



State of New Jersey

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
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Lt. Governor

NEIL VAN ESS
Acting Chairman

CELINA LEVY
Executive Director

MINUTES

Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

April 20, 2021

Attendance: Neil Van Ess (Chairman), Celina Levy (Executive Director), Gregg Benson (Public Member), Betty Ann Cowling-Carson (Public Member), Donna DeStefano (Public Member), Frank Greenagel (Public Member), Gisele Pemberton (Public Member), Donna Westhoven (AOC), Jeff Carrick (DCF), Kate Butler (DCA), Luiz Pereira (DOE), Annette Riordan (DHS), Craig Sashihara (LPS), Liz Schofield (DMAVA), Allison Samay (NJ President's Council)

Call to Order

The three hundred and forty seventh 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

Chairman 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.

Approval of Minutes

After a brief discussion, the minutes for March were approved. (Y-14; N-0; ABS-0)

Chairman's Report

Chairman Van Ess welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked the Council members for their attendance and achieving quorum to complete Council business. He shared that the Council would be voting on the County Plans in June and asked for the Council's support for quorum.

Problem Gambling Awareness Month Resolution

Executive Director Celina Levy read a resolution recognizing April as Alcohol Awareness Month in New Jersey. After a vote, this resolution was approved. (Y-14; N-0; ABS-0)

Presentation: "Major DMHAS Initiatives"

Donald Hallcom, from the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) of the NJ Department of Human Services, gave an overview of the major initiatives being worked on by DMHAS.

Mr. Hallcom shared that with block grant funding from SAMHSA, DMHAS is able to offer primary prevention programs such as pain management programs for older adults, military programs and programs to help engage the LGBTQ at risk youth community.

The Division also focuses on opioid overdose prevention, Naloxone distribution and recovery through such programs as the Opioid Overdose Recovery Program (OORP), Prison Intensive Recovery Treatment Support (PIRTS), and Recovery Housing and Telephone Support.

After a discussion with Council members, Executive Director Celina Levy and Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro will work with Mr. Hallcom in sharing these initiatives and more with the Alliance network.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Celina Levy shared with the Council that she continues to represent GCADA on the DMHAS Suicide Prevention Committee and the Committee is currently working on webinars addressing suicide prevention during COVID-19. The first two have been completed, entitled "Resiliency and Emotional Well-Being During the COVID-19 Crisis" and "Treatment and Resources During the COVID-19 Crisis." Links will be provided to Council members, Coordinators and Alcohol and Drug Directors once they are available.

Director of Prevention and Planning, Sara Thode shared with the Council that the FY2022 County Plans will be presented to the Council for conditional approval in June. The Council Review Team will meet between June 7th and the June GCADA meeting to review the plans before they are voted on by the Council.

Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro shared that the New Jersey Prevention Network Conference would be held virtually on April 28th-30th. Although GCADA was unable to offer scholarships this year, there are a few available through the Division of Highway Traffic Safety.

Ms. Levy thanked the Council Members for their guidance and support, the County Coordinators and all of the Alliances for the good work they do in light of the challenges faced, GCADA staff and Mr. Van Ess for his leadership.

Adjournment

Mr. Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:25.