

Harm Reduction Commission

Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2019

3:00-5:00 pm

Date of meeting: Monday, January 28, 2019

Start time: 3:05 pm

End time: 5:15 pm

Location: McCormack Building, One Ashburton Place, Conference Rooms 1 & 2, Boston, MA 02108

Members present:

- Marylou Sudders – Executive Office of Health and Human Services (Chair)
- Monica Bharel, MD, MPH – Department of Public Health
- Jeffrey N. Roy – State House of Representatives
- Cindy Friedman – State Senate
- Marty Martinez – Designee of the Mayor of Boston
- Marc McGovern – Mayor of Cambridge
- Jessie M. Gaeta, MD – Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program
- Matilde Castiel, MD – Worcester Health and Human Services
- Armando Gonzalez – Massachusetts resident
- Leo Beletsky, JD, MPH – Northeastern University
- Deirdre Calvert, LICSW – Column Health
- Gary Langis – Education Development Center
- Aubri Esters – Massachusetts resident
- Robert Roose, MD – Mercy Medical Center

Members absent:

- Frederick Ryan – Arlington Police Department

Proceedings

Secretary Sudders called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm. She welcomed members and explained that the commission has scheduled two additional meetings for February 12 and 26. She noted that her staff is finalizing a scan of harm reduction services that are available in Massachusetts, which will be shared with the commission prior to the next meeting on February 12.

Secretary Sudders noted that members of the media were present at the meeting and have requested to make audio recordings, which Secretary Sudders has allowed without objection.

Vote: Secretary Sudders requested a motion to approve the minutes from the commission's previous meeting on January 9, 2019. Senator Friedman moved to approve the minutes, which was seconded and approved unanimously by all members in attendance.

Three representatives from the Boston Users Union shared their personal stories and outlined their members' preferences and recommendations related to harm reduction sites and services. The representatives, who identified themselves as Paul Bowman, Sonjia, and Ralph, stated their preferences for a supervised consumption site to be established in Boston and to expand the services and operating hours of existing harm reduction programs. In particular, the representatives praised the services offered by Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program's Safe Place for Observation and Treatment (SPOT) and the Boston

Public Health Commission's harm reduction and needle exchange program known as AHOPE (Access, Harm Reduction, Overdose Prevention and Education). (See PowerPoint presentation posted online to the commission's Meeting Materials webpage for additional details.)

Dr. Elsie Taveras, Executive Director for the Kraft Center for Community Health, presented on the organization's mobile health program in Boston. (See PowerPoint presentation posted online to the commission's Meeting Materials webpage for additional details.)

At 4:15 pm, Mayor Walsh entered the room and replaced Mr. Martinez at the commission table.

Mayor Walsh provided an overview of his trip to Toronto and Montreal from January 17-18, 2019 to meet with city officials and visit the supervised consumption sites.

Mayor McGovern provided an overview of his trip to Montreal from January 17-18, 2019 to meet with public health officials and visit supervised consumption sites operating in Montreal.

Commissioner Castiel left the meeting at 4:50 pm.

Secretary noted that her staff will be compiling members' perspectives into a draft document summarizing the commission's findings. She stated that the commission is not required to achieve a consensus on the findings. Senator Friedman suggested that commission members send their comments regarding the commission's findings directly to Secretary Sudders's staff before the commission's next meeting.

Vote: Secretary Sudders requested a motion to adjourn. Representative Roy moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded and approved unanimously by the members.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.