



CITY OF DELRAY BEACH
ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
OPIOID SETTLEMENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE

100 NW 1st Avenue
Delray Beach, FL 33444

Monday, October 6, 2025

11:00 a.m.

City Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room

1. **CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Mazzeo at 11:02 am.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

Present:

Ariana Ciano, Police Department
Charles Ridley, Vice Chair
Joseph Mazzeo, Fire Department, Chair
Stephen Posovsky

Absent:

Jeffrey Lefton

Staff present:

Jeff Oris, Assistant City Manager / Board Liaison
Lawonda Warren, Legal Advisor
Jeane St. Luce, Executive Assistant

Roll was called and quorum was present.

3. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

A Motion was made by Charles Ridley to approve the agenda, seconded by Ariana Ciano. All in favor, no opposed. Motion **PASSED** unanimously **(4-0)**.

4. **MINUTES**

A Motion was made by Charles Ridley to approve August 4, 2025, minutes, seconded by Ariana Ciano. All in favor, no opposed. Motion **PASSED** unanimously **(4-0)**.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Dr. Suzanne Spencer, CEO of Living Skills in the Schools, 1700 Lake Ida Road, stated one out of every four kids resides in a home with substance abuse. She stated to give money where it would be the most effective to the community as every \$1 invested gets \$18 in return. She discussed preventing the onset of the first use of a substance of students which could prevent the risk of addiction at a later stage.

Steve English, Crossroads, 102 NE 10th Street, stated Crossroads has a 42-year history. He stated he is an advocate of seeing the money effective in prevention, assistance with job retraining, housing and any other aspect that takes a holistic approach. He commented on how medical personnel in the community should be trained on how to deal with people who are addicted as a number of people relapse due to ill informed medical practitioners who prescribe liberally because they do not know how to deal with addicted people.

Cat Kelley, Crossroads, 5671 Devil Circle, explained she is on the Board of Crossroads and provided background information. She advised in six months that approximately 117,000 people have walked through the doors at Crossroads for various reasons. She explained their biggest hurdle is housing assistance for those individuals released from treatment facilities with no money, no family support and no means to support themselves. She has been able to provide some scholarships for housing.

6. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. Discussion With Drug Task Force

Assistant City Manager Oris stated that since it was discussed at the last meeting to collaborate with the Drug Task Force, the item was placed on the agenda.

Committee Member Ciano stated that instead of working separately, everyone should work together to come up with a plan on how to spend the opioid funds and what is right for the City of Delray Beach.

Assistant City Manager Oris provided a background on the opioid settlement and the responsibilities of the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee.

Lawonda Warren, Legal Advisory requested attendees to state their name, address and if they are a representative of the Drug Task Force when speaking.

Committee Member Ciano introduced Lissa Franklin, Director of the Drug Task Force.

Lissa Franklin, Director of the Drug Task Force, introduced herself and provided a background. She discussed the background on how Committee Member Ciano's position and program was established with much success. She discussed the need for an outreach program in the Fire Department.

Chair Mazzeo asked if anyone has any recommendations to the committee for the available opioid funds which the committee could evaluate and ensure it complies with the requirements.

Steve English asked if there was a proposal or outline for the funds? Assistant City Manager Oris stated that is the purpose of this committee.

Vice Chair Ridley discussed that it would be helpful for him to find out what is happening in the community with regards to substance abuse. He questioned what are the problems and how do we fund the solutions.

Dr. Suzanne Spencer stated the committee is discussing a big, complex problem and \$200,000 is not going to solve the problem. We also need to know if the funds are going to be a one-time distribution or multi-year. Some of the decisions will be around the funding. Will the funds seed a program or amplify programs already existing. The committee needs to narrow this down to how to use the funds. Does the committee want to look at prevention, intervention or crisis. Let's narrow down some of the questions which will help where the committee wants to focus.

Mark Woods, Code Enforcement, stated it is a difficult time in Delray Beach because the housing prices have put sober houses off the grid. Mark Woods provided some background information on DAF (Drug Abuse Foundation). Once a person gets out of treatment, sober houses provide a place for the person to reside. The home has to charge rent, and the rent comes from a bunch of different sources including scholarships. Unfortunately, poor people are left out as they don't have first, last or security as well as means to continue with rent. The housing voucher from DAF is the only resource.

