



State of New Jersey

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
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NEIL VAN ESS
Acting Chairman

CELINA LEVY
Executive Director

MINUTES

Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

July 18, 2023

Attendance: Neil Van Ess (Chairman), Celina Levy (Executive Director), John Armato (Public Member), Donna DeStefano (Public Member) Eileen Fishman (Public Member), Sweta Kansagra (Public Member), Jeff Carrick (DCF) Michelle Graham-Lyons (DCA), Adam Cortes (DOC), Lashunda Harden (DOH), Annette Riordan (DHS), Rebecca Glinn, Craig Sashihara (LPS), Chuck Robbins (DMAVA), Allison Samay (NJ President's Council)

Call to Order

The three hundred and seventy third regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Acting Chairman Neil Van Ess.

Open Public Meetings Act Statement

Mr. Van Ess announced that notice of this meeting was provided in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21). In addition, Mr. Van Ess stated that public comments were to be provided electronically, through the GCADA website contact portal between the hours of 10am and 1pm on the day of the meeting.

Roll Call

Katelyn Assenheimer called the roll. Members present and absent were noted for the record. Mr. Van Ess informed the Council that this meeting would be for informational purposes only due to the lack of quorum.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Van Ess welcomed everyone to the meeting. He also welcomed newly appointed GCADA member, Sweta Kansagra to the Council.

Presentation: “Substance Use Considerations and Resources for New Jersey’s Rural Communities”

Jamey Lister, PhD, Associate Professor, Rutgers University School of Social Work, Co-Director and New Jersey Director of the NeC-ROTAC and Kristen Powell, PhD, Associate Research Professor, Rutgers University of Social Work Director of the NeC-PTTC gave an overview of their work to the Council.

The Northeast & Caribbean Rural Opioid Technical Assistance Center (NeC-ROTAC) is funded by SAMHSA and develops training and provides technical assistance addressing opioid and stimulant use affecting rural communities in New Jersey. Substance use disorder factors that affect rural communities are low educational attainment, poverty, unemployment, a lack of access to health care and isolation.

Training topics include education and awareness on how the opioid epidemic affects rural communities, best practice approaches for substance use disorders as well as harm and stigma reduction. NeC-ROTAC also conducts meetings with partners to identify the types of trainings that their stakeholders need.

Executive Director’s Report

Executive Director Celina Levy thanked the PTTC for their presentation and to Cape May County Coordinator, Peter Belasco for bringing this presentation to GCADA.

Ms. Levy and Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro met with the Governor’s office last week to discuss the Master Plan and are pleased to have their support and commitment. Ms. Levy shared that their discussion regarding alternative, sustainable funding source for GCADA continued to be extremely positive, with updates to be provided as the process moves forward.

Ms. Levy also shared that the Master Plan subcommittee met and thanked Gisele Pemberton, John Armato and Moira Nelson for volunteering their time to be members of this subcommittee, and for their invaluable input.

Director of Prevention and Planning, Sara Thode shared with the Council that the GCADA State Alliance Coordinators are currently reviewing the FY24 DMHAS and DEDR plans.

Final testing for the Municipal Alliance Grant System (MAGS) launch is underway. The Municipal Alliance Grant System is expected to go live in the early fall for the planning process of the FY25 County and Municipal Alliance Plans.

Adjournment

Mr. Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:23.