

MINUTES
Region 16 Opioid Abatement Council Meeting
August 28, 2024
2:00 – 5:00pm
4th Judicial District Attorney’s Office
105 E. Vermijo Ave, Colorado Springs, CO 80903
4th Floor Main Conference Room

First Name	Last Name	Title	Present(Y/N)
Voting Members			
Lynette	Crow-Iverson	Colorado Springs (COS) City Council	Y
Erik	Stone	Teller County Commissioner	Y
Lt. Jake	Markus	Proxy for Teller County Undersheriff	Y
Holly	Williams	El Paso County (EPC) Commissioner	Y
Carrie	Geitner	EPC Commissioner	Y
Michael	Allen	Fourth Judicial District Attorney	Y
Doug	Trainor	COS Police Department	Y
Randy	Royal	COS Fire Chief	Y (Proxy Deputy Chief Jayme McConnellogue)
Nancy	Henjum	COS Councilmember	Y
Lee	Walker	Victor Fire Department	N
Dr. Leon	Kelly	EPC Coroner	Y (Proxy Dr. Emily Russell-Kinsley)
Joseph	Roybal	EPC Sheriff	N
Denise	Howell	Manitou Springs City Manager	N
Patrick	Regan	Monument Police Chief	Y (Proxy Commander Tim Johnson)
Non-Voting Members: Municipalities who will cycle onto the voting membership in future years			
Frank	Salvato	Cripple Creek City Manager	N
Chris	Deisler	Woodland Park Police Chief	N

Troy	Johnson	Fountain City Attorney	N
Current Non-Voting Members			
DeAnn	Ryberg	EPC Public Health Deputy Director	N
Kim	Mauthe	Teller County Director of Human Services	Y
Michelle	Wolff	Teller County Public Health Director	Y
Bridgette	Fuson	Department of Human Services (Monument Representative)	Y
Non-Voting Members Appointed by Council as SMEs			
Jack	Briggs	Springs Rescue Mission	N
Dr. Eric	Stein Bronsky	Physician, Medical Director CSFD AMR EPC/Teller 911 Authority	Y
David	Albrecht	Cardiologist, lived experience	N
Jason	Jorgenson	COS School District 11	N
Matt	Riviere	Advocate, lived experience	N
Laura	Ridenour	EPC Behavioral Health Manager	Y
Staff Support, Members of the Public, and Subject Matter Expertise			
Amanda	Grant	EPC Deputy Director – Financial Services	Y
Kenny	Hodges	EPC County Attorney	Y

Others Present:

Henny Lasley, Co-founder & Executive Director for One Chance to Grow Up

Allison Dodge, Donor Relations for One Chance to Grow Up

Nicole Johnston, Project Manager for CHP

David Leinweber, CO Springs City Council

Becka Barnhart, CDC Foundation

Steve Johnson, CO Springs Fire Department Community and Public Health Administrator

Travis Williams, Chief Development Officer for Springs Rescue Mission

Kate Singh, Chief Communication Officer for 4th Judicial District Attorney's Office

McKee-Borah Maelee, Mental Health El Paso County Sheriff's Office

Nick Grassi, Project Analysis for Financial Services

Liani Murphy, Program Director for Serenity Recovery Connection

Quorum Met? Yes (11/14)

