

Board of Selectmen Special Meeting
Minutes of July 28 2015

I. Call to Order

Chair Mary O'Donoghue called the Special Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 8:30 A.M. in the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Room in the Town Offices. Present from the Board of Selectmen: Alex Vispoli-Y, Paul Salafia-Y, and Mary O'Donoghue-Y. Also present: Interim Town Manager Larry Murphy, Police Chief Patrick Keefe and Police Commander Charles Heseltine. The meeting was duly posted and recorded.

II. Opening Ceremonies

Chair Mary O'Donoghue led the meeting in a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by Ryan Beck from Troop 74.

III. Opiate Addiction Discussion

Selectman Salafia and Vispoli invited Chief Keefe and Commander Heseltine to today's meeting to present their plan on combating the opiate addiction problem in Andover.

Within the last six months Andover has experienced an increase in heroin overdoses surpassing the count for all of 2014. There have been 33 occurrences to date, 12 from residents - some with multiple occurrences and 7 resulting in death. Andover's geological location to Rte 93 and Rte 495 has always created drug activity opportunities. Chief Keefe's plan addresses issues of opiate addiction and how to reduce the distribution, usage, and overdoses within the community through enforcement, innovative education, awareness, and intervention. A copy of his *Combating Opiate Addiction* plan was distributed to the Board and members of the audience.

The Enforcement Goals are geared towards reducing the number of overdoses. Police officers will be issued and carry NARCAN (naloxone), the number of substance abuse detectives will be increased and patrols will be ever present in targeted areas. The Essex District Attorney's office has a Drug Diversion Program for people ages 17-26 where first time non-violent offenders would be sent right away. Currently Andover does not have anyone in this program. Distributors of opiates identified will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Identified users of opiates and overdose victims will be referred to a clinician/counselor. Andover will also partner with P.A.A.R.I. to access resources for education awareness

The first step in the Education/Awareness Goals is to hire a Program Coordinator. The new hire would assist with getting help for addicts after detox and into rehabilitation facilities (for all age groups) provide awareness within the community, work with all Town Departments to identify needs and concerns, and create innovative ways to educate the community on addiction, abuse and other mental health disorders. The

Program Coordinator would work during off-hours and be available 24/7 and help in developing community training and support for families and friends of addicts.

Education and awareness goals include identifying support people within the community to oversee and drive the positions and input from the community. The police can assist with education and awareness programs but no one in town has the knowledge needed that the two new full-time positions will have; the other position being an Addiction Clinician.

Under the Intervention Goals, the Addiction Clinician would develop proactive outreach programs, expand access to addiction treatment options and resources, and access to medication assisted treatment for opiate addiction. The Addiction Clinician will reach out to addicts and their families providing support in developing a plan to ensure their survival and to facilitate the long-term process of recovery and help to empower and motivate families and the community by providing data driven strategies aimed at problem-solving.

Long-term education is very important in the journey to combat opiate addiction and education programs should start as early as fourth and fifth grade. There are several organizations that have already pledged their support to help combat the addiction; the Rotary Club, the Kiwanis', Phillips Academy, Merrimack College, and other local organizations. The Andover Police in conjunction with the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center is holding a public 'overdose training' session on Wednesday, August 26th from 6-8 P.M; the training is free and open to the public and will focus on helping family and friends to recognize the signs and symptoms of addiction, how to prevent an overdose, and how to perform rescue breathing and administer Narcan.

The next steps include filling the two new positions as quickly as possible. The Board of Selectmen will take action to endorse the Chief's plan and ask Larry Murphy to work with Donna Walsh to find the emergency funds for the two positions within the current budget if possible. A job description will be prepared for the Board of Selectmen's approval at their August 10th regular meeting.

Selectman Vispoli moved for the Board of Selectmen to endorse and proceed with the plan to combat opiate addiction as presented by Chief Patrick Keefe and to have information available on the job descriptions for the two positions and funding needed for the August 10th Board of Selectmen's meeting and for the Interim Town Manager to provide a solution on the funding requirements. The motion was seconded by Selectman Salafia and voted 3-0 to approve.

At the suggestion of Kathy Urquhart, Elder Services Director and Chief Keefe, the Board of Selectmen asked the Interim Town Manager to draft a letter to be sent to our State

Legislature from the Board of Selectmen to advocate with insurance companies for more beds and access to health treatment facilities. Library Director, Beth Mazin said they would be open to hosting community awareness panel discussions. In addition, Dr. Berman, Interim Superintendent said the Andover Public Schools is committed to working with the Town to do whatever is needed.

IV. Adjournment:

At 9:10A.M. on a motion by Selectman Salafia and seconded by Selectman Vispoli, the Board voted to adjourn the Special Meeting of July 28, 2015. Roll call: Alex Vispoli-Y, Paul Salafia-Y, and Mary O'Donoghue-Y.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo
Recording Secretary