



State of New Jersey

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE
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Governor

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Lt. Governor

NEIL VAN ESS
Acting Chairman
CELINA LEVY
Executive Director

MINUTES

Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse

November 17, 2020

Attendance: Neil Van Ess (Chairman), Celina Levy (Executive Director), Gregg Benson (Public Member), Frank Greenagel (Public Member), Donna Westhoven (AOC), Jeff Carrick (DCF), Herbert Kaldany (DOC), Luiz Pereira (DOE), Annette Riordan (DHS), Holly Low (DOL), Craig Sashihara (LPS), Liz Schofield (DMAVA)

Call to Order

The three hundred and forty second 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. Mr. Van Ess informed the Council that this meeting would be for informational purposes only due to the lack of quorum.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Van Ess welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared with the Council that New Jersey had voted to legalize recreational marijuana, and that Governor Murphy had announced his appointments of Dianna Houenou as Chair of the Cannabis Regulatory Commission, and Jeff Brown as Executive Director. The Governor will also appoint Krista Nash as a member of the Commission upon recommendation of Senate President Sweeney. Executive Director Celina Levy will share more in her report.

Mr. Van Ess also shared that GCADA had been informed by Treasury that there had been another decrease in the DEDR funds. More updates will be shared as soon as they are available.

Veterans Day Resolution

Executive Director Celina Levy read a resolution recognizing November 11th as Veterans Day. This resolution will be voted on at the next meeting.

Presentation: “Office of Resilience – Building Self-Healing Communities”

Dave Ellis, Executive Director of the Office of Resilience of the Department of Children and Families gave an overview on how his office coordinates statewide efforts to prevent and protect against the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

The NJ ACEs Collaborative is a public-private partnership that acts as a liaison across the state’s public and private sectors to increase public awareness of ACEs. This includes such work as gathering data about current efforts, meeting with community-based organizations, providing training and technical assistance on how to be trauma informed, and engaging communities that are directly impacted by ACEs. Dave Ellis let Ms. Levy know that he would be sending an invitation to her to join the upcoming meeting of the Collaborative.

The Collaborative is also currently working on a statewide plan to provide children and families with resource programs and services and decrease the prevalence of ACEs in communities.

“DMAVA – Introducing our Change in Leadership”

Colonel (Ret.) Walter R. Nall, named Acting Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs of the NJ Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) by Governor Murphy, shared with the Council that Governor Murphy named Colonel Lisa J. Hou, D.O. as the Interim Adjutant General and Commissioner of DMAVA.

Dr. Hou is the first woman to hold this position and commands more than 8,400 Soldiers and Airmen of the NJ National Guard. She also directs the Department in federal and state missions as well manages all state veterans’ programs, commissions and facilities in New Jersey.

Executive Director’s Report

Ms. Levy in follow-up to Mr. Van Ess’ remarks about the Cannabis Regulatory Commission shared with the Council that Dianna Houenou, who was appointed Commission chair, currently serves as Policy Advisor and Associate Counsel to Governor Murphy. Jeff Brown, who was appointed as Executive Director, currently serves as Acting Commissioner at the New Jersey Department of Health overseeing the Division of Medicinal Marijuana. Krista Nash, who was appointed to serve as a member of the commission previously served as a mentor at Oaks Integrated Care and Transitions for Youth and serves on the Camden County Addiction Awareness Task Force. Ms. Levy and Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro have been in touch with

the new leadership of the Commission and details regarding legislative bills are still being discussed. Updates will be provided as soon as they are received by GCADA.

Treasury has informed GCADA that the Drug Enforcement Demand Reduction (DEDR) Fund has again been decreased. Ms. Levy and Ms. Alfaro are working closely with Treasury, OMB and Governor's Office liaisons to see what options are available to address this situation.

Adjournment

Mr. Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:55.

**** FROM ****

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**** AFFILIATION ****

Group: NJ Assoc of County Alliance Coord.
Relationship: President

**** MESSAGE ****

SUBJECT: 11_17 Council meeting

The presentations today were very interesting and timely. However, the focus of the Council should be on the efforts to sustain the Municipal Alliance program. GCADA staff provided a very small amount of information and shared no detail about their efforts to fix the funding issue. What are you doing about protecting and sustaining this valuable program? Why have you not accepted the offer of the New Jersey Association of County Alliance Coordinators to provide assistance with advocating for the program?

As a follow up to previously submitted questions from a prior meeting, when will they be answered?