



The Knowledge Effect

Meeting Minutes

May 11, 2017
10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

***Vision Statement:** The Knowledge Effect's vision for Lafayette Parish is to create a safe and healthy community.*

- I. Call to Order and Welcome
- II. Introductions
- III. Opioid Awareness- **Doug MacDiarmid (3.a.i.1&2)** Our coalition is made up of different agencies in the area such as hospitals, schools, law enforcement, treatment centers, churches, etc. From these agencies we have collected data in order to choose our objectives; underage drinking, synthetic marijuana, and opioid abuse and awareness. Opioid awareness and abuse is something that we really have not been able to make a significant impact towards since a lot of this has been more on the legislative end through other various DFC Grantees throughout the state.
 - a. Proposed Town Hall
 - i. In order to combat the opioid issue currently happening, we are in the process of planning a town hall. The steering committee met to begin the organization of the town hall and two ideas were brought up on which way to go with the town hall.
 1. The first idea was a general awareness town hall that will get people from the community to come and speak on the opioid issue. It would consist of various speakers, similar to how our synthetic marijuana town hall was in the past. The speakers for that town hall were someone with the Police Department who dealt with synthetic marijuana first hand, a district attorney, as well as someone who made synthetic marijuana in his own home, as well as struggled with addiction but was currently in recovery. Attending this town hall was people from the community, healthcare professionals, as well as law enforcement officials. Since synthetic marijuana was still particularly new at the time, many people were interested to see what it was, how it was getting out onto our streets, and how we planned on combating the issue. Attendees were also shocked by the ease of access to synthetic marijuana and he believes that the same will happen with the opioid awareness town hall.

2. The second idea would be to only involve pharmacists and the medical community to host some sort of “summit” where we can hash out all of the opioid issues that are coming up. We would also begin the conversation on prescription drug drop boxes; where these can be located, where they are currently, cost, etc. According to ongoing conversation that Mechelle has had with local pharmacist, disposal is where majority of the cost comes into play. However, another local coalition, St. Landry Proud, has partnered with their police department and coroner’s office to handle the disposing of the opioids without charge. In some conversation that he has had with doctors in the past is that insurance companies have directed to billable services which has in turn caused doctors to go in, ask their patients what is wrong, and then simply write them a prescription for the pain that they say they are in. When attending the Statewide Coalition meeting that it was said that there are 108 prescriptions for every 100 people in the State of Louisiana.
- ii. **Question:** *Doug MacDiarmid:* Does anyone have any input or questions on what avenue we should take in regards to the town hall?
 1. **Answer:** *Guy Gideon:* We will need to include women in the discussion being that they are the growing population with the prescription/opioid abuse.
 2. **Answer:** *Ray Biggar:* I would expect a big spike in heroin to occur soon as stakeholders begin to crack down on the issuing of prescriptions as well as these prescription drugs may not be giving addicts the high that they are used to. The natural progression of this is to then go to the street drugs because they are cheaper and easier to get.
 - iii. **Ray Biggar:** (3.a.iii.) The Caring Communities Youth Survey (CCYS) has begun tracking this indicator in youth carefully. Typically they do not see youth starting off abusing heroin then going to prescription drugs, those that use have admitted to using heroin have typically begun abusing with prescription medications first. The new CCYS data should be coming out soon, they are waiting on OBH for approval to release the data to the community.
 - i. **Question:** *Doug MacDiarmid:* Does the CCYS data show if youth were also reporting other substance use prior to prescription drug use?
 - ii. **Answer:** *Ray Biggar:* I am working closely with an addictionologist and that they are working on a theory that prescription drugs may become a new gateway

drug for youth. Youth are not just using alcohol, or starting off with alcohol and marijuana but rather prescription drugs are in their medicine cabinets at home whether they were prescribed them or their parents have them. We did not find anything significant but there is some movement towards prescription drugs becoming a new first time drug of choice just because of how they are available. The CCYS for the first time contains youth indicators relating to synthetic marijuana and bath salts.

