



OCONEE COUNTY OPIOID RESPONSE TASK FORCE

Regular Meeting Held at:

February 16th at 10AM

Council Chambers, Oconee County Administrative Offices
415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

Members

**Aaron Zeller, MD (Chair); Scott Krein (Co-Chair); Lekesha Benson
Michael Carroll; Richie Caudill; Tim Rice; Caitlin Pope;
Alan Sayre; Jon Holland; Zac Smith**

The Oconee County Opioid Response Taskforce met on Friday, February 16th, 2024 at 10am in County Council Chambers, located at 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla SC. Members present included Aaron Zeller, Michael Carroll, Caitlin Pope, Alan Sayre, Lekesha Benson, Scott Krein, Brittney Martin; Grants Administrator, and Staff Liaison; Zac Smith.

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com]. In addition, it was made available [upon request] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

Minutes:

- 1. Call to Order:** Dr. Aaron Zeller called meeting to order at 10am.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** Dr. Aaron Zeller
 - Motion made by Mr. Alan Sayre, Second by Mr. Mike Carroll. No Discussion. All in favor 6-0.
- 3. Discussion Items:**

Community Support Application Review/Approval and Oconee County Application Approval

- Dr. Zeller asks if anyone had thoughts on the application process.
- Mr. Scott Krein asks if we have a small and large funding group, are we going to make them fill out the entire application.
- Ms. Brittney Martin put one box per strategy. Due to organizations possibly having multiple strategies, there can be a place for more strategies, however the application could be a little longer.
- Mr. Scott Krein stated that he likes the idea of more area to place more strategies in.
- Ms. Brittney Martin began the walkthrough of Oconee County Request for Community Support.
- Ms. Brittney Martin stated that the Sheriff's Office application will be present for approval next month.
- Dr. Zeller asks what is life after lock-up and what do they do?
- Ms. Brittney Martin explained that the program hires persons out of the jail to help them enter the job field and back into regular life. Explained the drug testing process and extra items that they have to report while in the life after lock up program.
- Ms. Caitlin Pope asks if the program is sustainable. Ms. Brittney Martin explained the sustainability of the program.

- Dr. Zeller voiced his concern about organizations finding out about the County utilizing funds for salary. He is concerned that organizations will want to use funding for salaries for folks.
- Discussion reference salaries, funding, and how non-profits would want to use money for salaries.
- Dr. Zeller asks about the life after lockup and if they are monitored. Mr. Scott Krein explained the process of how the person is paired with a senior person from a county department. More discussion on life after lockup program.
- Mr. Alan Sayre; For clarification, this is for three new positions in the life after lockup program and not for existing positions. Ms. Brittney Martin confirmed same. Mr. Alan Sayre asks if the county has a plan if council denies funding. Ms. Brittney Martin stated that she would confirm with Ms. Brock.
- Ms. Lekesha Benson asks if the life after lockup mentors have some awareness training around stigma of addiction. Dr. Zeller and Mr. Scott Krein recommended that stigma training be completed to mentors before they receive someone for the life after lockup training.
- Mr. Alan Sayre recommended that reducing the stigma training budget be placed in the budget. If it's going to be recommended for life after lockup, stigma training needs to be placed in the opioid budget.
- Mr. Alan Sayre: Motion to approve the Oconee County application with the contingency of placing training mentors and budget numbers to be reviewed at next meeting. Lekesha Benson, second, vote 6-0.
- Dr. Aaron Zeller; any questions regarding the generic application? Mr. Alan Sayre; simplify formatting just a little. Discussion on the generic application.
- Ms. Brittney Martin; Do you want applications to be sent to taskforce in advance to review them? Discussion was completed and the consensus was yes. Ms. Brittney Martin; would you like the applicants to be present at the meeting next month to present proposals and to answer any questions? Mr. Scott Krein; Yes. All applicants need to be at meeting to answer any questions. Dr. Zeller wants an applicant to do a 5-10 minute presentation for proposals.
- Ms. Lekesha Benson; did we say that the board was going to cap the funding for a new program? Mr. Zac Smith; for any pilot program, the vote last month was to cap it at \$25,000. For any other existing program, it was to be a vote when they review the application. More discussion of funding caps.
- Ms. Brittney Martin; you don't have to approve the entire application...you will have the ability to approve and/or disapprove items.
- Ms. Lekesha Benson; is there a place on the application or can there be a place on the application that shows sustainability of funding. Ms. Brittney Martin said that it can be placed in the application.
- Dr. Zeller asks if there are any further questions. He recapped what he heard as far as concerns on the application.
- Motion made by Mr. Alan Sayre to approve the application with the contingency that revisions be made to reflect the boards recommendations. Mr. Scott Krein with a second, and all approve, 6-0.

Potential Funding Caps and Support Tiers

- Dr. Aaron Zeller, the application does not need to change for small vs. large sums of funding. The discussion rests with limits on a pilot program. Mr. Scott Krein stated \$25,000.
- Ms. Lekesha Benson stated that if a program has not been established in Oconee County, it needs to be considered a pilot program.

- Mr. Scott Krein made motion for pilot programs to receive a maximum of \$25,000 the first year. Mr. Alan Sayre second, no discussion, all in favor 6-0.
- Ms. Brittney Martin; if you put that pilot programs are limited to \$25,000, you, as a board can approve up to \$25,000.
- Dr. Aaron Zeller; The maximum budget that we can disperse as a board is \$800,000. Mr. Scott Krein; we need to look at projections for the next three years and be conservative with the funding. Discussion on monetary spending and theoretical spending continued.
- Mr. Scott Krein; the board has close to \$266,000 for the next three years to spend. That is with continuing the Opioid Response Coordinator position with Oconee County.
- Ms. Lekesha Benson; does the funding go up each year in SOCRF? Ms. Brittney Martin; the funding fluctuates very slightly and will not change until we are approved for funding. That's when it will decrease.
- Dr. Zeller; a cap does not need to be placed, however, the board needs to know the cash flow and balance of what funding is left. Mr. Scott Krein began conversation of sustainment of organizations if they are not funded by SCORF.
- Dr. Zeller; the board needs to be contentious of the SCORF and County Council meetings. There may need to be an extra meeting between months to approve applications in a timely manner. Discussion on application deadline for the remainder of the year.
- Application for Oconee County will be given to County Council on March 19th. On behalf of the Oconee County Sheriff's Office, Mr. Alan Sayre stated that they can wait until the June deadline.
- Ms. Brittney Martin; if a taskforce member misses three consecutive meetings, can they be removed from the board? Mr. Alan Sayre made motion that if a board member misses three meetings with no reasonable explanation that they be removed. From there, the staff liaison will find a replacement. Second by Mr. Scott Krein, all in favor 6-0.
- Mr. Mike Carroll; do the applications have to be discussed in public or in executive session? Mr. Alan Sayre, it has to be able to be transparent and minimize complaints. Everything needs to be subject to FOIA. Ms. Brittney Martin; executive session is typically reserved for contractual, personnel, or legal matters.
- Ms. Lekesha Benson; in the event that a county or municipal department puts an application in for funding, does the board member have to recuse themselves from the vote and discussion? Or, does the said board member(s) just exempt from the discussion. Dr. Zeller; make sure that board member does not vote, but can be a part of the discussion.

4. Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made by Dr. Zeller, second by Ms. Lekesha Benson, all in favor 6-0.

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