

MONTVILLE TOWNSHIP DRUG AWARENESS COUNCIL/MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of April 13, 2016

Meeting Called to Order: by Chairperson J. Daughtry at 7:30pm

Members in Attendance: J. Daughtry, L. Connelly, M. Johnson, J. Scialla, M. Murolo, J. Matias, S. Marcus, K. Spitz, J. Witty, and M. Cooney

Members Absent: M. Campbell (Excused – Email submitted), C. Beyer (Excused – Email submitted)

Liaisons in Attendance: D. Nielson - T.C., S. Dahse - MTHS S.A.C., M. Palma - B.O.E., N. Mertz - D.S.S., & D. Danzi – M.T.P.D.

Liaisons Absent: C. Caballero – M.T.H.S. S.A.C., R. Glennon - M.T.H.S. G.C., K. McCorkle – Lazar S.A.C.

Guests in Attendance: Lt. A. Caggiano – M.T.P.D.

A motion was made by Chair J. Daughtry, seconded by J. Witty, to excuse the absences of members who had previously submitted notice to the Chair of their inability to attend tonight's meeting (as noted above). The motion was approved by a voice vote.

Approval of the Minutes:

Minutes for the March meeting were submitted by Recording/Corresponding Secretary M. Johnson, and distributed to members via Email. Chair Daughtry opened the floor for discussion on the proposed minutes. No changes being noted at that time, a motion to approve the minutes was made by S. Marcus, seconded by L. Connelly, and approved by a voice vote of those in attendance.

Welcome New Members/Liaisons

At this time, the D.A.C. welcomed two new participants. M. Cooney was welcomed as the newest member of the Montville Township D.A.C., and gave a quick introduction. Officer D. Danzi was then introduced as the newest liaison from the Montville Township Police Department by Lt. A. Caggiano. The two expressed their desire to help the D.A.C., and wished to work with the Council to define the liaison's role as well as the D.A.C.'s expectations. Chair Daughtry responded that D. Peterson would typically report on the statistics for the month prior regarding arrests and incidents related to substance abuse, particularly among juveniles. S. Marcus asked if it was possible to get data on local crime statistics from a historical perspective. A. Caggiano stated that he could go back to the beginning of the year to pull a report on local trends, but gathering data from surrounding areas would be more difficult.

Chair Person's Report:

Chair Daughtry announced that he and J. Witty would be attending a summit in Atlantic City on Friday, April 29th hosted by the N.J. Prevention Network. The Chair also noted that S. Nebesni from the County had recently circulated a list of upcoming events, which he would share with the Council.

Liaison Reports:

Police – D. Danzi reiterated that he would take the D.A.C.'s requests and prepare a report for the next meeting. J. Witty noted that she read Parsippany was implementing an S.R.O. program, and asked if that was on the local P.D.'s radar. Lt. A. Caggiano noted that the program had been discussed here in town, but was not on his radar at the moment. M. Murolo asked what purpose an S.R.O. would serve. Lt. Caggiano stated that the Township currently has a Juvenile Officer that makes visits to the schools, and participates in regular meetings with their administration. The program has been in place for years. M. Murolo reiterated that the focus is on building a relationship with the students. After the D.A.R.E. program was mentioned, Lt. A. Caggiano reported that L.E.A.D. was the program taking its place in the State of New Jersey.

J. Matias asked if the Police Department would ever consider getting another police dog of it's own, setting aside the inherent costs of the program for the moment. Lt. Caggiano noted that K-9 Officer Thor was a tremendous asset to the department while he was alive, but the costs associated with raising, caring for, and training a K-9 Officer make it an unlikely program to pursue in the near future. Lt. A. Caggiano also noted that, even if the Township had its own K-9 unit, it could not initiate school visits on its own; they must be invited and approved.

D. Nielson also noted the "Peer to Peer" interactions taking place among the police explorers, with respect to established community policing methods. M. Cooney, a former member and leader within the explores, noted that recent MTHS graduates continue to be involved with the program as well.