1. **2:05-2:05pm | Introductions and Roll Call**
 - a. Conducted as shown above.
2. **2:05-2:10pm | Consent Calendar Discussion**
 - a. **COUNCIL ACTION:**
 - i. Teller County Sheriff's Office Lt. Jake Markus motioned to approve the minutes. Teller County Commissioner Erik Stone seconded the motion.
 - ii. Vote:
 1. Unanimously approved.
3. **2:10 – 2:48 | One Chance to Grow Up Presentation: Kids and THC and Why it Matters (Henny Lasley, Executive Director and Allison Dodge, Donor Relations)**
 - a. Summary
 - i. Henny Lasley, Executive Director of One Chance to Grow Up, presented on the organization's efforts to address substance use among youth through data-driven policies and public education. Emphasizing a neutral stance on marijuana legalization, One Chance to Grow Up advocates for effective regulation and highlights concerns such as the increased potency of THC products, lack of standard serving sizes, and the link between marijuana use and the opioid crisis. The presentation also noted the rising prevalence of high THC concentrate vaping among youth, the role of marijuana in toxicology results for suicides among teenagers, and the disparity between adult perceptions and the actual risks of marijuana.
 - b. Discussion
 - i. Kate Singh, Chief Communication Officer at 4th Judicial District Attorney's Office inquired about the marketing of THC products resembling inhalers and about the removal of labels on THC products. Henny Lasley explained the labeling of the inhaler is the most transparent example available where the product's nature is not easily identifiable.
 - ii. Teller County Commissioner Erik Stone raised concerns about packaging warnings for THC products, noting that European tobacco products often include extensive warnings. Henny Lasley responded that House Bill 1317 mandates pamphlets detailing risks such as Cannabinoid Hyperemesis Syndrome (CHS) and mental health conditions for concentrates. Teller County Commissioner Erik Stone shared anecdotal evidence from a psychiatrist about frequent cases of THC-induced psychosis and questioned legislative limits on packaging. Henny Lasley mentioned recent legislation requiring THC symbols on edibles and discussed limitations on packaging to avoid misleading appearances.
 - iii. EPC Commissioner Carrie Geitner expressed appreciation for the efforts of One Chance to Grow Up, citing personal experiences and emphasizing the need for early prevention. She inquired about the organization's educational efforts in El Paso County and the connection between marijuana use and the opioid crisis. Henny Lasley acknowledged ongoing efforts but highlighted limitations in school district decisions and emphasized the importance of upstream prevention and parental education.

- iv. COS Councilmember Nancy Henjum questioned why El Paso County does not participate in the Healthy Kids Survey, to which Henny Lasley explained that participation decisions are made at the district level, and insufficient data may lead to data suppression.
 - v. 4th Judicial District Attorney Michael Allen and COS Police Department, Doug Trainor discussed the correlation between high-potency marijuana and increased crime rates, with Doug Trainor, COS Police Department noting a rise in violent crimes in Teller County. 4th Judicial District Attorney Michael Allen highlighted the broader impact of marijuana legalization on crime and black-market activities, linking substance use to various forms of crime.
 - vi. Lt. Jake Markus and other council members explored the possible connections between THC use and crime rates, with 4th Judicial District Attorney Michael Allen suggesting that increased substance use contributes to broader crime issues, including domestic violence and property crime.
4. **2:48-2:54pm | ROAC Finance and Contracts Update (EPC Deputy Director - Financial Services Amanda Grant)**
- a. **Updates**
 - i. EPC Deputy Director of Financial Services, Amanda Grant reported that the previously awaited half a million from the original opioid administrator has been received and is now available for use. Amanda pulled down all of the funds from the database that are available for the council to use at this time. She noted that two contracts with Colorado Springs were finalized, but the DARE program contract will not proceed as advised by EPC Sheriff Joseph Roybal.
 - ii. 4th Judicial District Attorney Michael Allen inquired about the reasons for the Sheriff's decision not to move forward with the DARE program. EPC Deputy Director - Financial Services, Amanda Grant indicated that she could not provide specifics on the Sheriff's decision.
 - b. **Acceptance of Opioid Settlement Funding from the Town of Palmer Lake**
 - i. The Town of Palmer Lake decided to opt out, resulting in \$1,478 of unused funds that will flow into Region 16. The council was asked to approve the transfer of these funds.
 - ii. **ACTION:** Lt. Jake Markus motioned to move the funds, and EPC Commissioner Holly Williams seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.
5. **2:54-3:00pm | Updates from Colorado Opioid Abatement Learning Forum**
- a. The Expenditure Dashboard launched on August 6, 2024, the dashboard provides \$14.65 million in logged spending and \$50.8 million in anticipated expenditures, with data available for Treatment, Recovery, Prevention, Planning, and Harm Reduction. It features filtering by region and expenditure category, with annual updates and full public accessibility.
 - b. The Data Workgroup has held nine meetings over the past six months, approved the use of infrastructure funds for data needs, and developed a survey to gather additional input from regions and local governments.
 - c. **2 Year Plan**
 - i. **Update on Funding Requests:**
 - 1. An additional regional funding request deadline of November 15, 2024, was approved, alongside existing deadlines of September 15 and March