iii. **Question:** *Melissa Newell:* Do you have any data showing the trend of prescription drugs becoming the new gateway drug? I am currently trying to prove that alcohol is the gateway drug in order to gather information for an under 21 ordinance.

iv. **Answer:** *Ray Biggar:* Again we are unsure. We are still looking for indicators on this but there is a pattern that is beginning to emerge towards the prescription drugs.

iv. **Doug MacDiarmid:** In a recent conversation that I had with Tim Melancon, he mentioned that currently the amount of “drugged driving” arrest have gone up. I think that this is something that population maybe does not understand or know about. Especially here in South Louisiana being that drunk driving has been at the forefront of everything. But now law enforcement is beginning to see more of the drugged driving arrest in blood samples or testing samples. Maybe this is something else that we can bring up in the town hall since it seems as though majority of people are leaning more towards the general awareness idea.

1. **Question:** *Doug MacDiarmid:* Chris is this something that maybe you can expound on a little bit more?

2. **Question:** *Christopher Waters:* Have we talked about who would be on the panel if we went towards general awareness?

3. **Answer:** *Doug MacDiarmid:* No, however we are thinking about following what was done previously for the synthetic marijuana town hall but we have not gone into specifics yet of who to invite. We will set up some sort of smaller committee in order to better organize the town hall. If you want to provide a speaker, or provide information we would love to have you and can provide contact information to you in order to set that up.

b. NAS-NICU Rocks- **Celeste Richard (3.a.b)** Lafayette General recently launched a cuddle program for babies who are suffering from any type of substance abuse issues as well as those whose parents may not be able to be near them due to lack of transportation, etc. Lafayette General is now accepting volunteers to come and cuddle these infants. Holly Howat gave contact information to Mechelle and me for someone from Lafayette General who oversees this program. We reached out to this person and are waiting to hear back from them. Since our coalition was so big on the NAS Committee we are looking to see if we can't intertwine with them to help out with this program.

i. **Doug MacDiarmid:** Holly also mentioned that they are looking for actual rockers to have people sit in to rock these babies, so if any of you know of anyone getting rid of any just let us know.

1. **Question: Doug MacDiarmid:** Does anyone else have anything that they would like to add on the opioid awareness issue?

2. **Answer: Guy Gideon:** We are in dire need of a Narcan program. I did forward information to my supervisor that Mechelle and Celeste sent me about possibly hosting training on Narcan and I have not heard back yet.

ii. **Doug MacDiarmid:** Acadian Ambulance is outfitted with Narcan/Naloxone which is the anti-overdosing drug. If they go out on a call and someone is overdosing they provide this shot to them in an epi-pen format. What we are finding out is that sometimes law enforcement is the first one to respond to an incident. So we were trying to see how we could go about getting officers trained to be able to provide this. There is the Gulf Coast High Trafficking District that provides training. I think they may do it free for certain agencies so this is something that we are looking into as well as the sustainability of something like this. The first thing law enforcement will look at is how something like this will be sustained funding wise and inventory wise.

1. **Ray Biggar:** There a lot of grants out there currently in regards to this. I have even seen some on SAMSHA's website.

IV. Alcohol Code Changes- **Doug MacDiarmid (4.a.i & 4.c)** For those of you who may not know the Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG) as in the process of modernizing their alcohol codes and changing definitions for certain things that were needing to be made more clear.

a. Final Adoption Date (May 16th)

i. There were 3 public input meetings held, the changes were then introduced to council last Tuesday and will be set for final adoption on May 16th.

b. Regulation Changes- **Christopher Waters (4.b.i & 4.d)** Initially LCG was proposing to reduce the distance between churches and schools from 300 feet to 150 feet

which was a concern but this was removed from the proposal. What is currently up for consideration that we have identified as well as language changes is the fact that now a waiver can be made on any establishment outside of a restaurant. Previously a waiver for distance could only be provided for a restaurant but now a waiver can be provided for anyone at the discretion of the council. The other component that we looked at was the implementation of fines for bar card holders/actual bartenders. This would enhance their penalties. It appears that currently if a bar tender is in violation they would not be fined as now they will or will possibly be fined. There is also change in the time of suspension/revocation of their bar card. Initially the biggest concern we had was them reducing the distance of the alcohol establishment from 300 to 150 feet because of the proximity to schools being that our coalition's initiative is to address underage drinking.

