

MINUTES
Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
October 23, 2009

CALL TO ORDER

The two hundred forty second regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Acting Chairman Neil Van Ess.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

Acting Chairman Neil 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

Susan Massaro called the roll. Members present and absent were noted for the record (see attached record).

Approval of Minutes

Acting Chairman Van Ess asked for a motion to approve the September minutes as presented to the Council.

Harry Morey motioned to approve the September minutes; seconded by Gregg Benson. A roll call vote was taken (see attached vote sheet) and the motion carried.

Executive Committee – No Report

Alliance Committee

Harry Morey, Chair, reported that the Alliance Committee is corresponding with DARE to set up a meeting to work out some questions they have regarding their programs. He also welcomed Riley Regan and is happy to honor the volunteers today.

Interdepartmental Advisory Panel

Gary Vermeire, Chair, reported there is nothing to add to last month's report and they are going to try and meeting on a quarterly basis. The request for the State Government component has been sent out and they will meet in early November.

Planning Committee

Executive Director Powner reported that Anthony Bucco sends his apologies that he could not be here today. He was called away this morning to a meeting but will try to join us for this afternoon's luncheon. She mentioned that the State Government Components are being worked on and we have already received a couple of the departments. The subcommittees are working on their goals and objectives for next year and we have not received any submissions so far for the Trends and Issue section in the Master Plan. The Planning Committee plans on having a draft copy of the Master Plan ready for the November meeting. Executive Director Powner also mentioned that we should have a draft copy of the GCADA bylaws for the November meeting.

Criminal/Juvenile Justice Subcommittee – No Report

Legislative Subcommittee

Kay McGrath, Chair, reported that the Subcommittee met on October 15th and had a presentation by Larry Ganges, Assistant Commissioner Division of HIV/AIDS Services, New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, that was on the Blood borne Harm Reduction Act, which is the formal name of the Needle Exchange Program. This act allows up to six cities to establish a demonstration pilot syringe access program to help prevent the spread of HIV, Aids, Hepatitis C and other blood borne disease. This program was signed into law by Governor Corzine in December 2006. GCADA on the recommendation of the Legislative Subcommittee approved the syringe needle exchange program with a caveat that those who applied for the needles exchange be offered treatment. A \$10 million dollar appropriation was attached to the bill designated for treatment; however no money was designated for the needle exchange program. Although the department has the money they are prohibited by federal and state law from using any public money for the purpose of exchanging syringes, money had to be raised independently. Mr. Ganges was a dynamic speaker and Ms McGrath would recommend he do a presentation to the GCADA. Mr. Ganges talked about the seriousness of the HIV problem and how it has reached epidemic proportions in New Jersey and the United States, how it is transmitted, and the requirements to have a needle exchange program. There are only five cities in New Jersey participating in the program. Trenton is not one of them because it did not pass the ordinance necessary to allow the program. Ms. McGrath went on to report that in the United States over 1.1 million people are living with HIV Aids and 1 out of every 5 don't know it, and

there are 56,000 new HIV infections annually. To date there have been over 500,000 related deaths in the United State. Minorities, women, men who have sex with men and youth are most at risk. As of December 12, 2008 there were over 72,000 HIV cases reported in New Jersey. New Jersey ranks 5th in accumulative cases, 3rd in pediatrics cases and has one of the highest proportions of women with AIDS. New Jersey also ranks 2nd among the 50 states with AIDS cases due to injection drug use.

The Legislative Subcommittee also discussed the 911 Lifeline Law or A3160/S2748, that grants immunity to certain underage persons for unlawful possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages. This issue was brought up to the subcommittee by Robert Zlotnick because this bill was sitting on the Governor's desk to be signed and he was looking for support urging the Governor to sign it. However, before a resolution supporting the legislation could be passed by GCADA the bill was signed by the Governor. Bob Zlotnick informed the subcommittee that there would be a press conference at Monmouth University on October 20th to help create an awareness of the merit of the legislation and to hopefully offset some of the negative press that suggested it would be a license for underage drinking. Dr Zlotnick offered recommendations that would speed up our process of passing a resolution when GCADA supports legislation.

The Subcommittee also looked at its goals and objectives and will vote on them at the next meeting. There was a discussion on how often and alternate ways of holding future subcommittee meetings.

