternate)
Ryan Sturm, Pinellas County Schools (alternate)

Not Present

Chief Adam Geissenberger, Chair, City of Pinellas Park Police Department
Becky Albert, Juvenile Welfare Board
Bruce Bartlett, State Attorney
Ulyee Choe, Pinellas County Health Department
Lisa DePaolo, Pinellas County Schools
Chief Eric Gandy, Clearwater Police Department
Antonio Gilliam, St. Petersburg Police Department
Melissa Leslie, Department of Children and Families
Jim Miller, Operation PAR, Inc.
Sara Mollo, Public Defender
Kimberly Todd, County Judge, Sixth Judicial Circuit
Karen Yatchum, Pinellas County Human Services

Others Present

Lisa Carrillo, Human Services Grants Services Section Manager
Yashira Gonzalez, Pinellas County Justice Coordination Section Manager
Tiffany Nozicka, Human Services Management Analyst
Cody Ward, Assistant County Attorney
Ashley Pabilonia, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk
Other interested individuals

All documents provided to the Clerk's Office have been filed and made a part of the record.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Acting Chair McGee called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM and requested that those in attendance introduce themselves.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one responded to the acting Chair's call for public comment.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 25, 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Upon the acting Chair's call for a motion to approve the minutes, Ms. Dean made a motion for approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Burns and carried unanimously.

ADULT DRUG COURT QUARTERLY UPDATE

Referring to a document titled *Pinellas Adult Drug Court – 3rd and 4th Quarters*, acting Chair McGee provided statistical information regarding the Adult Drug Court for the third and fourth quarters, including that the program had 485 participants, 155 new admissions, 101 graduates, and 293 individuals remaining active at the end of the reporting period; and that the program's graduation rate is 52.6%.

JUVENILE DRUG COURT QUARTERLY UPDATE

Referring to a document titled *Juvenile Drug Court Program Quarterly Report*, Juvenile Diversion Program Coordinator Alicia McLane provided statistical information for the period of April 1 through June 30, 2025, including that, of the 46 juveniles who entered Juvenile Drug Court, 16 graduated, and five were discharged; and that 25 juveniles were referred to Suncoast Center. She also noted that program resources were shifted to truancy services due to increased referrals; whereupon, Ms. McLane provided details regarding the number of referrals made by each referring agency.

Ms. McLane also provided statistical information for the period of July 1 through September 30, 2025, including that, of the 21 juveniles who entered the Juvenile Drug Court, 17 graduated, and 10 were discharged; and that 16 referrals were made to Suncoast Center; whereupon, she provided details regarding the number of referrals made by each referring agency.

In response to a query by Ms. Dean, Ms. McLane indicated that parents who choose not to participate in the Juvenile Drug Court program is the most prominent barrier preventing

referred juveniles from graduating. Responding to comments and queries by Ms. Gonzalez, Ms. McLane also provided input regarding reduced alternative options for assisting juveniles who are not participating in the program and availability of data pertaining to nonparticipation and recidivism; whereupon, she related that the success rate for the program is approximately 80 to 90%.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES, VACANCIES, OR RESIGNATIONS

Acting Chair McGee indicated that former SAAB member Ann Starling's seat is now vacant; and that the Largo Police Department's new appointee is Major Amodeo. She also listed the following proposed alternates and made a motion to approve them:

- Major Richelle Bradshaw, Largo Police Department
- Ryan Sturm, Pinellas County Schools
- Marlaina Satcher, Juvenile Welfare Board

The motion was seconded by Ms. Dean and carried unanimously.

FY 2024-2025 JAG PERFORMANCE REPORTS

ALPHA House – Breaking Cycle of Generational Abuse

Later in the meeting, ALPHA House of Pinellas County Director of Operations Jasmine Randolph indicated that her organization serves as the only transitional housing program in Florida for homeless women and babies who are abused and trafficked; whereupon, she reviewed the success of the program's goals, which relate to identifying power and control as behaviors in abusive relationships, providing program services to 25 women, and defining healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Boley Centers – Intensive Case Management

Boley Centers Homeless Services Director Jennifer Strong provided a brief overview of her organization's permanent supportive housing program and the clients served. Ms. Strong reviewed the success of the program's goals, which relate to reducing client hospitalizations, increasing referrals to 12-step programs for substance use, and providing unduplicated clients with referrals to substance abuse treatment; whereupon, she discussed the distribution of informational pamphlets regarding Vivitrol, which is a monthly injection that assists with curbing alcohol cravings.

HEP – Emergency Shelter Beds

Homeless Empowerment Program (HEP) Executive Vice President of Operations Katerina Gerakios-Siren indicated that HEP has provided housing for three justice-involved individuals; whereupon, she provided an overview of various wraparound services that were provided.

Ms. Gerakios-Siren also reviewed the success of the program's goals, which relate to securing transitional or permanent housing, improving self-esteem, obtaining employment, seeking vocational or educational opportunities, feeling optimistic about the future, and maintaining housing; whereupon, Vice President of Case Management and Housing Satina Thomas highlighted a client success story.

MORE Health – Firearm Safety and Firearm Prevention

MORE HEALTH, Inc. Social Media Coordinator Carlene Lemaster indicated that her organization provides health and safety education and conducts firearm safety classes in schools; whereupon, she reviewed the success of the program's goal, which relates to conducting firearm safety classes for third graders. Ms. Lemaster briefly discussed safety techniques taught to students and the results of evaluations completed by teachers. Ms. Lemaster also invited those in attendance to observe a firearm safety class and to visit the organization's website.

