

# GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS

December 14, 2018

Governor & Council Chambers

CONCORD, NH

## MINUTES

### **Members Present:**

Stephen Ahnen, *NH Hospital Association*

Alex Casale, *NH Courts*

Cheryl Coletti-Lawson, *NH Business and Industry Association*

Frank Edelblut, *NH Department of Education*

Monica Edgar, *Treatment Professional*

Annette Escalante, *Executive Director and Director of the Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services*

Katja Fox, *NH Department of Health & Human Services*

Helen Hanks, *Department of Corrections*

William Hatch, *NH State Representative*

Susan Huard, *NH Community College System*

Timothy Lena, *Prevention Professional*

Gordon MacDonald, *Office of the Attorney General*

David Mara, *Governor's Advisor on Addiction and Behavioral Health*

Jennifer Patterson, *NH Insurance Department*

Chris Placy, *Public Member*

Joseph Ribsam, *NH Department of Children, Youth and Families*

Tym Rourke, *NH Charitable Foundation*

Seddon Savage, MD, *NH Medical Society*

Stephanie Savard, *Treatment Professional*

Patrick Tufts, *Granite United Way*

Governor Chris Sununu

Col. Todd Swass, *NH National Guard*

Jim Young, *NH Liquor Commission Division of Enforcement*

### **1. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Patrick Tufts opened the meeting, welcomed Governor Chris Sununu, Commission members and the public.

### **2. Approval of Minutes**

There was a motion by Patrick Tufts to approve the minutes from October 26, 2018. The motion was seconded by Cheryl Coletti-Lawson. The minutes were approved with all in favor.

### **3. Governor's Update**

Patrick Tufts shifted the agenda in order for Governor Sununu to provide an update on the Federal investment in New Hampshire through the State Opioid Response (SOR) grant. Governor Sununu greeted the Commission Members and the public, wishing everyone happy holidays. He reminded the group that there is a lot of work happening within the Commission's scope as well as statewide. He stated that things are trending in the right direction. He asked Commission Members to think about how Commission dollars may be able to be used to fill the gaps due to their fluid nature, contrary to the Federal investment which is heavily restricted. He encouraged the group to hold money back for unexpected items and gaps in order to respond to needs as they arise. Governor Sununu requested the Treatment Task Force reach out to get feedback from the spokes (providers). Stephanie Savard, task force chair, agreed. He also asked Members to keep in mind that all task forces need to be geographically representative and to make sure that people are being included.

Governor Sununu commented on the Commission's Strategic Plan saying that when he saw the first one 4-5 years ago, it was an intimidating document with 100+ pages. He commended the group on developing a plan that is digestible and readable. He reminded the group of the importance of New Hampshire legislators being able to easily read the document and be able, within 10-15 minutes, to get a sense of where the state is going.

#### **4. NH DHHS Commissioner's Update provided by Katja Fox**

Katja informed the group that staff has been hired to oversee the State Opioid Response (SOR) grant. She reported that most of the Requests for Proposals associated with the SOR grant have closed and some have been awarded. DHHS employees are working alongside hubs at all nine locations across the state, working on a daily basis on questions and implementation, operational concerns, etc. Some of the hubs have convened providers but there will also be public sessions for anyone from the community to hear and learn more about local impacts.

Katja also informed the group of the recent opening of the youth treatment center in Manchester. Governor Sununu added he was excited about this new investment, but that is it something a state hopes they do not need but New Hampshire does. He noted he will be looking for reports on usage as well as upcoming changes to the name and brand of the facility.

Tym Rourke offered congratulations to the Governor's Office and DHHS for moving this amount of money so quickly through the process. He asked what members of the Commission should say to people now when they ask, since January is so close. Katja noted it is true that the kinks will need to be worked out, however the important thing is that individuals will have one place to access treatment when they are ready. They will be able to call 2-1-1 or visit their local hub right away. Governor Sununu also added there will be new branding across hubs. They will be called, "The Doorway" at Concord, Dartmouth, etc. He noted that once things are up and running, they will be looking for ways to roll this out to the public to ensure all residents have access. Jennifer Patterson from the New Hampshire Insurance Department informed the group that they are looking to reconvene their Behavioral Health Workgroup to enhance treatment services and it will be important for insurance companies to understand how this works too. Governor Sununu noted the State's IDNs are integrated with this work as well. He noted that he believes we will see more people accessing treatment in the coming months as we create a system that people can trust and believe in.

#### **5. Strategic Plan Update**

Amy Pepin, Center for Excellence, opened by acknowledging her team for their hard work on gathering input and making sure nothing was missing from this report. She noted that Patrick wanted a different look for this upcoming plan than what has been done in the past. Therefore, the plan is much shorter and written at a higher level. Amy noted that they have summarized and aggregated all task force recommendations, anytime a task force icon is in the plan, there is a deeper level of information available online. She informed the Commission that the plan being presented today is for digestion and feedback. She also noted that pictures throughout the plan are of task force members, chosen randomly by the graphic designer intentionally. Amy walked the Commission members through the drafted plan highlighting the message from the Governor and Patrick, the overview of the Commission, the overview of task forces, brief overview of the state of the problem, as well as goals and objectives that have been endorsed in the past.

Tym Rourke praised Amy and her team, noting a very user-friendly format. He brought up a concern on objective 4.2 being limited to drugs other than marijuana. Amy responded often times, due to high usage rates of marijuana, it can hide change in rates in other substances. She said they could explore adding a meaningful marijuana measure to give a better sense of what is occurring. Tym Rourke followed up with a question about the choice of measure for alcohol in the plan stating the state and partners typically look at past 30-day use of alcohol for youth instead of binge drinking rates. Amy Pepin clarified that the measure pertained to all ages, not only to youth. She offered to add a youth measure if the Commission wanted. Tym Rourke also asked about why opioids were highlighted in Objective 11D

instead of all substances. Amy Pepin clarified that measure was chosen to align with SOR grant strategies. Tym also requested that the Commission's Strategic Plan aligns with the 10-year mental health plan. Amy Pepin and other members of the Commission agreed.

Helen Hanks asked about the use of the word discrimination on page 7, noting that people with a substance use disorder are not a protected class. Tym Rourke stated they are protected under the disability coverage. Amy Pepin went on to explain this work was chosen specifically to describe systemic discrimination and within organizations. She stated this was an important distinction to heighten expectations on how people are treated.

Many members of the Commission had questions about the ability for the Commission to impact insurances, including Medicaid, Medicare and private companies. Amy Pepin made note of the feedback and reminded the Commission that the goals outlined are aspirational and pragmatic, stating that even though the Commission does not have this level of influence, it ought to be included.

Patrick requested the Commission members approve the plan pending changes addressed during this conversation. Tym Rourke made a motion to approve the plan pending agreed upon changes. Motion seconded by Helen Hanks. Motion passed with all in favor.

Governor Sununu added his appreciation for Commission members on getting this plan finalized. He encouraged members to begin to think about next steps. Governor Sununu addressed the Commission members about a concern he has around the legalization of marijuana. He stated if legalization happens it will take the State nine steps backward after six steps forward. He reminded the members that New Hampshire is now leading the way on SUD intervention and legalizing marijuana would add confusion. Governor Sununu encouraged the Commission to think about taking a stance on the issue.

## **6. Executive Director's Update**

### **• Financial Dashboard**

Annette Escalante presented the financial dashboards, outlining what is currently in contracts and obligations to date. Patrick thanked Annette for keeping the Commission informed. He noted that he does have recommendations for the Commission's consideration on how to use the unspent funding for upcoming state fiscal years. He asked the Commission to ensure their investments align with the SOR grant and are executed properly. Patrick requested using some of the current year's unspent funds to purchase a new supply of Narcan for the hub system. Patrick made a motion to approve \$300,000 for Narcan. There was discussion by members on the critical nature of having this supply as well as questions around how long the supply would last. Katja Fox replied that this would only be used as a bridge funding for the hubs, however it is currently unclear, but it should be an adequate amount. Steve Ahnen asked if the Narcan would be distributed through the Public Health Networks. Katja Fox confirmed that it would. Cheryl Coletti-Lawson seconded the motion. Motion approved with all in favor.

Annette asked Amy Pepin to talk briefly about the cost effectiveness workplan. Amy stated that there is another report due for cost effectiveness inventory. This report was supposed to be completed on 12/1/18. However, this deadline was not realistic based on receiving the contract in October. Amy proposed to the group that the new deadline of 3/1/19 would be appropriate. She reminded the group that this is not an evaluation report but rather a report on the cost effectiveness of programming. Patrick stated he would like to follow up on the cost and lift of the four different reports and decide on the best approach moving forward.

Patrick asked the group if there was any other business. Commissioner Edelblut noted that the Department of Education has received a Federal grant for \$700,000 per year for five years for a multi-tiered system of support. He explained a discrepancy between how the Department of Education calculated their indirect cost rate and how it is

calculated Federally. He informed the Commission this difference caused a budget shortfall of \$23,370 per year. Commissioner Edelblut requested the Commission cover this gap in order to avoid losing the funding. Steve Ahnen asked if the Commission has historically funded program overhead. Tym clarified, saying in unique circumstances they have, however, in general it has not funded state operating expenses. Steve Ahnen offered support for the motion and added to not make funding overhead an ongoing practice. Katja Fox asked Commissioner Edelblut if the request is for one year of funding or for five years. Commissioner Edelbult stated the motion is for five years. Jennifer Patterson seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor, with Commissioner Edelbult abstaining.

**7. Task Force Updates**

Due to lack of time, Patrick requested Task Force Updates be provided in January. Members agreed.

**8. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Public Comment was made by Susan McKeown by asking the Commission Members to speak up during the meeting in order for the public to hear. She also suggested potentially pulling the gallery closer to the where the Members sit in order to help the public hear. Patrick agreed and indicated he would make improvements at the next meeting.

Diane from the NH Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors Association (NHADACA) reported a successful Conference and thanked the Commission for its support.

Josh McCabe shared concerns on the RFP for the data dashboard. He stated concerns about the requirements focusing on technical rather than on developing a state assessment. He cautioned against spending a lot of money and still not having the outcomes that the providers need.

Sue Thistle asked Annette Escalante if the Narcan purchased by the Commission is distributed at no cost to New Hampshire residents. Annette confirmed and reminded the group the Narcan is delivered to the public via the 13 Regional Public Health Networks.

Kate Frye from New Futures informed the group that there are target measures for marijuana that could be introduced for the Strategic Plan. She also asked the group to keep in mind 18-26-year-olds when looking at potential workforce problems.

*The next Governor's Commission meeting  
January 25, 2019 from 9:30 am to 11:30 am at the  
NH State House  
Governor & Council Chambers  
Concord, NH*