

Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2022

1:00 - 2:30 pm

Date of meeting: Wednesday, March 23, 2022

Start time: 1:00 pm

End time: 2:30 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	-	-
3	Charles Anderson MD, MPH, MBA – The Dimock Center	X	X
4	Gina Armstrong – Pittsfield Health Department	-	-
5	Jason Ball – Framingham Police	X	X
6	Matilde Castiel, MD – Worcester Department of Health and Human Services	-	-
7	Maureen Cavanagh – Magnolia New Beginnings	-	-
8	Damon Chaplin – New Bedford Health Department	X	-
9	Abby Dean – Brookline Public Health Department	X	X
10	Denise Garlick – Massachusetts House of Representatives	-	X
11	Lindsay Hackett – City of Springfield	X	X
12	Suzie Hauptmann – Falmouth Department of Human Services	X	X
13	Brendan Little – Granada House	X	X
14	John McGahan – Gavin Foundation	X	-
15	Jeffery Olmstead – Amherst Fire Department	A	X
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	X
20	Jennifer Tracey – Boston Mayor's Office of Recovery Services	X	X
21	LaToya Whiteside – Prisoners' Legal Services	X	X

* (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 1:00 pm. She welcomed members and noted that all votes taken during the meeting would be conducted via roll call.

Secretary Sudders introduced a new member of the Council, Chief Jeffery Olmstead from the Amherst Fire Department. Council members briefly introduced themselves and their respective affiliations.

Vote to approve minutes from the 1/5/2022 meeting: Secretary Sudders requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Council's previous meeting on January 5, 2022. Director Chaplin introduced the motion, which was seconded by Ms. Peterson and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

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:

- Ms. Feiner explained that her team anticipates judgments against Johnson & Johnson and the three major opioid distributors – Cardinal, McKesson, and Amerisource Bergen. She noted that agreements are expected against Cardinal, McKesson, and Amerisource Bergen in April, followed soon after by Johnson & Johnson.
- She explained that the judgments will provide up to \$525 million in abatement funds to state and local governments over a period of years, 60% of which would go towards the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Trust Fund (Trust Fund), an amount she estimated at approximately \$18.5 million per year on average. She stated that the next deposit into the Trust Fund is anticipated in April or May of 2022, followed by regular deposits in July going forward.
- She noted that municipalities would receive the remaining 40% of the total settlement funds, which will be utilized to strengthen harm reduction, treatment, and recovery programming across the Commonwealth. She explained that the agreement includes a detailed list of permitted uses, including an opportunity for municipalities to pool funds in coordination with the DPH Office of Local and Regional Health's shared service infrastructure, which may benefit smaller towns.
- She reiterated that an FAQ document and list of anticipated amounts that municipalities can expect to receive is available on the AGO's Mass.gov page: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/frequently-asked-questions-about-statewide-settlements-with-opioid-distributors-and-johnson-johnson>
- Ms. Feiner also highlighted her team's collaboration with University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) and Johns Hopkins to create an Opioid Industry Documents Archive, a digital repository of publicly disclosed documents from recent judgments, settlements, and ongoing lawsuits concerning the opioid crisis. She expects disclosures to begin in the coming months from McKinsey and Mallinckrodt, with documents from Insys anticipated later in the year.
- She noted that the settlement with Purdue Pharma remains delayed by the appeals process, but once confirmed, it is expected that Massachusetts will receive a total of \$102 million disbursed over several years.

In response to questions from Council members, Secretary Sudders clarified that the statute establishing the Trust Fund did not stipulate a timeframe for spending the settlement funds. She also clarified that the mechanism for distributing Trust Funds dollars would be through grants from DPH/BSAS that local organizations could apply for as RFRs and RFPs are released in the coming years.

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. During the discussion, Council members raised the following proposals:

- Dr. Taveras proposed that anti-stigma campaigns and trainings related to stigmatizing language and practices be included.
- Director Chaplin reiterated his proposal that return-to-work programs for those in recovery from substance use be included to help them reintegrate into society.
- Professor Rosenbloom proposed that subgroups be formed to develop a multi-year strategy for spending the Trust Fund dollars, which would take into account process and outcome measures.
- Ms. Whiteside proposed that a race and equity component be included in programs.
- Mr. Rosenthal proposed that subcommittees be formed, focusing on a variety of topics, including harm reduction, community health, and racial equity.
- Ms. Peterson proposed that services for children impacted by opioids be included.
- Director Tracey noted that a review of existing services and programming would be helpful.
- Mr. Little proposed that support for caretakers be included.

Secretary Sudders summarized aspects of the discussion and explained that her team would begin work on an RFR to engage an entity to develop a strategic plan that takes race and ethnicity into consideration. She reminded members that the Council does not have control over how municipalities spend their funds and stated that the Trust Fund is an opportunity to address gaps in existing substance use disorder (SUD) programming and support innovative approaches to SUD.

Franklin Cook and Glen Lord, Co-directors of Support After a Death by Overdose (SADOD), presented an overview of SADOD’s work to increase the capacity and effectiveness of peer grief support in Massachusetts for people affected by a death from substance use. For additional details, refer to the SADOD presentation on the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council’s [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

Mr. Cook provided the following links to and contact information for SADOD:

- Website: www.SADOD.org
- Franklin Cook, franklin@unifiedcommunities.com, 617-398-0243
- Glen Lord, glen@peersupportcommunitypartners.com, 857-232-0065
- Support Group Directory: <https://sadod.org/support-group-directory>
- Request free booklets for bereaved people who need support: <https://sadod.org/request-a-brochure>
- VOICES newsletter archive: <https://sadod.org/newsletter>

Secretary Sudders provided a brief update on the status of the Trust Fund, noted that there is currently \$11.6 million in funds, roughly \$10 million of which has been obligated for the initial four proposals voted on during the Council’s September 2021 meeting. She added that her team would develop a financial plan for the Council’s next meeting in June, with a quarterly breakdown of expected revenues into the Trust Fund.

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. For additional details, refer to the meeting presentation on the Opioid Recovery and Remediation Fund Advisory Council’s [Meeting Materials webpage](#).

In response to question from Ms. Dean regarding the concentration of low-threshold housing within Boston, Director Calvert noted that low-threshold housing is available statewide. She added that a list of housing providers would be shared with the Council.

Secretary Sudders left the meeting at 2:32 pm.

Vote to adjourn: In the Chair's absence, Gabriel Cohen requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Professor Rosenbloom introduced the motion, which was seconded by Director Tracey and approved by roll-call vote (see detailed record of votes above).

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 pm.