

**MINUTES OF THE
MEETING OF THE
MAYOR'S OPIOID TASK FORCE
FIRST FLOOR MEETING ROOM
MEETING ROOM 1
JANUARY 17, 2019
6:30 p.m.**

ATTENDEES:

Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu
Councilwoman Mary Fortier
Councilman Peter Kelley
Mark Jenkin
Sandra Kamen
Lisa Coates
Marco Palmeri
Eileen McNulty
Christina Sanchez
Chief Brian Gould
Tim Gamache
Barbara DeNoia
Jeff Quamme

ITEM #1 – CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS OF MEMBERS

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu opened up the meeting at 6:30 p.m. She welcomed the members and the members introduced themselves.

ITEM #2 – ACCEPTANCE OF NOVEMBER 2018 MINUTES

A Motion was made and seconded. Motion passed.

ITEM #3 – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu explained that Public Participation is on all City Hall agendas, but this forum is a free flowing meeting and participation will be conducted throughout the meeting.

ITEM #4 – ACTION ITEMS

- **DISCUSSION OF STATE GRANT AWARD**
- **TOBACCO 21 PROPOSAL**
- **VAPING PRODUCTS AND LETTER TO BUSINESSES**
- **RECOVERY FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PROFILE**

Marco Palmeri addressed the Committee and stated that the State of Connecticut awarded the Recovery Coach Grant to Bristol. The grant is for two years, \$75,000.00 each year. It would provide recovery support services to the Bristol citizens. The target areas are survivors of opioid overdoses as well as individuals who suffer from opioid use disorders. Bristol was one of 8 towns to receive this grant. Wheeler Clinic will be providing the services and the City will be providing oversight and fiduciary responsibilities. Marco will be attending the first kick off meeting next week and will report back to the Committee.

Jeff Quamme spoke about his organization credentialing recovery coaches throughout the country as part of his job. They provide standardized skills and training and provide another level of legal defensibility for Wheeler and for the individuals providing the services because they have been appropriately trained.

Tim Gamache asked for a definition of Recovery Coaches and if there is training for individuals who want to become recovery coaches. Jeff explained that recovery coaches are individuals, often, but not always, individuals who were addicted to opioids. They have gone through specific training with issues relating to opioids and do not handle any clinical issues. They are actively involved in the life of a recovering addict in order to prevent relapse. This is different than a sponsorship program. In a sponsorship program, the individual is a sponsor to an individual as part of their own recovery wherein a Recovery Coach is their job. They may use their addiction as a guideline, but it is a job.

The group discussed different types of recovery coaches. They also discussed CCAR which offers 30 hours of training. For more information people can email stacy@ccar.us. Mark Jenkins also spoke about another service for recovery coaches called Advocacy Unlimited who employ Recovery Support Specialists. He stated that there are also programs that offer Recovery Navigators and his company offers Recovery Ambassadors.

Eileen McNulty spoke about the Opioid Response Grant, (STR – State Targeted Response) which is \$5,000 for the Task Force to put to use. There are a few deliverables that need to be fulfilled:

- 1) A second Narcan Training Session
- 2) Prescription Monitoring Program – Host a breakfast at Bristol Hospital and bring in a speaker
- 3) Better publicize the Take Back Drug Program at the Police Department (Lt. Guerrera has been good about holding events throughout the year)
- 4) Sample lock boxes
- 5) Look into Hospital Education component
- 6) Media publicity

All deliverables need be completed by the end of March. Some of them have already been accomplished. It was suggested to conduct another drug take back program at the 3rd Annual Wellness Expo on Saturday, March 9th from 9:00 – 1:00 at Bristol Eastern High School.

The Mayor addressed the vaping products and sending letters out to the gas stations. She would like to send a letter out putting them on notice that the City would like them not to sell products to anyone under the age of 21. She passed out a sample letter to the members for review along with information from Tobacco 21. She is hoping that the State will pass legislation rather than going through local ordinances. If it doesn't, the City will do its due diligence and start enacting ordinances to address the issue. The committee agreed to send the letter out and cite Connecticut General Statute sections on displaying the products.

Eileen McNulty stated that there will be a press conference on January 23 at 10:00 on Capitol Hill. The press conference has to do with smart approaches to marijuana and opposition to the marijuana bill. It will be coming out of the Senate rather quickly legalizing marijuana for recreational use. She doesn't think they have all the votes in the house yet and she is taking some students up to the press conference in opposition of the bill. She is seeing an increase of referrals in her office for substance abuse and it is all tied in with using vaping products and marijuana. She and another member of her office will be going to Washington in February to obtain the most up to date data on the issue. She is requesting the committee members send her testimony, medical facts and criminal facts showing the effects of recreational use for her to bring to the State and National level.

Chief Gould stated that the CT Police Chiefs Association is very involved in legislation and this is one of the front line topics. They are in support of not legalizing marijuana for recreational use. All indications show that this is going to pass and he encouraged people to come forward and voice their opinion on non-legalization. The CPCA is now figuring out not how to stop it, but how to control the issue as they feel it will be passed. He stated the driving force for this is money.

The Mayor will keep Tobacco 21 on the agenda to see what comes out of the Committee of Public Health. She stated that she spoke to the First selectman from Burlington regarding the Tobacco 21 issue and they are interested in doing something as well and partnering up with Bristol. She sent an article to Chief Gould which discussed the "Center City" (which Bristol is) and working with the communities surrounding towns to have them piggy back off Bristol's opioid prevention efforts. We should be sharing the committee's efforts with Plymouth, Burlington, Wolcott, Farmington and any other towns that touch Bristol.

Chief Gould stated that Bristol will be entering into an agreement with the State (DEMS) to train kids so that we can use them interchangeable with other communities to teach them to go buy underage products.

Eileen McNulty stated that it was reported at the Youth Commission that the Board of Ed voted down purchasing the vaping detectors in the schools stating it was an additional cost. The Mayor asked Councilman Kelley to follow up on that.

The Mayor met with Ana Gopian from Tri Circle and discussed Bristol becoming a recovery community. There are some official and unofficial items that need to be done. This is not an actionable item for tonight but she wanted to put it before the committee. She passed out information for their review for the next meeting in February and possibly bring it to City Council in March.

Eileen McNulty mentioned that the Best 4 Bristol wanted to start a Blue Christmas for people who might be grieving for the loss of a loved one. Clergy will be offering spiritual services during prevention week and recovery week.

ITEM #5 – NEW BUSINESS DATA COLLECTION ISSUES

Data collection continues to be an issue and we will continue to work through it in conjunction with the Bristol-Burling Health District, EMS, and Police Department.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND NEW DATA/ARTICLES CIRCULATED

Upcoming Events: Next week is National Drug and Alcohol week and February 4th is National Prevention week.

Articles distributed:

- Establishing a Recovery Friendly Community
- Mayor's letter on selling of e-cigarettes and vaping products
- Tobacco 21 article – Preventing Youth Tobacco Use
- Recovery Team – Outreach Support – A community-based service of The Children's Center of Hamden
- News article – “East Hartford Mayor aims to restrict tobacco sales”
- Letter from Dr. Sue Moreau, Board of Ed regarding vaping and Juuling
- Article – “Filing: OxyContin maker forecast ‘blizzard of prescriptions’”
- Press Release from Connecticut Department of Public Health – As opioid crisis takes its toll on CT employers, DPH offers workplace policy changes to reduce substance abuse impacts to employers and the workforce

ITEM # 7 – ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on THURSDAY, February 21st at 6:30 – First Floor Meeting Room.

Mayor Zoppo-Sassu, Chairwoman
Mayor's Opioid Task Force

DRAFT