

Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

January 5, 2022

3:30 - 5:00 pm

Date of meeting: Wednesday, January 5, 2022

Start time: 3:30 pm

End time: 5:00 pm

Location: Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Members participating remotely		Vote 1*	Vote 2
1	Marylou Sudders (<i>non-voting chair</i>) – Executive Office of Health and Human Services	N/A	N/A
2	Jennifer Almonte – Lynn Department of Public Health	X	X
3	Charles Anderson MD, MPH, MBA – The Dimock Center	X	X
4	Gina Armstrong – Pittsfield Health Department	-	-
5	Jason Ball – Framingham Police	-	-
6	Matilde Castiel, MD – Worcester Department of Health and Human Services	-	X
7	Maureen Cavanagh – Magnolia New Beginnings	X	X
8	Damon Chaplin – New Bedford Health Department	X	X
9	Abby Dean – Brookline Public Health Department	X	X
10	Denise Garlick – Massachusetts House of Representatives	X	X
11	Lindsay Hackett – City of Springfield	X	-
12	Suzie Hauptmann – Falmouth Department of Human Services	A	X
13	Brendan Little – Granada House	X	X
14	John McGahan – Gavin Foundation	X	X
15	Mary Beth Ogulewicz – Amherst Department of Senior Services	-	-
16	Joanne Peterson – Learn 2 Cope	X	X
17	David Rosenbloom, PhD – Boston University School of Public Health	X	X
18	John Rosenthal – Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI)	X	X
19	Elsie Taveras, MD, MPH – Mass General Brigham	X	-
20	Jennifer Tracey – Boston Mayor's Office of Recovery Services	X	X
21	LaToya Whiteside – Prisoners' Legal Services	-	-

* (X) Voted in favor; (O) Opposed; (A) Abstained from vote; (-) Absent from meeting or during vote

Proceedings

Secretary Sudders called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm. She welcomed members and noted that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call.

Council members briefly introduced themselves and their respective affiliations.

Vote to approve minutes from the 9/30/2021 meeting: Secretary Sudders requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Council's previous meeting on September 30, 2021. Director Chaplin introduced the motion, which was seconded by Mr. McGahan and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

Secretary Sudders noted that the Council has scheduled meetings for March 23 and June 28, 2022.

Gillian Feiner, Senior Enforcement Counsel within the Health Care and Fair Competition Bureau at the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office (AGO), provided updates on the ongoing opioid settlements.

- She explained that in August 2021, the AGO announced settlements against the three largest opioid distributors – Cardinal, McKesson, and Amerisource Bergen – and the opioid manufacturer Johnson & Johnson for their role in the opioid ongoing epidemic. Under the settlement, Massachusetts and its municipalities would receive up to \$537 million over 18 years, which would fund additional prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery efforts across the state. She noted that all cities and towns are eligible to sign on to the settlement and that the deadline to do so was extended from January 2nd to January 26, 2022. She also explained that a set of guidelines for spending settlement funds is currently under development and an FAQ has been produced for municipalities who may have been notified about the two recent settlements (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/frequently-asked-questions-about-statewide-settlements-with-opioid-distributors-and-johnson-johnson>).
- Ms. Feiner also summarized the recent settlement between the AGO and Collegium Pharmaceutical, which manufactures the slow-release opioid, Xtampza ER. She noted that Collegium sales representatives misled doctors about the potential risks of the drug by marketing it as a safe and responsible alternative to other opioids, despite having the same active ingredient (oxycodone) as other drugs like Oxycontin. She explained that under the terms of the resolution, the company has agreed to pay \$125,000, stop marketing its opioids in-person and through speaker programs with health care professionals in Massachusetts, and publicly disclose the doses of its product sold both in Massachusetts and nationally on a quarterly basis.
- In response to a Council member's question about the status of the settlement with Purdue Pharma and the Sackler family, Ms. Feiner explained that the \$4.5 billion resolution is currently under appeal after being invalidated by an appeals court judge. She provided her email address in case members of the public would like to reach her directly: gillian.feiner@mass.gov

Secretary Sudders provided a brief update on the status of the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Trust Fund. She noted that there is currently \$11.5 million in the Trust Fund, with approximately \$10 million set aside for the initial four proposals discussed at the Council's last meeting in September.

Secretary Sudders facilitated a discussion of the revised principles for spending Trust Fund dollars and proposed services which the funds might support that had been developed based on Council members' suggestions during previous meetings. She noted that the list of principles and services had been revised, incorporating Council members' feedback at the last meeting. She stated that the list of principles and services should be considered a "living document," which the Council will revisit from time to time.

In response to Secretary Sudders' request, Council members suggested additional services and approaches for consideration, including:

- Ms. Peterson clarified that “families impacted by opioids” includes a broader category of individuals such as orphans and grandparents who have lost loved ones due to opioids.
- Professor Rosenbloom proposed that the Council develop measures in the review process and monitoring of grants to ensure compliance with stated goals.
- Mr. Rosenthal proposed that the scope of the services be widened to include other substances beyond opioids.
- Ms. Hauptmann proposed that support for community-based recovery centers and recovery navigators be included.

Deirdre Calvert, Director of the Bureau of Substance Addiction Services (BSAS) at the Department of Public Health (DPH) provided an update on the initial four proposals for Trust Fund expenditures. In response to comments from Professor Rosenbloom related to the inclusion of equity metrics, Director Calvert explained the limitations that providers face related to methadone distribution, which federal laws require to be linked to a brick-and-mortar location. In response to comments from Dr. Anderson, Secretary Sudders noted that her team would explore how equity metrics and equitable distribution and equitable delivery could be made more explicit in BSAS contract language. For additional details, refer to the meeting presentation on the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Director Calvert and Sarah Ruiz, Director of Planning & Development at BSAS presented an overview of services for incarcerated and post-incarcerated individuals in the Commonwealth. Emilia Dunham, Manager of Special Projects with the MassHealth Office of Behavioral Health presented on the Behavioral Health Supports for Justice Involved Individuals (BH-JI) grant. For additional details, refer to the BSAS presentation on the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council's [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Secretary Sudders proposed that additional information on equity, metrics, and language that could potentially be included in proposals and contract evaluations be discussed during the next Council meeting scheduled for March 23.

Vote to adjourn: Secretary Sudders requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Director Chaplin introduced the motion, which was seconded by Mr. McGahan and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm.