



Advisory Committee

Wednesday, September 7, 2022 10:00 to 11:30 a.m.

Hagler Mason Auditorium, City Hall

IN ATTENDANCE: Meredith Reeves, Laura Gilliam, Dr. Irv Williams, Chris Johnson, Connie Bookman, Blair Castro, Dave Torsell, Lou Ray, Steve Stroberger, Ronnie Rivera, Jesse Wolfe, Allison Patton, Ashley Wilkinson-Meyer, Brianna Houston, Buzz Ritchie, Walter Arrington, Melissa Johnson, Gina Hart? Lindsey Cannon, Lauren Clark, John Johnson, Martika Baker, Rita Cook, Michelle Luckett, Drew Stringfellow, Jarrod Dawson, Travis Tompkins, Elizabeth Kissell, Gina Hart, Guy with Bright Bridge, “Thevans” on Zoom, Marcus McBride, Ross Goodman, Sara Lefevers, Jamie LaPointe, Whitley Smith, Monica Stanford, Michael Kimberl

Connie Bookman

- Welcome

Dave Torsell, Escambia County Emergency Medical Services

- Mr. Torsell has been here in Pensacola for 15 months. He presenting information that he is giving to the BOCC at 9:00 at the COW- two things go hand in hand with homelessness: addiction and mental health. He has NEVER seen things this bad in 26 years during his career in public safety. They have data that shows they are leading the state in overdoses: 2019-2020, leading in opioid deaths, heroin overdoses, fentanyl overdoses, morphine overdoses, and cocaine overdoses. They are currently at 5.72 overdoses a day. Escambia County has

doubled in overdoses while 67 other counties saw a decrease. 1423 overdoses so far for the year in September. By end of year, we are going to be at about 1900. Have given over 1100 doses of Narcan this year.

- Escambia County has selected to participate in state CORE program, 9 counties were selected. This program is going to introduce something that has been missing, which is follow-through, case management, wrap-around services, etc. The team is EMS, three local hospitals, CHNWL, and local Health Department. Currently, nobody is following these patients after an overdose. Escambia has been sponsored with a “Community Paramedicine” grant to really scrutinize calls and to be there for the patients on a daily basis, making visits every 24-hour period to actually provide medication therapy in the field.
- The goal is the “warm hand off” with community paramedics and registered nurses. Patients will actually see who you are when you are discharged. EMS is also working to transform several vehicles to become transportation vehicles for appointments. October is the goal date for when the program will kick off.
- Chief Torsell also started a family focus group about two months ago, where he has been meeting with the family members of those struggling with addiction or who have lost family members to addiction. They are meeting monthly at the Public Safety office. These people are giving feedback on what works, and what services are failing.
- Members can reach out to EMS Chief Torsell at dmtorsell@myescambia.com; Office (850) 471-6426; Cell: (850) 436-3958

Dr. Irvin Williams and Rachelle Burns

- Health/Mental Health/Addiction/Case Management
- Dr. Williams gives an update on Mental Health subcommittee, who is working hard to streamline case

management services. Lakeview is opening a 10-bed detox facility within the next 60 days. This will be where the ASU is currently located.

- City and County have been awarded money as part of the opiate settlement; there is opiate abatement board that will be meeting to determine ways to best disperse those funds. Approx. \$175 million will be used for these purposes.

Allison Patton and Ronnie Rivera

- Legal Services/Criminal Justice/Specialty Court
- ECSO has been working with County Administrator Wes Moreno and Michelle Salzman to try and get a homeless dashboard in place where providers can go update their bed counts daily. They have also met with John Johnson and right now board is in demo/trail mode at www.myescambia.com/community-shelter-dashboard
- Laura gave feedback that we should consider other factors for why agency may not be able to update dashboard, entity needs to realize how valuable it will be for them and how valuable it will be for the community.

Marcie Whitaker and Meredith Reeves

- Housing
- Meredith gave an update on the Housing subcommittees work, seeking to provide information on grant and funding opportunities, sharing data with members and reaching across the aisle to make sure they are bringing in other partners to funding opportunities.
- Currently, there is available CSBG grant due to Covid for rentals. They are also keeping an eye on the county's discussions.
- The city and Opening Doors has awarded 35 housing vouchers, 13 currently shopping and rest are now in homes!

- The group is also looking at who has a benefit or funds from the city or county, and what was expected when they received this benefit...we need to hold these partners accountable and help them grow into what is needed.

Dr. Marcus McBride and Jesse Wolfe

- Employment/Workforce Development/Education
- George Stone has hosted several tours for members; October meeting is going to feature Dr. Deb Douma and be the Chamber officer.
- Marcus and Jesse are having conversations on how to help people take that step to get comfortable to come on to a technical college's campus, they are offering oil change class and giving them an opportunity to work on with a mentor and get that initial tour, and then explore possibility to further their education.

Ashley Wilkinson – Meyer and Jennifer Tompkins

- Faith-based Organizations/Food Programs/Mentoring/Transportation
- They are working on transportation solutions (partnering with car dealers or automotive repair shops) to help solve some of these issues.
- The FBO subcommittee is focused this month on sequential intercept mapping for food services, they are going to look at the data we have gathered where the gaps are, and any duplications, and brainstorm how to streamline these services and work in alignment.

John Johnson

- Summary of CoC Activity
- John gave everyone a report on CoC data from 2020, which is based on the last ten days of January. Florida has seen significant decline in areas of Veterans, youth, and more according to state report. The CoC will be having meetings over the next few months, on Sept 20

will be their next meeting to determine what will be next priority.

- The funding that the CoC got from CARES grant was in response to COVID. They were able to open shelters at Bright Bridge and REAP, including for homeless women and families.
- John stated that the CoC scored an 18/20 on their audit review.
- They have increased their street outreach capacity by partnering with Lakeview Center, and have partnered with Favor House to offer services to those feeling domestic violence, which was one of their target populations.
- John stated that as a state, and across all CoC's, we are having a decline in homelessness.