

Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee

Date: 10/1/2024
Location and Time: 9 – 11 a.m.
Present: Mark Levine, MD, Caroline Butler, Ruth Hardy, Monica Hutt, Madeline Motta, Scott Pavek, Jess Kirby, Dane Whitman, Deb Wright
Absent: Kristin Atwood, Shawn Burke, Michael Doenges, Heather Stein, MD, Stacey Sigmon

Meeting Facilitator and Note Taker: Mark Levine, MD

Meeting Objectives:		
Agenda Item	Discussion	Next Steps
Opioid Settlement Funding Application Review for State Fiscal Year 2026	<p>The Department received 54 applications for SFY 2026 Opioid Settlement Funding.</p> <p>Nine committee members reviewed the applications, so we need five more to complete the process.</p> <p>The committee decided to put a motion forward to address the missing members results:</p> <p>Senator Hardy made a motion regarding proposals where members in attendance today have reviewed and submitted their responses. Any proposals where everyone said no to those proposals getting further review would remove them from further consideration. For proposals with at least seven votes in support, organizations would be invited to come and present their proposal to the committee. Any other proposals would remain on the table until the remainder of the committee has been able to read and score the applications.</p> <p>Deb Wright seconded the motion and the remaining committee members unanimously agreed.</p>	Kelly will reach out to the remaining members to request that they complete the review.

	<p>Kelly Dougherty reviewed each proposal ranking that were submitted with the committee.</p> <p>Senator Hardy presented another motion: There are 13 voting members, so if the majority of members (7) who complete the application review process vote yes on an application they will be invited to present, and all others (who receive less than 7 votes) will not be discussed further and eliminated.</p> <p>Deb Wright seconded the motion and the remaining committee members unanimously agreed.</p>	
<p>Ethics and Conflict of Interest Reminder Lauren Layman</p>	<p>Lauren reminded the committee of TJ Jones' May 2024 presentation regarding ethics and conflicts of interest and asked members to keep that information in mind when reviewing the applications.</p> <p>If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to her if you think you might have any conflicts and want to recuse yourself.</p>	
<p>Sustainable Funding</p>	<p>Many members want to learn more about the status of existing programs and how things are going; is it making a difference? We will review the data on these programs at the beginning of every year. Now that we are in year three, we have more data to review to help make decisions going forward.</p>	
<p>Public Comment</p>	<p>Titan Potter I spent a year working with the Agency of Natural Resources as the Environmental Justice Coordinator, but most of my background has been working in the intersections of incarceration, mental health, and substance use. So I'm just going to drop something really quickly in the chat. Just a couple things I wanted to share with the committee related to the conversations that are happening right now.</p> <p>The first is just a reminder that activists from all over the country, including Vermont, put together a road map with a lot of really, really thoughtful guidance on how to make the decisions y'all are making. I'm sure you all have seen this before. I just wanted to bring it back because time goes on and it's easy to just sort of get tired and drift into what's easy or drift into what's kind of what's we're used to.</p>	

And I think these exercises it helps to remember that things that they point out in the road map, like supporting small community organizations, being open to hopeful innovations that maybe aren't things we know as well, making sure we're including people actively using drugs in decision making.

As somebody who using my experience in community outreach from working at ANR followed. What was going on this committee and spreading the word to organizations and people who do direct work with folks struggling with the opioid crisis. Everyday frontline harm reduction work who don't know how to follow those meetings, don't know how to apply for these funds, don't know how to access it. And so, you all understand, are tired. I've been there. I left that position for a reason. I'm not saying what you all do is easy.

And please remember, there's like really hard-working Vermonters on the other side of this process who do this work for free every day. I would consider from the perspective transparency and accountability too, maybe just like touching base with all folks.

I saw some comments. You didn't go through all the comments in the survey, but things like might be better suited for other funding, just like let an organization know that then because again, we're all in this together and everyone's working hard to fight the crisis on the front lines.

The other two links I dropped in the chat in I saw a comment about the acupuncture proposal the top comment was. I don't know if this is evidence based and that is not consistent at all with my understanding of the research, I dropped a couple links that are more consistent with my understanding.

I just would really strongly suggest folks, maybe if you're not sure if something is evidence based like just to take a harder look on that one in particular. And yeah, the last thing I want to say is, you know, I also in transparency submitted a proposal and the top comment for that one is. I'm not sure this is a serious proposal. It was a serious proposal.

	<p>Please assume that the people doing the work are taking it seriously just because it's not something you've heard of or something you're familiar with. Harm reduction work is happening every day in small bits of community where people are actually safe enough to ask for help and falling into the bias of what's known or what's big or who's done it before really can undermine the kind of innovation that that road map calls for.</p> <p>And I appreciate your Labor truly. Again, I know it's hard on all sides of the work and that committee work is often also added work on</p> <p>Thank you for the time.</p>	
Next Meeting	October 28, 2024 10 - noon	