There were some questions and comments made by Council members present. John Gluck asked for clarification on some of the statistics regarding the success of the program offered by Ms. McGrath who initially reported that there were a total of 3,748 people enrolled in the program and that 1,644 were sent to treatment and 48% were successful. Nick Petrozzino clarified the numbers and said 1,600 were referred to a program and 48% were successfully admitted to a program, and that is not saying the individuals successfully completed or graduated from a program.

Treatment Subcommittee

Gregg Benson, Chair, reported that the Treatment Subcommittee will meet directly after the November Council meeting. In the meantime again part of the issue is attracting new membership to the committee to revitalize it and if anyone knows of anyone interested in being on the subcommittee please let him know. There are a number of issues to discuss, and to partner with the Legislative Subcommittee, as we look down the road at some of the concerns impacting the field from the treatment standpoint.

Veterans and Military Ad Hoc Committee

Nick Petrozzino reported that the directories are a very big hit and is getting calls every day for them.

Other Business – No Other Business

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Powner mentioned that there are few prospective new members for some of the subcommittees and she will get these names out to the Chairs. She briefly explained who in the office is taking care of what committees and encouraged Council members to get involved in the subcommittees if they are not already participating.

We hosted a prevention meeting on October 1st along with NJPN and DAS to discuss county and municipal prevention planning. She said it was a great start but we need to keep moving forward with these types of meetings and expand them to others such as Department of Education and Department of Health.

Executive Director Powner said that the workshop she is presenting following the meeting will discuss making the case to have the Municipal Alliance Program recognized as effective environmental prevention strategy. She has been reaching out to academics and researchers in New Jersey to explore partnerships that will lead to scholarly papers and research we need to document the case.

GCADA has been meeting with Treasury Administration and is preparing a request for a proposal for independent auditing services. Beginning in 2010 auditors will go out to the counties to audit the DEDR Funds. Our plans are to audit seven counties a year so that in three years, a plan cycle, we will complete all twenty one.

Site visits have started to the counties Marge Beattie, Kevin Sullivan and Nick Petrozzino are doing the monitoring. They each take a portion of the monitoring: Marge is doing fiscal, Kevin is doing administration and Nick is looking at programmatic.

Executive Director Powner explained that we have been asked for another status update from the Comptroller's Office which is due on Monday, October 26th.

When the Legislature returns we are going to follow up with some of the legislators we met with during year. A few showed a keen interest to assist us moving forward to maximize the state's resources so that prevention, intervention and treatment can serve more people and be more

effective. She has been invited by Senator Lesniak to work on a committee of experts regarding criminal justice and corrections reforms specific to drug abusers.

Gregg Benson mentioned that at the last meeting he brought up the CSAP and CSAT reports sent to DAS and asked that GCADA request copies of the actual reports. Executive Director Powner said that the letter sent to DHS Commissioner Velez regarding the State Government Component also asked for additional information including the CSAP and CSAT reports.

Dorinda Sapp from the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs mentioned that many schools are transitioning from using the DARE program to one the National Guard is implementing. She asked if the Council would be interested in having them do a presentation on the program at an upcoming meeting. Acting Chairman Van Ess and others said that would be very interesting and asked Executive Director Powner to coordinate with Ms. Sapp to arrange for the presentation.

Public Comments

David Hanna had a question regarding the 911 bill, was it on underage drinking? The answer was yes. He also had some comments regarding using DARE and there was discussion and comments made from the Council members present.

Acting Chairman Van Ess introduced keynote speaker General Dean of CADCA. General Dean wanted to stop by and say good morning to the Council and said it is very important to have good models and strategies for local people to use; this is one of the things he will talk about today and how we can increase the work we do. The challenges we find right now across the country is this big health care movement, but addiction and substance abuse is not included. CADCA has been working to get it included and he urged the Council and Alliances to raise the issue as well. Another challenge they have right now is to break down the barriers between education, prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery and dealing with it all as one continuum is critical. There a lot talk nationally about screening and intervention, treatment and recovery, and losing site of the fact that you still have to prevent. He also discussed the Safe and Drug Free Schools losing the state grants funding and New Jersey having to face some challenges with medical marijuana issue.

Bill Smithoover discussed that the drug free school program was a good thing. He wanted to know if this was the group that put together the DEDR grant regulations. He had concerns regarding the 25% limit on an individual program in that his community could not fully fund a drop in youth center. His concerns were answered by John Gluck and Executive Director Powner. There was some discussion among the Council members present.

Adjournment

Acting Chairman Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:55 a.m.

Mary Lou Powner
Executive Director