Dr. Suzanne Specer asked Mark Woods why employment is not available to everyone because they are so early in recover or are businesses not willing to hire them? Should the committee be looking at employer's programs.

Mark Woods said for the person that does not have family support, yes.

Lissa Franklin stated the housing vouchers would be a viable option.

Cat Kelley stated she has seen several clients that are having a hard time finding employment. For 50 job applications submitted there might be 2 call backs. Some companies do not want to hire people who are in recovery. Luckily Delray Beach does have a few companies that hire people in recovery. She questioned if this is a one-time drop in money or is the money going to be used in different ways.

Dr. Suzanne Spencer stated we all think about how we can help individuals, but our mission is what can help the masses.

Angie Sweeney, Public Funding Innovation Fund, stated she is working with Florida Commerce on an admission of parental assistance. When a person is in early recovery and in need of short term rental assistance, fund the person in recovery in a board-certified recovery residence for a few weeks and assist them with employment and supportive services. At first 100% of rental assistance then once the person obtains employment the rent will decrease until the person is able to cover the rent themselves. This is a statewide initiative that is in the works.

Lisa McWhorter, Wayside House, 378 NE 6th Avenue, provided a background on Wayside House. She stated the trifecta is after someone comes out of treatment the person has stable housing, skills to stay clean and employment. What happens in the first year is critical. The identified problem is long-term assistance. If the person is unable to stay employed, the person would not be able to afford rent. Wayside House only services women but for everyone in the community, there is no long-term assistance.

Dr. Suzanne Spencer asked why the person would not be able to keep employment.

Lisa McWhorter stated that since the person is in the early stages of recovery, they are trying to stay clean, keep a job, keep their emotions in check and possibly deal with family issues. She explained at Wayside House, they assist women and children. She explained the money should be used for the masses as most people relapse in the first six months because they just can't keep it together and they need support.

Mark Woods asked what the restrictions are to use the opioid settlement money?

Lissa Franklin stated the funds must be tied back to opioids.

Cat Kelley stated when the opioid money first became available there was a sheet of what the money could be used for, which was anything that is opioid related for the masses.

Lisa Franklin announced the HUB would be closing. She stated on a large scale what has helped other communities falls into four buckets: prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery.

Lisa McWhorter stated Committee Member Ciancio has the pulse on what is happening in Delray Beach. She talked about the Palm Beach County's Fire Department bridge program.

Chair Mazzeo stated the Fire Department started doing a bridge program, but the program was canceled due to lack of funding. He discussed running a Narcan report for a month and the Fire Department has provided Narcan to more elderly people, with the majority over 70 plus years of age, than youth. Elderly people are being prescribed drugs for ailments.

Steve English stated that is why we should provide education to our medical professionals as it is not just the young population. He commented that there are people residing at Harbor Edge and they have a massive addiction issue because they have the means to have any doctor prescribe any prescription. We should focus on what is the biggest bang for the buck.

Assistant City Manager Oris explained the settlement agreement and stated if funding a program can be related to opioids, then it would be allowed. The city needs to send the state the annual plan.

Steve English commented that if Fire Departments are dispatched to the elderly population due to being overly prescribed, the commission is going to want to see the cost savings. He further discussed wrapping the housing vouchers around a volunteer program. If the person is unemployed and looking for a job maybe the person could volunteer and give back ten hours a week. This would be similar to a job and when a person is busy, the person tends to have opportunities open. To see tangible value to the community, the person could volunteer for hours cleaning up the parks in Delray Beach.

Dr. Suzanne Spencer asked Mr. English is he wanted to seed a program or amplify one? He said seed.

Vice Chair Ridley stated he understands there is a rise in seniors but what are people seeing on the streets?

Chair Mazzeo stated the Fire Department is not seeing as many overdose calls because of the availability of Narcan. He further stated, just because the calls are down does not mean they are not happening. It just means someone else may be giving the person Narcan and they are not going through the 911 system.

Discussion ensued regarding the affordable housing and employment for people getting out of treatment.

Discussion ensued regarding the HUB being utilized and the HUB closing.

