

MONTVILLE TOWNSHIP DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL/MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of November 9, 2016

Meeting Called to Order: by Chairperson J. Daughtry at 7:32pm

Members in Attendance: L. Connelly, M. Cooney, J. Daughtry, M. Johnson, S. Marcus, J. Matias, J. Salamone, K. Spitz, J. Witty.

Members Absent: J. Scialla (Excused), M. Campbell (Excused), M. Murolo (Excused), Carol S. Beyer

Liaisons in Attendance: D. Danzi – M.T.P.D., M. Palma – Montville BOE

Guests in Attendance: K. Haft and T. Becker

A motion was made by L. Connelly and seconded by J. Salamone to excuse the absences of members who had previously submitted notice to the Chair of their inability to attend tonight's meeting (as noted above). The motion was approved by a voice vote.

Approval of the Minutes:

M. Johnson presented the Council with the proposed minutes for the October 19th meeting of the D.A.C., circulated prior to the meeting via Email. A motion to approve the minutes as proposed was made by S. Marcus, seconded by L. Connelly, and approved by a voice vote of all members present.

Chairperson's Report:

Chair Daughtry reminded members that some individual terms are up at the end of the year, and that an application for renewal must be completed and returned to the Township Clerk by November 18th.

Chair Daughtry reported that he attended a County Opiate Task Force meeting along with L. Connelly, J. Witty, K. Spitz, and S. Marcus. The group brought back a CD of a 22-minute video shown at the meeting, "Chasing the Dragon". The video focuses on the prevalence of OxyContin in communities, resulting from prescriptions for pain relief that often lead to serious cases of addiction. J. Witty asked whether or not the Council might consider showing the video at a public event.

The group also reported on discussions regarding a new system being adopted by law enforcement agencies to take addicts to treatment facilities, rather than traditional processing upon arrest. K. Spitz noted that the movement stems from a system developed by a Police Chief in Massachusetts, which is now being adopted in West Orange.

The next meeting of the County Opiate Task Force was scheduled to take place on Wednesday, November 16th at 5pm at the Office of Temporary Assistance in Morristown. M. Johnson asked if these meetings were open to the public. Chair Daughtry replied that the Task Force is always looking for anyone with an interest to get involved.

S. Marcus noted in his summary of the meeting that he was disappointed in the lack of attention paid to primary prevention and systems to stop people from getting addicted in the first place. He noted that we should also be focused on talking to kids and families to help them understand that just because there is a pill out there these days for every issue does not mean that it should be prescribed or used. How do we fight this societal expectation that prompts people to seek these drugs automatically? J. Witty and S. Marcus also discussed past practices and efforts by the state to prevent "hit ups" of emergency rooms by walk-ins seeking to refill pain medication prescriptions. While an expansive system helps to track and report such cases in hospitals, there is no such resource for smaller "mom & pop" pharmacies.

Liaison Reports:

First Aid – No report given

Police – D. Danzi provided the Council with a detailed report on substance abuse cases for the year. S. Marcus asked if lab results were sought in all arrests related to substance abuse. D. Danzi reported that such tests are only sought if a case is proceeding to trial. S. Marcus noted that these tests can be valuable in detecting other, new substances that are being cut or mixed into other, more prevalent substances. The selective use of testing resulted in a delay in catching the rise of Fentanyl.

J. Salamone asked to clarify whether or not the "out of town" arrests were drive-through cases resulting from motor vehicle stops. D. Danzi replied that it can be a mix. Sometimes the urge will strike people to stop where they are an engage in such an activity, or they are merely passing through on their way to do it somewhere else.

SAC – No Report given. J. Witty noted that it is important to have some representation from the S.A.C. to know what is going on in the schools. In past meetings, S.A.C. Liaisons had discussed developing a rotating schedule so that each meeting would be covered. M. Johnson noted that he will follow up.

Board of Education – No report given.

Township Committee – No report given.

