

**MONTVILLE TOWNSHIP DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL/MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE COMMITTEE**

**-SPECIAL SESSION-**  
Minutes of January 25, 2017

**Meeting Called to Order:** by Chairperson J. Daughtry at 7:30pm

**Members in Attendance:** L. Accardi, M. Campbell, L. Connelly, M. Cooney, J. Daughtry, N. D'Oench, D. Gawley, M. Johnson, S. Marcus, J. Matias, J. Salamone, K. Spitz

**Members Absent:** J. Scialla, J. Witty

**Guests in Attendance:** J. Sandham (*Mayor, Montville Twp.*)

Chair Daughtry welcomed members to this special session of the D.A.C., specifically convened to establish the Council's goals for the year. As such, there will be no reports, just discussion and assignment of specific goals to committees and individuals.

**Review of Committees:**

The Chair started the meeting by listing the current committees established by the D.A.C. Members reviewed all active committees, and sitting committee chairs were asked to contact the membership with initial meeting dates/information within the coming weeks so that Council members can decide which groups they would like to be a part of. Committees mentioned include:

- Project Graduation (*currently co-chaired by L. Connelly and J. Salamone*)
- Project Promotion (*currently chaired by J. Witty*)
- Red Ribbon Week (*currently co-chaired by J. Witty and J. Matias*)
- Finance Committee (*No current chair*)
- Programs & Community Education (*currently chaired by J. Witty*)
- Juvenile Justice & Youth Activities (*currently chaired by M. Johnson*)

Mayor Sandham recommended launching a fundraising committee to tap into communal commitment to addressing the opiate epidemic. Citing widespread interest in doing something to make an impact, he stressed the importance of striking while the iron is hot. As more organizations (including local service clubs and boards) become involved in these efforts, the Township would like to have a plan to show to them, details on how resources can be allocated to programs and other activities. Also emphasized that these efforts could draw additional support for Project Graduation. Chair Daughtry noted that fundraising would be incorporated under the finance committee.

**Discussion**

L. Accardi and K. Spitz opened the discussion by summarizing recent conversation with J. Witty. They recommended developing monthly programs to establish a stronger presence within the community. While programs, activities, and topics covered could vary, they could all be coordinated under the banner of "drug free nights". These could also be good opportunities for sponsoring with local businesses. M. Campbell noted that the D.A.C. had previously attempted a monthly program schedule, but some activities were rushed and did not make an impact. Stressed the importance of spacing events out to ensure quality over quantity and warned against taking on too many large activities back-to-back. L. Accardi and M. Johnson agreed, noting that more moderate steps could be taken to develop a D.A.C. presence. Recommended starting small, with specific, targeted programs and partnerships to build a name. Then, over time, scatter in larger, more ambitious youth programs to really draw in participation. Have to approach it as though it were one-part marketing campaign.

J. Salamone noted that his son (an MTHS graduate, former R.E.A.C.H. leader, and current college student) shared ideas for programs with the Project Graduation committee. Raised the idea of starting regular, weekend activities that get kids out an active. Need to do something to keep them from sitting at home on the weekends. Boredom can lead to trouble. M. Johnson noted the approach was very similar to developing a sense of community on a college campus, developing routine programming to get community member active. L. Accardi stressed importance of program regularity, and to keep it consistent so residents know they're coming and can plan on them. N. D'Oench noted that dances had been popular in the past, and would be another, engaging activity to bring back for students. Mayor Sandham noted that there are no fees for using community property for these activities, depending on availability. He also emphasized that there's no need to necessarily reinvent the wheel, as recreation department hosts a wide array of programs that annual serve upwards of 1,000 local youth. S. Marcus agreed, noting that this is one of the key audiences we should be seeking to reach out to. If so many school-aged children are already involved in community recreation programs, how do we share our message with them? Their families?

