

***Mental Health and Substance Abuse Committee Meeting  
August 25, 2014  
Town Council Chambers***

Present: Chair Rebecca Haugh  
Councilor Thomas J. Lacey  
Councilor Patrick O'Connor  
Councilor Robert Conlon

Not Present: Michael Molisse

Also Present: Lyn Frano, Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator

Recording Secretary: Diane T. Hachey

Chair Haugh called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM and opened the meeting by thanking all committee members for attending during the summer recess.

***Presentation by Lyn Frano, Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator***

Ms. Frano distributed a binder which contains pertinent information regarding the subject of substance abuse and noted that she will update as needed. Additionally, a hard copy of a power point was distributed to the committee members and used as a basis for her discussion this evening.

There are various abuse prevention programs which are federally and state funded:

- *Drug Free Communities Support Program (DGC) Grant*, which runs from October of 2006 until September of 2011. Weymouth was one of 87 communities who received this grant.
- *Drug Free Communities Support Program (DFC)*, which runs from October of 2011 through September of 2016
- *Hal Roger's Prescription Drug Monitoring Grant*, which runs from 2013 to present. This vital program identifies for pharmacists, doctors, and police-- people who are "doctor/pharmacy shopping" to fill prescriptions. It is beneficial as it alerts as to those who may have addiction issues. Additionally, the District Attorney's Office has trained all medical personnel in the administration of naran, which has saved the lives of individuals who have overdosed.

- *Prevention and Wellness Trust Fund*
- *Massachusetts Opioid Abuse Prevention Collaborative (MOAPC)*

This collaborative addresses oxycontin, percocet, and other highly addictive pain killers. Other sources of funding under this collaborative are CHNA20, Fundraising, Memorials, Disposal for medication collection kiosks in partnership with the Norfolk County District Attorney's Office and Covanta, Sharp's containers/disposal for needles collection kiosk (Manet Community Health Center).

Ms. Frano discussed what we, as a town, are doing to address the substance abuse issue, and she noted that we face an acute challenge from the overuse of prescription pain medications-- which have become so expensive that those addicted have turned to heroin as their drug of choice. But we, as a town, have proactively been addressing this issue, along with youth alcohol, tobacco and marijuana use since 2006. From 2002 through 2007 there have been 3265 overdose cases in the state of Massachusetts. As a result of this, the Massachusetts Oxycontin and Heroin Team was established. The Town of Weymouth is working collaboratively with the city of Quincy (MOAPC) and funding is being granted to towns (Braintree, Weymouth, Quincy, Randolph and Stoughton) which have established focus groups to study the issue and come up with a plan of attack. The town of Weymouth included a mailing in the water bill, which was so successful that it is serving as a model for other towns and states. The Mayor has also instituted an "anonymous drug tip line" which has served to curb those dealing illegal drugs, in addition to training programs at the schools (young ages) to educate children about the dangers of drug use.

Chair Haugh asked if Ms. Frano believes the issue is getting better or worse, to which Ms. Frano replied that she has been in this position for seven years and believes, due to all of these programs, that the situation is improving. She believes that the use of marijuana is increasing since it was decriminalized and warns that medical marijuana use may increase abuse.

Ms. Frano noted an upcoming seminar entitled "A Frank Discussion on Marijuana" which is being held on September 22 at 7:00 PM. She encouraged all committee members to attend and noted that she has complimentary tickets for anyone interested.

Ms. Frano recognized the support to schools through DFC funding as follows:

-*Youth survey administration* which identifies trends in youth substance use, and guides the work and gauges the town's prevention efforts

*-Updated Health Waves curriculum for middle/high school health classes*

*-ATOD prevention videos for health education classes (pre and post testing to gauge progress)*

*-Family programs for students at risk for drug use*

Councilor Conlon noted that it is imperative that parents control their prescriptions at home, so they are not available to their children.

Councilor O'Connor expressed that he graduated in 2003 and some of his friends, who were good kids, fell into drug programs. They have told him that if they realized the seriousness of drugs they would have handled their situation differently. He feels that we are addressing the issue by raising awareness.

Councilor Lacey compliments Ms. Frano on her efforts, with this uphill battle and questions who runs the methadone clinic. He is concerned that this may be an addictive drug also. Ms. Frano does not know who is responsible for the clinic, but confirms that methadone has been around for a long time and although there isn't a lot of research surrounding it, due to substance abuse being a stigma, it too, can be addictive. There is also a drug on the market called suboxone which takes the craving away and vivitrol which is a shot.

Councilor O'Connor feels strongly that the major pharmaceutical companies play a major role in this, citing that people get hooked on prescription drugs, then on the preventative drugs, it is a vicious circle.

Councilor Conlon suggests that the federal government should fund pharmaceutical companies in an effort to curb addiction and develop an antidote to addiction.

Councilor Lacey agrees on the premise as stated by Councilor Conlon, not that the federal government should fund the effort, but the pharmaceuticals should.

Chair Haugh complemented Ms. Frano on the content included in the binder distributed. Many constituents have reached out to her as chair of this newly formed committee and asked how they can be of help,

Ms. Frano noted that the Youth Coalition meets regularly and Officer Joe Favreau is going to be the new chair, as she is stepping down.

The Town Council can help support her efforts by approving funding for conferences and training and when the grant is depleted in 2016, funding her position on a full time basis in order for this important work to continue.

Ms. Frano offered to make herself available in any way the Council wishes, she is willing to train constituents who've expressed an interest in helping. She asked what the committee hopes to accomplish. Councilor O'Connor wants to shed light on an issue which is real, prevalent and remove the stigma. Town Council is getting involved, becoming educated on the topic and people want to help, he encourages them to get involved and help prevent substance abuse.

Ms. Frano agrees that raising awareness and removing the stigma attached to substance abuse is imperative as it perpetuates those who need help from coming forward and asking for it.

With no further business to attend to, Councilor O'Connor motioned to adjourn at 7:51 PM - motion seconded by Councilor Lacey and voted unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by: Diane T. Hachey as Recording Secretary

Approved by: Chair Rebecca Haugh

Voted unanimously on 15 September 2014