Youth Services – Chair Daughtry stated that reports for the Youth Center activities were submitted via email by C. Ziolkowski.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Project Graduation Committee: No report given.

Project Promotion Committee: No report given.

Programs & Community Education Committee: J. Witty reported on the status of Red Ribbon Week programming. Posters are set to be hung within the Community Center starting on Monday, November 14th for judging. The award ceremony for students and parents will be held during the evening on November 30th, though location details have yet to be finalized.

J. Witty also noted that B. Seabury of the Morris County Prosecutor's Office is interested in helping with another presentation or program (he previously hosted a forum on the Opiate Epidemic in Morris County at the Montville Twp. High School) for February or March of 2017. J. Witty will continue to check back with him on his schedule, and will keep the Council posted.

Finally, J. Witty noted that Pequannock will be hosting a presentation by former NBA player Chris Herron. The presentation was previously attended by D.A.C. members to largely positive reviews, though has been noted to be particularly expensive. The Council discussed once again whether or not it could look into teaming up with other local organizations to host the program in town.

Finance Committee: No report given.

Youth Activities & Justice System Committee: M. Johnson reported that there have been no further updates from their contacts at Rutgers, and it does not look like a graduate student is available to assist with the survey project. J. Witty recommended reaching out to another school, and that they may have a contact at the University of Texas A&M. M. Johnson noted that he will look into this, and will look to bring the survey committee together after the Holidays to discuss other potential approaches to collecting insights and views from local youth.

Public/Other Business (Not on Agenda).

The D.A.C. welcomed two guests from the community, K. Haft and T. Becker. Both had heard of the D.A.C. and attended past programs, and joined tonight's meeting in the hopes of learning more about ongoing projects and to join in the discussion. S. Marcus asked K. Haft and T. Becker to provide a "parent's impression" of the drug and alcohol curriculum within the local public school system. T. Becker noted that she believed it to be very clinical, doing a great job of teaching students about the names and nature of the various substances that are out there. In her opinion, however, it was lacking an "experience" component that connected this technical information to its impact and presence within the real world. K. Spitz noted that she had spoken to the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Rovtar, regarding the LEAD program and the inclusion of police as guest speakers. There are still discussions in the works as to what might be achievable. BOE liaison M. Palma followed up by asking for more information on these discussions. K. Spitz noted that Dr. Rovtar's initial response emphasized the difficulty in balancing guest speakers and other presentations with available instructional time. M. Johnson noted that Dr. Rovtar was very supportive of working with the D.A.C. to discuss and explore new programs and initiatives that might supplement the District's current instruction. With respect to LEAD, D. Danzi noted that there may not be much support for the program in the future, due to financial restraints.

K. Spitz followed up by noting that research into this program has been put on hold until the Police Department hires more officers. As discussed in previous meetings, the D.A.R.E. program utilized officers who were solely dedicated to community policing initiatives. No officers are currently employed in this capacity any longer. M. Cooney asked the D.A.C. what it can do to "set the stage", to ensure that necessary pieces are in place if and when more officers are available. M. Johnson noted that it's very difficult to lay a foundation, as the program depends on the availability of two organizations: the police and the schools. If one does not have a clear picture of what to expect from the other, it's very difficult to start preparing. The best we can do is keep communication channels open and engage both sides in moving the line towards our goal.

The date and time for the Round Table concept discussed by J. Scialla are still tentatively set as 7:30pm on Tuesday, November 29th at the First Aid Squad building.

Chair Daughtry reported that he has a meeting scheduled with the Township Administration in the coming week to discuss the \$15,000 recently allotted by the Township for "Drug Awareness Initiatives", and will report back on these discussions.

J. Witty reported that she will be attending a Parent Teacher Council meeting on November 17th.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to discuss on a motion made by J. Witty and seconded by J. Matias, all in favor by voice vote; meeting adjourned at 8:27pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Johnson
Corresponding/Recording Secretary
December 14, 2016
Approved: January 11, 2017