- c. Another issue we have found is that compliance checks to check on these underage buyers and drinkers has not occurred since March of last year. After some talk with Marcus Bruno, Marcus stated that LCG is looking to work with the state to be able to have more of the states ATC personnel to be able to do underage compliance checks in bars. There was also talk on upping the dollar amount of renewing bar cards, as well as location of where bar card renewal will occur. I believe they are looking into doing a lot of that online now in order to mainstream everything. I did notice also that neither the moratorium nor the 21 to enter was addressed in these alcohol code changes.
 - i. **Question:** *Celeste Richard:* I have heard that there are four proposed ordinances in regards to the moratorium being lifted, when are these going before council?
 - ii. **Answer:** *Doug MacDiarmid:* I am not sure, the last I heard about it was during the public information meetings that were held last year about it.
- d. Just to touch in on what you said in regards to the compliance checks, previously they were done once a month. This was done through our DFC grant money as well as matching money from the 15th JDC which is no longer there. The compliance checks were happening once a month and I'm sure everyone can recall hearing it on the news or seeing it in the papers; the seller who were out of compliance. This was a safe guard at that point for bar owners to know that someone could potentially stop by and check in on them selling to minors. Since March 2016 no local compliance checks have been done so now these bar owners seem to not have much to worry about. Even if we may not be able to get the funds to do it once a month, if we can potentially get it to where it would come at some point throughout the year, this would provide some sort of barrier as far as getting law enforcement out there but not having to worry about doing it once a month.

If you would like a copy of the updated alcohol code changes please contact Mechelle Richard.

V. Medicinal Marijuana Presentation- **Doug MacDiarmid presented an already scripted presentation that was provided to The Knowledge Effect at the Statewide Coalition meeting. If you would like a copy of this presentation please email Mechelle Richard.**

VI. Agency Updates

- a. **Christopher Waters-** June 3rd we have our Chess and Chat program for youth happening at the Domingue Center from 1pm-4pm. We also haven't set the date yet but we will be doing a leadership mixer series focusing on a variety of topics. At some point we are going to reach out to this coalition in terms of addressing some issues relating to opioids, alcohol, and synthetic marijuana. I'll keep everyone updated on this.
- b. **Melissa Newell:** I have been working on a few narratives to combat the cultural issue of alcohol in our community. I don't want there to be a concept that I am trying to take something away from people but rather asking people to drink more responsibly. Also, I do a newsletter for ARTSC each month. If you all have any programs or events that you participate in just send pictures and a write up to me and I can it out in the newsletter.
- c. **Guy Gideon:** The Lafayette Parish Sherriff's Office Youth Program is offering its summer camp program for high school students from June 12th - 30th and July 10th-28th for middle school students. If you would like more information on this you can contact Nedra Green. LPSO also has a drug testing lab which I have left information for as well as prices for services. Individuals can utilize these services.
- d. **Steve Fruge:** The only thing that is currently going on in the Lafayette Parish School System is our budget. Graduation is also coming up on May 20th at the Cajundome. Northside High is also having an open house in order to try and help the public know what it has to offer its students. There is a health and a law academy there so they are trying to inform the public more on this.
- e. **Corey Jeanlouis:** August 19th at the Martin Luther King Center we are doing our Caritas on the Move. This is basically a giant health fair where we will have health screenings such as blood pressure checks, BMI's, possibly cancer screenings and immunization shots as well. If anyone here would like to participate, set-up a table just to be able to give information to the community just let me know. We are expecting around 300-400 people to come.

VII. Closing Remarks

VIII. Next Meeting: July 13, 2017- Rosa Parks Transportation Center: 10am to 11:30am

Mission Statement: *The Knowledge Effect serves the community through education, public policy initiatives, community events, and trainings that ensure community wellness targeting both youth and adults.*

For more information contact Mechelle Richard 337-291-8173.