



State of New Jersey

CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
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KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

NEIL VAN ESS
Acting Chairman

CELINA GRAY
Acting Executive Director

MINUTES

Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse October 15, 2014

Call to Order

The two hundred ninety second regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Elected Chairman Neil Van Ess.

Open Public Meetings Act Statement

Chairman Van Ess announced that notice of this meeting was provided in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21).

Roll Call

Katelyn Assenheimer called the roll. Members present and absent were noted for the record.

Bylaws Provision

Chairman Van Ess asked for a motion to continue operating under the Emergency Powers of the 2010 Bylaws. Kevin Meara made this motion and it was seconded by BettyAnn Cowling-Carson. After a vote, the motion was approved. (Y-9; N-0; ABS-6)

Approval of September Minutes

After a brief discussion, the September 2014 minutes were approved. (Y-12; N-0; ABS-4)

Chairman's Report

Chairman Van Ess thanked the members for their attendance at the meeting. He stated that he recently attended the Governor's press conference on the "Faces of Addiction". He was also present at the ribbon cutting ceremony of the Raymond J. Lesniak Recovery High School in Union County. He stated that New Jersey and the Governor's Council were both very committed to the public health crisis of heroin.

Mr. Van Ess also shared that he had received great feedback about the Municipal Alliance Volunteer of the Year event last month.

Presentation: Overview of NAMI NJ Programs

Acting Executive Director Celina Gray introduced Aruna Rao, Associate Director from the National Alliance on Mental Illness of New Jersey (NAMI NJ). In light of October 5th being declared "Mental Health Awareness Week", Ms. Rao was asked to give an overview of her organization to Council members.

Ms. Rao shared that NAMI NJ is a non-profit organization committed to promoting awareness and improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness through treatment and advocacy.

In 2001, NAMI NJ began incorporating multiculturalism into their programs. Ms. Rao shared that it became apparent that different cultures experienced different stigmas about mental illnesses. Today, NAMI NJ has educational and awareness programs for South Americans, African Americans and Chinese American families.

Ms. Rao introduced Marilyn Goldstein, teacher and trainer for NAMI NJ's "Family to Family" program. Family to Family was established in 1991 and started in New Jersey in 1996. This educational program covers information on mental illnesses and disorders, medication, treatment and recovery. It was also evaluated by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and listed as a best practice.

The course consists of 12 sessions and it is taught by other NAMI families. To date, there have been 300,000 graduates. It is currently offered in 16 counties throughout New Jersey. Ms. Goldstein shared that it is offered in Spanish and will also be offered in Mandarin in the spring of 2015.

Ms. Gray thanked Ms. Rao and Ms. Goldstein for their presentation and stated that mental illness does not discriminate. She said different cultures have different experiences and the substance abuse component of these programs offered by NAMI NJ was very important.

Acting Executive Director's Report

Acting Executive Director Celina Gray shared that the Governor's Council is fully engaged in the heroin crisis in New Jersey. She recently attended the Governor's anti-stigma conference on addiction and will also be involved in the Governor's Task Force on addiction. She has also been invited to speak at the Department of Human Services' Stakeholder's Communication Group to decrease stigma.

Ms. Gray said that GCADA staff is working with the county Alliance coordinators on the remediation of their county plans. Rebecca Alfaro will present the progress of this as well as give an overview of the county guidelines at the November meeting. She also said that she had received great feedback about the Volunteer of the Year event. She said GCADA would continue with this format for recognizing the volunteers next year in lieu of the Summit.

This year, the Governor's Council is seeking to increase its sponsorship level to \$40,000 towards the New Jersey Prevention Network's annual conference which will be held on March 6, 2015 at the Atlantic City Convention Center. Ms. Gray shared that an increase in sponsorship will offer GCADA greater visibility with our logo as well as addiction campaign materials. This sponsorship would also provide 200 scholarships to Municipal Alliance members to attend the conference. These scholarships would in turn provide GCADA staff and public Council members with free registrations. Ms. Gray will provide more details regarding a keynote speaker and workshops as they become available.

Other Council Business

Paul Ressler shared that he really enjoyed the Volunteer of the Year event and felt it was very moving. He informed the Council members that he had not been reappointed to the Council but would continue to offer his support.

Gregg Benson stated that he felt New Jersey has been making a lot of progress in the area of addiction with the support of the Governor.

Adjournment

Elected Chairman Neil Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m.