J. Witty also extended her thanks to Lt. A. Caggiano and the Montville Police Department for their help in coordinating the “Opiate Epidemic in Morris County” event, a notion wholly supported by those in attendance.

First Aid – J. Scialla reported that the Montville Twp. First Aid Squad’s rigs have all been equipped with Narcan, though P.D. still tends to be the first responders on the scene. Still, it is an excellent tool to have on hand. The squad is also preparing to launch its new hydraulic stretcher.

MTHS/Lazar S.A.C. – S. Dahse reported on behalf of the S.A.C.’s noting that the three liaisons will be coordinating with one another to alternate their attendance at D.A.C. meetings. She reported that the MTHS S.A.C.s have four more programs lined up for the year, including an opportunity for parents to meet with the S.A.C.s to discuss a range of issues, as well as a 15 minute child break program planned for May. With respect to Prom, the District is looking at “Project Pride” as a prevention/awareness program to be utilized in coming years. Chair Daughtry asked if the paperwork for the Improbable Players had come in yet, as it is needed to finalize payment for the event. S. Dahse made a note, and agreed to follow up & report back.

Youth Services – N. Mertz noted that C. Ziolkowski had submitted his report via Email prior to the meeting, briefly going over remaining account totals and program highlights. N. Mertz also reported that the R.E.A.C.H. students would be participating in roadside clean ups with the township and donating their grant monies received through the program to Project Graduation.

Board of Education – M. Palma noted that the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. René Rovtar, circulated a letter discouraging private parties on the night of graduation with the District’s regular newsletter. The D.A.C. expressed their gratitude to Dr. Rovtar for her attentiveness to the issue, praising her approach.

Township Committee – D. Nielson reported that a notice on Project Graduation will go out with other notice, but not the tax bill. Proofs of the notice had been received by the Township from M. Johnson, and would be finalized shortly. L. Connelly asked if there were any updates on Paypal/GoFundme, or some other form of E-payment for Project Graduation. N. Mertz noted that she had asked, but has not yet received a response. D. Nielson also reported that the Township would be taking a hard stance on the sale of alcohol to minors within the community. Lt. A. Caggiano expressed the commitment of the Police Department towards the issue as well.

J. Witty asked if the Township could advertise the upcoming School of Rock Concert on the electronic board. D. Nielson said that the request would have to be sent to J. Hercek. J. Witty noted that she Emailed regarding the Opiate Epidemic, but did not see the advertisement appear on the Board. D. Nielson stated that the messages typically rotate, but believes she saw the Opiate Epidemic notice on the board. M. Cooney recalled seeing the notice as well. D. Nielson added that, if there ever appeared to be an issue like that at the last minute, she is available on her cell phone. Lt. A. Caggiano offered to have the P.D. set up some of their electronic road signs to advertise the concert as well.

Sub-Committee Reports:

Project Graduation Committee: L. Connelly reported that the letters to local families had been delayed, but the District quickly turned them around and the bundle was now ready for bulk mailing; the committee is just waiting on the check to be printed. In the meantime, she reported, some checks have already begun to come in. M. Murolo stated that they would meet with A. Orris of the MTHS P.T.C. as well to deliver their “pay it forward” speech to underclassmen parents and try to recruit volunteers. J. Scialla asked if a P.G. Committee meeting date had been set. L. Connelly responded that she is still looking in to possible dates. Chair Daughtry reminded the group that, in addition to the upcoming concert on April 20th, the School of Rock would be holding their annual summer concert at the Amphitheater in June. M. Johnson did not have the date on hand, believing it to be the weekend of the 12th, and needed to confirm. L. Connelly reported that the lawn sign design has been updated, and sale forms would be distributed soon. She asked whether or not it would be possible to post it on the school website.

Project Promotion Committee: J. Witty reported that there is still plenty of time to go, and all that has yet to happen is the ordering of food. Otherwise, we are all set.

