

MINUTES
Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse
February 15, 2011

Call to Order

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

Open Public Meetings Act Statement

Acting Vice 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).

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was said by the Council members present.

Roll Call

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

Chairman's Remarks

Acting Vice Chairman stated that this meeting would be for informational purposes only since there was no quorum.

Mr. Neil Van Ess introduced a new public member Barbara Sprechman from the Mercer Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. He also welcomed James Wojtowicz who will be the new designee for the Department of Corrections since Myrtle Daniels has retired.

Acting Chairman Van Ess also stated that he would continue on as Acting Vice Chairman until a new Chairman was nominated. No formal vote was taken due to a lack of quorum.

Compulsive Gambling Presentation

Don Weinbaum, Executive Director of the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey gave a presentation to the GCADA members regarding the work of the Council.

The Council is a nonprofit agency that has been in service for 28 years. The Council focuses on prevention of problem gambling, education, advocacy and referral. There are 11 providers across the state that work with the CCGNJ. Currently there are about 350,000 problem gamblers in the state of New Jersey. Many times, problem gambling is a hidden addiction and doesn't come out until the person is in serious financial trouble. A family member that comes from an alcohol and drug addicted family is more at risk to become a problem gambler.

The agency provides a 24 hour hotline (1-800-GAMBLER) that offers free or low cost treatment and/or referrals. About 25% of the calls received are from family members of problem gamblers. A K-12 curriculum on Gambling Awareness is available to interested schools. The Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey is also working on creating a chat feature on their website.

National Problem Gambling Week begins on March 6th thru March 12th. In 2010, Governor Chris Christie proclaimed the month of March Problem Gambling Awareness Month in New Jersey and Don Weinbaum hopes this will be done for 2011 as well.

The Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse drafted a resolution recognizing Problem Gambling Awareness Month. This resolution will be emailed out to the Council members.

Executive Committee – No Report

Alliance Committee – No Report

Interdepartmental Advisory Panel – No Report

Planning Committee – No Report

Criminal/Juvenile Justice Subcommittee – No Report

Legislative Subcommittee

Kay McGrath reported that the Subcommittee met on January 13th and February 3rd.

The subcommittee drafted a resolution with the help of Jon Gaspich for the need to have a Student Assistance Counselor in every school district. A resolution regarding this matter had been drafted a number of years ago, but it was never adopted by the Legislative Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee discussed Bill A3703/S2614 which offers an early release to individuals who are incarcerated for drug related offenses if they agree to attend and complete a 4 stage intensive drug treatment program. The Subcommittee suggested changes to the Bill and these changes were forwarded to Senator Lesniak who seemed very receptive.

Bill A3350/S2497 was also discussed by the Subcommittee members. This bill offers individuals who are in arrears with their child support responsibilities to have their professional, driver's and other license restored if they make arrangements and put forth a good faith effort to pay their child support obligations.

Treatment Subcommittee – No Report

Veterans and Military Ad Hoc Committee

Acting Chairman Neil Van Ess reported that the Resource Guide was in the process of being updated and copies should be available within the next few months.

Other Business

No other business was reported.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Mary Lou Powner informed the Council members that this would be Evon Judkins last Council meeting as she will be retiring on March 1st. She has been a great asset to the GCADA and will be missed. George Myers has come to GCADA as a transfer and will be taking over many of Evon's responsibilities as State Alliance Coordinator. Also, Rebecca Alfaro-Avenoso is out on maternity leave until June and her county assignments have been delegated among Marge Beattie, George Myers, Kevin Sullivan and Nick Petrozzino. The GCADA staff all have different roles across the agency.

Ms. Powner also reported on the SAMSHA Stop Survey that the State of New Jersey has been asked to participate in. All submissions are due by February 28th. The survey contains four parts: Enforcement which will be submitted by the Department of Law and Public Safety, Prevention which will be submitted by the Division of Addiction Services and the remaining two (Collaboration and State Funding) will be submitted by the Governor's Council. The information from the Master Plan will be used as a basis for this survey.

The first cohort of the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America training will be held at the Radisson Hotel in Freehold from March 28th through April 1st. Eight counties will be invited to participate in the first training. The other sessions will be held in June and September.

The Governor's Council Alliance Summit will be held in September. The Executive Committee decided on this month because there are many conferences already being held in the spring and September is also Recovery Month for the State of New Jersey.

Public Comments

No comments from the public.

Adjournment

Acting Chairman, Neil Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m.

Mary Lou Powner
Executive Director