L. Accardi and J. Matias asked what was currently being done to ensure youth were monitored within the Youth Center and the Community Park. Members shared personal and second-hand accounts of questionable activities going on around the Youth Center

and the surrounding grounds. Emphasized that it is not a matter of displeasure with current administration of Y.C., but a simply a matter of not being able to be everywhere at once. The Council discussed the possibilities of engaging additional civic groups and organizations to sponsor programs at the Y.C. during after school hours (i.e. tutoring, presentations, hosting games/tournaments) to provide additional eyes and hands in engaging and monitoring youth while they're on the grounds. Specifically, some concerns were shared that youth may be retreating to the surrounding woods to smoke. Mayor Sandham noted that they could increase the police presence on the grounds, but if an officer were to see something it would lead to an arrest. Question raised as to whether or not such a "heavy handed" approach was an appropriate first response. The Council did not reach a final determination on this point.

J. Salamone reiterated that student feedback is important, not only in planning Project Graduation, but in determining what programs and activities the Council should bring forward as a whole. M. Johnson noted that the high school has a student government (class boards and a Student Advisory Council ("S.A.C.)), would like to see these programs strengthened and possibly reorganized to ensure students have a proper channel for sharing their voices in communal affairs. A stronger partnership with the schools and the town in empowering students by engaging them directly. Mayor Sandham noted that the D.A.C.'s bylaws call for two student representatives to serve on the Council. He recommended reaching out to the schools for recommendations. D. Gawley asked whether or not community service was a requirement for graduation. M Johnson noted that it was not a formal requirement at the high school, but has been used by some local religious organizations, and that some of the high school's clubs require the completion of service hours for full participation credit.

S. Marcus noted that, while filled with many great ideas, the current discussion was not yet goal-oriented. Risked circling around and going nowhere. M. Johnson recommended breaking the topics discussed into 3-5, broader categories and begin assigning them to working groups. These groups/committees would ultimately assume responsibility for ensuring the goal was met by the end of the term, and reporting on the Council's progress throughout the year. After an initial discussion, the Council developed the following goal areas:

- Area 1: Programs targeting local youth (to keep them active and engaged)
- Area 2: Programs targeting parents & general community members
- Area 3: Environment/Safety at the Youth Center (providing resources and support to staff/integrating additional programs)
- Area 4: Completion of the Youth Attitude Survey (collect local data on youth attitudes and trends)
- Area 5: Branding & Technology (expand outreach by utilizing new resources/develop digital presence and brand for Council)
- Area 6: Stigma Free initiative (branching off of County initiative, programming coming to Town)
- Area 7: Finances and Fundraising (including grant research)

M. Campbel noted that these areas are not yet concrete goals, need to adhere to the S.M.A.R.T. structure. M. Johnson, noting the time, recommended assigning working groups to each area, then tasking these groups to refine their assigned area into a S.M.A.R.T. goal to share with the rest of the Council. The following individuals were preliminarily assigned to working groups for each of the 7 goal areas. Members not currently listed are encouraged to reach out to these groups, or identify areas of interest at the next meeting.

- Area 1: K. Spitz, L. Accardi, J. Witty & S. Marcus
- Area 2: K. Spitz, L. Accardi & J. Witty)
- Area 3: M. Cooney & M. Johnson)
- Area 4: M. Johnson, S. Marcus, M. Cooney & D. Gawley
- Area 5: D. gawley
- Area 6: K. Spitz
- Area 7: TBD – Chair Daughtry

**Public/Other Business (Not on Agenda).**

K. Spitz and L. Accardi noted that there will be upcoming discussions on the L.E.A.D. program, and wondered whether or not this should be incorporated as a goal. M. Johnson noted that there are still personnel issues relating to police availability. Mayor Sandham noted that the opiate epidemic is priority number one for the Township, and that availability will not be an issue if programs are developed. Overtime, if needed, can be utilized to ensure objectives are met and impactful programs are supported.

K. Spitz made a motion for up to \$500.00 to be paid as a reimbursement to the Montville B.O.E. for poster contest supplies in 2016. Motion seconded by D. Gawley, and approved by members present in a voice vote (M. Johnson abstaining).

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business to discuss on a motion made by S. Marcus and seconded by L. Connelly, all in favor by voice vote; meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Johnson  
*Corresponding/Recording Secretary*  
February 8, 2017