15. Funds requested by September are expected in January, while those requested by November will be received in February or March.

ii. Discussion

1. Proposal for Deadline Changes: Dr. Eric Stein Bronsky recommended evaluating the November deadline further, with consideration for the March deadline if additional time is needed, to better align with the upcoming summit's insights on funding and reporting. This was suggested to ensure proposals are well-considered rather than rushed.

4. 3:00-4:24pm | Strategic Planning (Initium)

a. Funding Discussion

- i. EPC Deputy Director - Financial Services, Amanda Grant discussed the potential shift from the current contract-for-services model to a grant-based approach. She noted that the choice between grants and contracts would depend on the council's desired level of control. Grants typically offer less control but may be less cumbersome, whereas contracts provide more oversight and control over outcomes.
- ii. COS Councilmember Nancy Henjum inquired if both grants and contracts could be utilized. EPC Deputy Director - Financial Services, Amanda Grant confirmed that both options are feasible, as state guidelines are flexible, allowing regions to manage funds as they see fit.
- iii. Thematic vs. Non-Thematic Applications:
 1. There was a discussion on whether to adopt thematic funding, where specific focus areas (e.g., youth prevention) would be prioritized or to keep the application process without themes year-round. Members discussed the benefits of thematic funding for targeted impact and the risk of overcomplicating the process.
 2. Steve Johnson, CO Springs Fire Department and Public Health Administrator expressed concern that thematic funding might limit opportunities for organizations to apply if their area of interest does not align with the current theme. He suggested that keeping non-thematic enrollment might better accommodate diverse applications throughout the year.
- iv. Open Enrollment Proposal: Both thematic and non-thematic options would still include an open enrollment. The proposed bi-annual application process includes:
 1. Application Submission Window: Proposals can be submitted at any time throughout the year.
 2. Potential Review Periods:
 - a. September Meeting: Proposals received by July 31 will be reviewed during the September meeting.
 - b. March Meeting: Proposals received by January 31 will be reviewed during the March meeting.
 3. Review Process: Selected applicants may be invited to present their proposals briefly at the meeting. Approved proposals will proceed to the contracting phase following the council's decision.
- v. The council discussed a hybrid approach to combine open applications with thematic focus areas to balance flexibility and strategic intent. There was also a

discussion about involving non-voting members for expertise and a concern raised about ensuring that the council wouldn't become a mere rubber stamp.

- vi. Next Steps: The council agreed to further explore these options and make a final decision in future meetings. It was proposed that Initium Health will provide a hybrid approach at the September meeting of the funding strategies discussed to ensure the approach aligns with community needs and strategic goals.

