

City of Jacksonville

*1st Floor - Council Chamber
117 W. Duval Street*



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 16, 2020

2:00 PM

Council Chambers 1st Floor, City Hall

Special Committee on the Opioid Epidemic

CM Ron Salem, Pharm.D., Chairman

CM Michael Boylan

CVP Tommy Hazouri

CM Brenda Priestly-Jackson

CM Randy White

Legislative Assistant: Juliette Williams

Research: Colleen Hampsey

Meeting Convened: 2:01 pm Meeting Adjourned: 3:17 pm

Presentation on Acetyl Fentanyl - Dr. Raymond Pomm

Dr. Pomm gave a presentation about the effects of acetyl fentanyl on the brain. Acetyl fentanyl is an opioid that is an analog of fentanyl, estimated to be fifteen times more potent than morphine. Acetyl fentanyl like other opioids, acts on opioid receptors in the brain. The brain adapts to the drug, diminishing its sensitivity, making it hard to feel pleasure from anything besides the drug. People addicted to fentanyl and analogs who stop using it can have severe withdrawal symptoms that begin as early as a few hours after the drug was last taken. The high potency of acetyl fentanyl greatly increases risk of overdose, especially if a person who uses it is unaware that a powder or pill contains it. Fentanyl and other synthetic opioids are the most common drugs involved in overdose deaths.

CM Priestly Jackson asked about educational campaigns in schools to promote awareness. There are some school programs currently, but Dr. Pomm said there should be more. CM Boylan asked about testing kits for people to assess tainted medications. Such kits are not currently available to the public. CM Salem cautioned against taking any prescription medicines unless they come directly from the pharmacy, not from a friend or the black market.

1. Call to order, introduction of Committee members - Council Member Ron Salem

Chairman Salem welcomed the attendees and members and then called for introductions.

2. Update on Project Save Lives - Dr. Raymond Pomm, Gateway

Dr. Pomm provided an update on Project Save Lives. Since it began in November of 2017 there have been 775 patients who consented to services. Of those who agreed to participate, 6 died from opioid related causes. There are currently 135 participants actively engaged in services through Project Save Lives. Dr. Pomm also spoke about the presence of fentanyl and its derivatives in other drugs besides heroin, such as cocaine, methamphetamine, Xanax and other Benzodiazepines.

3. Report on overdose trends/Narcan Grant - Chief Rowley & Chief Castleman, JFRD

Chief Castleman, JFRD, spoke about contract negotiations with emergency departments, which are still ongoing with UF Health. When asked about how to get the program into all local emergency departments, Dr. Pomm said that is the goal, but at the moment treatment capacity is an issue. In the future, it is hoped that the emergency departments at Baptist Downtown and Normandy Park will participate. Chief Castleman also said that Jacksonville Sheriff's Officers will now be carrying Narcan.

Asst Chief Mark Rowley, JFRD, spoke about overdose data trends over the last three years. After a downward trend last year, JFRD's responses to overdoses and administration of Narcan have been increasing. there were 3417 emergency calls received as overdoses in 2018 and 4140 in 2019; in 2018 Narcan was administered 2806 times and 4048 times in 2019. Opioid overdoses are most frequent in zip codes 32210, 32218, and 32244 (and council districts 1, 7, 9 and 10).

Ms. Viafora Ray, JFRD director for the Safe and Healthy Neighborhood project, spoke about federal grant funds awarded to Jacksonville to expand access to, and increase education about, Narcan. Since January 15, 2020, 189 Narcan kits have been distributed to individuals and community partners. Drug Free Duval is conducting training sessions and Gateway Community Services is providing storage for the Narcan. The distribution plan for the Narcan doses is city-wide, but targets those with the greatest risks in the highest impacted areas of Jacksonville. It was suggested that council members whose districts include elevated opioid overdose incidents should try to incorporate Narcan education into community events.

4. Update on Opioid Lawsuit - Tiffany Pinkstaff, Office of General Counsel

Tiffany Pinkstaff provided an update on the City's lawsuit against opioid pharmaceutical companies. The multi district lawsuit was remanded to federal court and is currently stayed while the judge hears selected bellwether cases and considers a global settlement resolution. Purdue Pharma declared bankruptcy last year, believed to be a step for the company to shield itself and its owners from more than 2,600 federal and state lawsuits. Settlement discussions are in progress and there is a deadline of June 30, 2020 for claims to be filed.

5. Report from Sheriff's Office - Director Nick Burgos, JSO

Steve Gallaher, JSO, provided an update on enforcement strategies and the increase in overdose death/homicide investigations. He noted that opioid addiction is a social-public health issue for which jail is not the cure. Assistant Chief Gallaher also commented on the presence of multidrug toxicity.

6. Report from State Attorney's Office - Tim Quick, State Attorney's Office

Tim Quick, State Attorney's Office, reiterated that the city cannot arrest its way out of the opioid epidemic.

7. Report on data collection - Dr. Lori Billelo, UF Health

Dr. Billelo, UF Health, spoke about data collection methodologies and how they are attempting to track outcomes for patients in five counties to see if the individual was offered, participated in or refused services from Project Save Lives.

8. E-Cigarettes and Vaping Epidemic Discussion - Council Member Ron Salem

CM Salem talked briefly about the public awareness campaign to inform residents, especially youth, about the dangers of vaping. This campaign is the result of a public-private partnership with \$100,000 from the City and \$100,000 from private donors. In the coming weeks, the City will issue an RFP to solicit bids from advertising and public relations firms to put together television and radio commercials, advertisements and other communications efforts with the goal of reducing the use of vaping products among Jacksonville youth.

9. Comments from the public (time permitting)

One attendee spoke about the risks of medically assisted treatment for opioid addiction and advocated for more faith based solutions.

10. Adjourn meeting

Minutes: Colleen Hampsey, Council Research
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