

Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council (AODAAC)

Meeting Minutes: Thursday March 12, 2020, 7:00- 9:00 pm

Virtual Meeting via Telephone Conference

Voting Members Present: Elyse Grossman, Larry Simmons, Margaret Mattson, Ed “Bunny” Rich, Evelyn Saim-Lobos, Dawinder “Dave” Sidhu, Cynthia Wright, Laura Mitchell, Kabir Singh, Ghulam Abbas

Ex-Officio Members Present: Hardy Bennett, Caryn “Corey” Brandel, Rose Burnhill, Ben Stevenson II

Guests Present: Ali Taghavi (Arise & Flourish)

Overview: The goal of the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council (AODAAC) is to express the views of the community in the formulation and administration of alcohol and other drug abuse prevention and treatment services in Montgomery County. Members of the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Advisory Council serve as community representatives, who provide guidance to the County Executive and the County Council in identifying prevention and treatment needs and reviewing the county’s efforts in addressing those needs. The Advisory Council will make recommendations in support of, or to improve, current prevention and treatment efforts. The AODAAC also serves as the local drug and alcohol abuse council and submits a bi-annual strategic plan to the State Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration.

Call to order. Elyse Grossman, Chair, called the telephone conference call meeting to order at 7:05pm. Introductions followed. With 10 voting members, a quorum was present. However, the AODAAC executive board determined AODAAC would wait for a future meeting to approve pending meeting minutes, due to challenges associated with phone meetings.

Updates

Committee Reports

Legislative:

Elyse informed that due to the COVID-19 outbreak, going forward the Maryland General Assembly is forgoing verbal testimony and will only accept submitted written testimony.

Prevention:

Margaret reiterated that the Prevention subcommittee hopes to add messages on vaping to the Arise and Flourish (A&F) substance use module currently presented in middle and high schools in Montgomery County. She asked whether there are non-vaping volunteers available to present the messages; Ali indicated that there are. Further discussion focused on whether AODAAC could provide any technical assistance on vaping to A&F for their upcoming meeting with their Board of Directors. Ali said he would welcome hard data on vaping to present at the meeting. Ben shared that Sara Rose and Christina Ruiz are working on a county vaping program and offered to connect the Prevention committee (Margaret, Laura, Larry, Kabir, Ben) and Ali with Sara and Christina and

to facilitate exchange of data and materials for Ali's April 1 meeting. Margaret can assist Ben with this action item as needed.

Treatment & Recovery:

Bunny updated that the Resource Fair and Open Mic that was scheduled for this upcoming Saturday—March 14th—will be cancelled and hopefully rescheduled for a future date.

County Reports

Health and Human Services (DHHS) report:

Hardy shared the following:

- The County Executive's Budget will be released on Monday March 16th.
- Behavioral Health and Crisis Services Chief interviews were conducted on February 27th: one set of interviews with DHHS senior leadership and the BHCS Management Team, and a second set with county partners, stakeholders, and BCC (Boards, Committees, & Commissions) officers.
- Both Hardy and Ben discussed that DHHS is still working on telework (work-from-home) logistics and policies for county program employees. Currently, DHHS is fully open and operating during its usual hours, but they have been instructed to cease planning events.
- There is a dedicated website for updates: <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/Coronavirus>

Rose shared the following:

- The Local Behavioral Health Authority is in the process of collecting Emergency Preparedness Plans from all county behavioral health treatment providers.

Additional AODAAC Member Comments

- Laura shared that because schools are closed, the Parent Teacher Association has cancelled all events going forward, and has postponed the Anti-Vaping Symposium.
- Dr. Abbas shared some information on COVID-19.
- Evelyn provided an update on Family Services programs: the RAP (Recovery and Academic) Program will be closed. The Landing (adolescent clubhouse) is open and will adjust its program times so that students from RAP can come for food and recovery support.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 PM