Finance Committee: M. Murolo reported that he was putting together a budget, focusing particularly on a timeline/guide for spending down grant monies prior to their deadlines.

Programs & Community Education Committee: J. Witty recapped the Opiate Epidemic program hosted at the Montville Township High School. Feedback collected was largely positive – citing it as both engaging and informative. J. Witty thanked the Police Explorers for their presence, but was disappointed to see that no one from the school administration attended the program. A question was asked as to whether or not the program could be repeated/adjusted for students. J. Witty noted that the Prosecutor’s office was open to the idea, but the issue they are now faced with is time; their schedules do not permit anything in the near future. M. Johnson noted that he had received positive calls/comments as well, and was particularly impressed by their responsiveness during the question and answer period.

J. Witty also reported on other, upcoming events distributed by S. Nebesni from the County. Chair Daughtry reminded the committee of the Improbable Players program coming to the schools in May.

Youth Activities & Justice System Committee: M. Johnson reported that the survey is still a work in progress, but the gears are turning. The committee just needs to finalize *who* will be processing the data collected. S. Marcus agreed to reach out to his contacts, but noted his schedule is full at the moment. M. Johnson replied that they are in no particular rush, and that it was best to let Project Graduation take center stage for the time being. He stated that he hoped to hold another meeting of the Survey Committee sometime in May.

Public/Other Business (Not on Agenda).

J. Witty noted that there was a great turnout from other, neighboring councils at the Opiate Epidemic, and encouraged members to get out and see what other organizations are doing.

M. Cooney asked if the High School still ran the Pre-Prom reenactment program. S. Dahse reported that this year it would be the Improbable Players. M. Cooney recalled seeing a video as a senior, which J. Witty noted as a previous, yet impactful program.

S. Marcus asked the D.A.C. to consider how it can get its message out to individuals beyond the school communities. K. Spitz recommended teaming up with the Montville P.D. to speak to local Board, Clubs, and Organizations.

J. Matias stressed the need for social media, and to finalize the website. J. Witty also noted that the Prosecutor presented very detailed, local information during the presentation, and that Lt. A. Caggiano had very insightful statistics for the Montville Community, including a push to lock up medicine cabinets. N. Mertz asked if any headway had been made on developing a Facebook page. M. Murolo noted that the Council had been told not to, and was instructed to immediately take down the last one they created. N. Mertz suggested asking again, and offered to follow up. She noted that the Senior House gets a lot of interaction on Facebook, and that a page would be a valuable tool for the D.A.C. to have.

M. Murolo added that those “snapshots” of local trends shared by the Prosecutor and P.D. would be great to share, as well as organize into a D.A.C. pamphlet or other publication. Lt. A. Caggiano noted that, upon approval by the Chief, they can publicly release the requested statistics. S. Marcus reiterated that consideration must not only be given to *what kind* of information is distributed, but how it is delivered to the community as well. How do we reach them?

J. Witty noted that with Summer and upcoming vacations, it might be a good time to promote the local “Lock Box”, and suggested S. Marcus as Chair for the campaign. N. Mertz suggested assembling information from the presentation on how prescribed medications are a significant lead-in to more serious addictions. M. Palma noted that he believes that people are aware of the problem, but do not want to talk about it; there’s a pervasive mentality that “if we don’t talk about it, then it will go away.”

J. Scialla asked that, if crime statistics are reported, would it be possible to differentiate external participants from residents. D. Nielson noted that this would be important, as there are many “pass through” cases along major roadways.

Some members objected to the separation, noting that all incidents, whether they involve locals or not, impact Montville’s resources.

Lt. A. Caggiano believed that would be possible to distinguish these individuals while also providing the “big picture” of overall activity.

Adjournment:

There being no further business to discuss on a motion made by J. Scialla, seconded by J. Matias. All in favor by voice vote; meeting adjourned at 8:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael D. Johnson
Corresponding/Recording Secretary
May 11, 2016