b. Roles and Responsibilities

i. Orientation Discussion/Gap Analysis

1. Dr. Eric Stein Bronsky emphasized the importance of providing clear orientation to new members to avoid them being uninformed about their roles and the council's operations.
2. COS Councilmember Nancy Henjum recommended that voting members assign and brief their proxies appropriately before meetings to streamline their understanding and avoid repetitive explanations.
3. EPC Commissioner Carrie Geitner agreed that orientation materials should be reviewed by all members. She noted a need to focus on expanding effective programs rather than just increasing funding.
4. COS Councilmember Nancy Henjum questioned if any critical gaps are missing in current treatment options, specifically detox facilities.
5. Dr. Eric Stein Bronsky confirmed a lack of detox facilities and beds. He noted that opioid detox can be handled in recovery centers rather than requiring specialized detox facilities, which are more critical for alcohol withdrawal.
6. EPC Commissioner Carrie Geitner mentioned a new recovery center, Step Springs, that is not specifically for detox but provides some detox capabilities.
7. Dr. Eric Stein Bronsky clarified that opioid detox does not require a dedicated facility and can be managed within recovery centers. He emphasized the need to focus on recovery centers for opioids rather than traditional detox facilities.
8. Teller County Commissioner Erik Stone asked about the differences between various detox and recovery facilities, particularly between residential and locked facilities.
9. Dr. Eric Stein Bronsky explained that opioid recovery centers are typically not locked and vary in design, often functioning as community-based housing.
10. COS Councilmember Nancy Henjum suggested naming the specific needs or programs for clarity.
11. Steve Johnson, CO Springs Fire Department and Public Health Administrator emphasized the necessity of medical detox.
12. Dr. Eric Stein Bronsky agreed that medical detox can be integrated into crisis care and noted a general shortage of crisis care facilities in Colorado. He highlighted that patients often leave the state due to the lack of available facilities and the need for comprehensive care.

a. Transparency

i. Recording Technology

1. Objective: Enhance transparency and community feedback by adopting technological solutions for improved accessibility and documentation.

This includes incorporating video recording and a specialized meeting camera.

2. Discussion:

- a. Dr. Eric Stein Bronsky suggested that borrowing equipment is not a long-term solution and proposed purchasing the equipment.
- b. EPC Commissioner Holly Williams made a motion to purchase the Owl Labs Meeting Owl and other necessary items for recording meetings.
- c. EPC Commissioner Carrie Geitner proposed a friendly amendment to adjust the motion amount to cap the spend at \$2,000.
- d. 4th Judicial District Attorney Michael Allen seconded the motion with no further discussion.
- e. Teller County Commissioner Erik Stone supported the motion.

f. ACTION:

- i. Vote: All in favor of the motion.

ii. Region 16 Website

1. EPC Deputy Director - Financial Services, Amanda Grant highlighted that the previous facilitators did not complete the website development work as planned. There is a desire to have a fully operational website to reduce personal workload, but concerns about logistics and ownership transfer if facilitators change roles remain.
2. EPC Commissioner Holly Williams noted that any new government website must comply with Colorado's updated ADA rules, which took effect on July 1, 2024 and she suggested a separate website for the council might be beneficial.
3. EPC Commissioner Carrie Geitner highlighted the importance of ADA compliance and mentioned that the rules became more burdensome as of July 1, 2024. She supported the idea of having a dedicated website.
4. COS Councilmember Nancy Henjum also supported having a dedicated website.
5. EPC Deputy Director - Financial Services, Amanda Grant noted that additional costs would arise from purchasing necessary tools and services.
6. Ivonne Hernandez, Project Manager for Initium Health, inquired about the potential name for the website. Teller County Commissioner Erik Stone and 4th Judicial District Attorney Michael Allen proposed "Pikes Peak Region 16" as the site name.
7. Nicole Johnston, Project Manager for CHP, supported the name "Pikes Peak" and suggested exploring search engine optimization capabilities for the website to enhance visibility.

b. Reporting

i. Quarterly Reporting Templates

1. Initium reviewed the reporting templates for Year 1 contracts. Each vendor has a unique template based on their specific metrics, with financial reporting being the only standardized element across all vendors.

2. Council discussed the potential of coming up with a more standardized reporting approach for future contracts to ensure a proactive and comparable evaluation process.