Stephanie Thompson, 100 S. Swinton Ave, stated there are enough treatment centers and they need to look at resiliency. She stated maybe this money could be tied to programs that are already being utilized like housing vouchers and job placement. She also stated there needs to be a person following up on people utilizing the funds.

Vice Chair Ridley asked if anyone is working with the Chamber of Commerce.

Lissa Franklin stated the Drug Task Force is a member and they work together to train Publix and Home Depot how to be recovery friendly employers.

Dr. Suzanne Spencer discussed an LSIS lunch and learn educational work program that educates parents on substance abuse. There is nothing more stressful than having a child who is actively engaging in substance abuse. She stated the program started last year and it is throughout the county. This may be an opportunity to grow the program.

Vice Chair Ridley asked how the Drug Task Force gets funded.

Lissa Franklin stated the Drug Task Force gets funding through fundraising and membership dues.

Chair Mazzeo asked when the Drug Task Force fundraises, is there a set amount or a specific reason?

Lissa Franklin stated they only fundraise to cover the website and IRS filing. Everything else is volunteered.

Dr. Suzanne Spencer asked the question again, are we looking to seed a program or are we looking to amplify something.

Chair Mazzeo stated at this time, he does not have an answer to that question.

Dr. Suzanne Spencer asked what is the end goal as it is her understanding that the money is to prevent opioid fatalities in the future.

Tammie Selman, Wayside House, asked what was the cost of the program that was defunded in the Fire Department.

Chair Mazzeo stated that with the increase in population and being dispatched to more calls, there was a need to evaluate what the community needs and risk reduction. The Fire Department's top calls are falls due to the elderly population. We could align our resources for elderly, homeless, substance abuse, educating diabetics and individuals with cardiac history. Doctors treat people but no one follows up on the person once they walk out the door. The Fire Department was able to use paramedics on light duty as social workers. Focus on the person, how they got there and how to assist them. We do fire prevention, but we don't do medical prevention. Our aim was to strive for preventative medical care. During the budget process for the last two years, we requested a social worker and paramedic for 40 hours a week to run the mobile intergraded health, but it was denied both times. Discussion ensued on the program.

Dr. Suzanne Spencer commented instead of just educating doctors, maybe we should expand to educating pharmacists. It could help seniors with misuse of medications.

Discussion ensued the possibility of seed money for the educational program.

Lissa Franklin asked if it would be helpful if she submitted a list of active members of the Drug Task Force and service category they represent. She could also provide the number of certified beds and what services are available.

Chair Mazzeo asked if she could describe the Drug Task Force, who is involved and their goals.

Lissa Franklin stated the Drug Task Force is a group of community advocates, city employees, county officials, and people in recovery who come together to increase education, prevention and recovery through various community initiatives. They host events to educate employers how to be recovery friendly employers. They also have a first responders' wellness program

Committee Member Ciancio stated back in 2015-2017 that the Drug Task Force was a lot more people. The current group is the dedicated, core group that has attended every monthly meeting and is invested in what happens in the city.

Chair Mazzeo asked what the Drug Task Force would do with \$200,000.

Committee Member Ciancio stated they would address the core issue: prevention, treatment and recovery.

Mark Woods what would be the next steps to have the providers request funding.

Cat Kelley stated the Drug Task Force helps set up all the programs and outreach.

Mark Woods questioned if the Drug Task Force has the accounting background to handle \$200,000 for accountability and distribution.

Discussion ensued on the possibility of the Drug Task Force receiving the \$200,000 for housing, resilience and prevention.

There was consensus by the committee for the Drug Task Force to provide a list of programs that could be funded with the \$200,000 by October 24, 2025.

B. Formulation Of A Recommended Opioid Settlement Expenditure Plan For FY 2025-26

7. **NEW BUSINESS:**

None

8. **COMMENTS:**

A. Staff

None

Note: Vice Chair Ridley left the meeting at 12:24 pm.

B. Committee Members

Committee Member Ciancio will follow up on why the HUB is closing. She also announced there are two available seats on this Committee.


Assistant City Manager Oris stated there may be a conflict of interest if a person is on this committee and the committee allocates funds to their organization.

9. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:26 pm.


Board Liaison


Date


Board Chair


Date