In response to a query by Ms. Dean regarding whether students might have more exposure to firearms due to the State's open carry law, Ms. Lemaster provided brief comments regarding steps that could be taken if a child reports having seen a firearm.

Operation PAR – Recreation Equipment

Operation PAR, Inc. Vice President of Grants and Philanthropy Martin Bimler indicated that Operation PAR's original intent for utilizing the grant funding was to purchase gym and recreational equipment for the Academy, an adolescent residential treatment facility; that the adolescent program was later deemed unsustainable due to reduced funding; and that the equipment purchased was then moved to the adult residential treatment facility.

Thereupon, Mr. Bimler related that while Operation PAR's goals with regard to installation of the equipment at the Academy were not accomplished, the organization is collaborating with its residential teams to integrate the use of the equipment into treatment plans.

WestCare – Mustard Seed Inn

Mustard Seed Inn Program Manager Linda Welborn related that the Inn's two facilities contain a total of 87 beds, which provides assistance to individuals who are experiencing homelessness, substance abuse, mental illness, and/or have a history with the criminal justice system. She also reviewed the success of the program's goals, which related to attending LifeSkills groups, obtaining employment, and securing permanent housing; whereupon, Certified Recovery Peer Specialist highlighted two client success stories.

Pinellas Park Police Dept – Law Enforcement Equipment

Referring to a PowerPoint presentation, Pinellas Park Police Department Training Officer Thomas Boyle indicated that conversion rifle bolt kits and training rifle magazines were purchased with the grant award; that this equipment reduces wear on duty weapons and lowers ammunition costs; and that the equipment also provides officers with opportunities to safely engage in simulated exercises.

FY 2024-2025 ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE TRUST FUND REPORTS

Gulf Coast JFC Services – Visitor Management System

Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services Grants Director Tess Benham indicated that the funding that her organization received was used to purchase a new visitor management system; whereupon, she provided details regarding the benefits of the system, including assistance with security, pre-registration of guests, and language support during the registration process.

Operation PAR – PAR Village Residential Furniture

Mr. Bimler indicated that Operation PAR utilized the grant funding to purchase 12 chairs for use in counselor offices and 15 desks for use in the men's residential program.

PEMHS – Desktop Computers

Acting Chair McGee clarified that Personal Enrichment through Mental Health Services (PEMHS) is now referred to as Eleos; whereupon, Eleos Wellness Grant Writer Timothy Smith indicated that his organization provides support with regard to mental health issues and crisis stabilization; that the grant funding assisted with the purchase of new computers for a new facility; and that moving into the facility was delayed but has recently begun; whereupon, he described the benefits of the computers, including coordination of transfers between emergency services and Eleos' facilities, creation of a plan for clients who are leaving, and follow-up support for teams and community partners.

WestCare – Davis Bradley Convection Oven

Ms. Foster indicated that the grant funding was utilized to purchase a new dual oven for its residential treatment facility, Davis Bradley, and provided an overview of the facility and its services; whereupon, she related that the dual oven has significantly enhanced the efficiency and reliability of the kitchen.

SAAB BOARD FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

FY24-25 Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Countywide (JAG-C)

Acting Chair McGee indicated that available funds from the JAC-C grant totaled \$232,520.00; whereupon, she listed the following projects and recommended funding amounts:

- City of Clearwater Police Department – law enforcement equipment purchase, \$66,429.40
- City of Pinellas Park Police Department – law enforcement equipment purchase, \$12,938.60
- City of St. Petersburg Police Department – SPPD rapid response drug detection initiative, \$25,000.00
- Eleos Wellness – restraint chairs, \$24,900.00
- Homeless Empowerment Program – emergency shelter program for justice-involved adults, \$50,000.00
- MORE HEALTH, Inc. – firearm safety and violence prevention, \$30,000.00
- Pinellas County Human Services – JAG planning grant position, \$23,252.00

Upon the acting Chair's call for a motion to approve the SAAB's funding recommendations for the JAG-C, Ms. Dean made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Ms. Roura and carried unanimously.

FY25-26 Alcohol and Drug Abuse Trust Fund

Acting Chair McGee indicated that available funds from the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Trust Fund total \$35,000.00; whereupon, she listed the following projects and recommended funding amounts:

- Boley Centers, Inc. – Koenig Center caboose renovation, \$10,000.00
- Eleos Wellness – medical equipment, \$10,000.00
- Gulf Coast Jewish Family and Community Services, Inc. – technology update, \$6,000.00
- Operation PAR, Inc. – Largo campus accessibility, \$7,898.00

Acting Chair McGee also indicated that the SAAB rolled over a remaining balance of \$1,102.00 into the fund for the following fiscal year; whereupon, following the acting Chair's call for a motion to approve the funding recommendations, Ms. Dean made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Ms. Roura and carried unanimously.

ROUNDTABLE

In response to a query by Ms. Gerakios-Siren, with input from acting Chair McGee, Ms. Carrillo explained that the Florida Department of Law Enforcement releases the solicitation for the JAG-C grant on the second year in the grant cycle with the Bureau of Justice Assistance; and that, as a result, the federal fiscal year remains a year behind the current fiscal year.

ADJOURNMENT

Acting Chair McGee adjourned the meeting at 9:58 AM.