5. 4:24-4:45pm | Public Comments

a. Discussion

- i. COS Councilmember Nancy Henjum stated she missed the previous meeting but had heard it was impactful and requested council members to share key takeaways from that meeting.
- ii. Doug Trainor, COS Police Department emphasized the significant impact made by the group of well-spoken youth who participated in the previous meeting and highlighted it is the reason this council exists.
- iii. Dr. Emily Russell-Kinsley noted an unexpected request from the youth for support for their families. She highlighted that the kids preferred engagement from their peers over traditional advice from teachers, indicating a gap in community-based peer support.
- iv. Dr. Eric Stein Bronsky mentioned that the Denver-based organization, FullCircle, expressed interest in expanding into the region, which could align with the council's goals.
- v. Doug Trainor, COS Police Department, advocated that a group like FullCircle shouldn't have to wait to apply and should be able to apply at any time.
- vi. Teller County Commissioner Erik Stone highlighted the value of peer support as emphasized by the youth, noting their preference for connections with individuals who have shared similar experiences.
- vii. COS Councilmember Lynette Crow-Iverson noted that the youth's trust in the council grew during their discussions. She also shared insights from a follow-up conversation about marijuana acting as a gateway to opioids, reflecting the need for targeted interventions.
- viii. 4th Judicial District Attorney Michael Allen was impressed by the bravery of the youth, particularly the two female participants who shared their harrowing experiences. This highlighted the importance of addressing trauma and providing support.
- ix. Nicole Johnston, Project Manager for CHP, stressed the importance of creating opportunities for social connections and community involvement. She suggested that programs like fishing and baseball, which foster relationships and belonging, should be considered in funding decisions.
- x. Becka Barnhart, CDC Foundation, observed that the youth emphasized themes of connectedness and sober activities. She mentioned that stigma often prevents individuals from seeking help, which points to the need for supportive and stigma-reducing programs.
- xi. David Leinweber, CO Springs City Council, urged the council to focus on collecting and analyzing data to measure the effectiveness of funded programs. He emphasized the importance of using data to make informed decisions about program funding and potential defunding.
- xii. Travis Williams, Chief Development Officer for Springs Rescue Mission, highlighted the role of the community in addressing homelessness and improving conditions. He noted recent survey results showing progress in reducing homelessness, which could be encouraging for the council's efforts.

- xiii. EPC Commissioner Carrie Geitner suggested funding programs that support youth sports and family engagement, drawing on personal experience with her teenage sons. She emphasized the need for programs that foster healthy relationships and avoid messages that undermine the role of parents.
- xiv. COS Councilmember Nancy Henjum supported the idea of connecting youth with adult role models, recognizing that not all young people have consistent parental figures.
- xv. Teller County Sheriff's Office Lt. Jake Markus echoed EPC Commissioner Carrie Geitner's support for after-school programs and family involvement, indicating that these can provide valuable support to youth.
- xvi. Kim Mauthe, Teller County Director of Human Services reflected on past community programs that supported family involvement and suggested exploring similar opportunities with nonprofits.
- xvii. Teller County Public Health Director, Michelle Wolff mentioned various state-level programs and scholarships available for youth, such as the 4-H health curriculum, which could be integrated into local programs to address substance use.
- xviii. James Corbett, Principal of Initium Health, addressed the need to highlight alternative coping mechanisms and the students' reality that they have access to illicit drugs in their schools which further highlights the need for effective strategies to support students.
- xix. Henny Lasley expressed appreciation for the council's thoughtful discussions and efforts, emphasizing the positive energy and commitment of its members.
- xx. Dr. Eric Stein Bronsky discussed the need for a holistic approach to substance use, including prevention and treatment. He emphasized that addiction often stems from underlying issues such as trauma, and highlighted the importance of addressing these root causes.
- xxi. EPC Commissioner Carrie Geitner asked for clarification on how to reconcile different views on addiction, specifically the distinction between chemical dependency and trauma-related issues.
- xxii. Dr. Eric Stein Bronsky offered to provide a detailed explanation on the topic at a later time. He emphasized that addiction often involves a complex interplay of factors, including trauma.
- xxiii. EPC Deputy Director - Financial Services, Amanda Grant suggested utilizing leftover funding to explore immediate opportunities to fund youth services like that of FullCircle.

6. 4:45-4:51pm | Final Comments

a. 2024 Colorado Opioid Abatement Conference

i. The following council members will be attending the conference:

1. Teller County Commissioner Erik Stone
2. El Paso County Commissioner Holly Williams
3. Teller County Public Health Director, Michelle Wolff
4. Teller County Director of Human Services, Kim Mauthe

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 4:51pm by Teller County Commissioner Erik Stone.