SIMI VALLEY TASK FORCE ON HEROIN PREVENTION
MEETING NOTES - THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2014

• Call to Order/Pledge/Roll Call 6:00 pm

• Task Force Chairman Mike Judge called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. All Task Force members were present with the exception of Member Trustee Dan White and Director Gene Hostetler.

• Public Comments:

  • Danica Salvaggio, Marketing and Volunteer Coordinator of Big Brothers Big Sisters: Big Brothers Big Sisters mission is to help children reach their potential through one-to-one relationships with mentors that have a measurable impact on youth. The Big Brothers Big Sisters Vision is successful mentoring relationships for all children who need and want them, contributing to brighter futures, better schools, and stronger communities for all. Students participating in the programs are more confident in their schoolwork performance, able to get along better with their families, 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to begin using alcohol and 52% less likely to skip school. She thanked Pastor Kevin Dieckilman and Simi Hills Christian Church. She stated the need for more mentors in Simi Valley. Big Brothers Big Sisters are looking forward to the opportunity to work with local community agencies on the Under One Roof project later in the year.

  • Pastor Mario Zamorano: Working with Pastor Kevin, assisting at Heroin anonymous meetings and ministering at Simi Hills Christian Church. He works with Narcotics Anonymous and stated that Simi Valley is in the forefront, doing more than other cities, bringing community organizations and people together to work on problems. In closing, Pastor Zamorano stated he is available and is here to help.

• The September 23, 2013 meeting notes were reviewed and received by the Task Force.

• Recognition of Outgoing Task Force members, Mike Nolan and Susan Klimusko for their service to the Task Force. Mike Judge, City Council Member and Task Force Chair, read and presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Ms. Klimusko. Mr. Nolan was not present.

• Task Force Chair Mike Judge introduced the new members of the Heroin Task Force.

  • Jim Vigdor will replace Mike Nolan as the representative from the Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce.
  • Melissa Siebers will replace Susan Klimusko as one of the Not One More representatives.

• Presentation by the Simi Valley City Attorney's Office Regarding the Brown Act

  • Felicia Liberman, Assistant City Attorney: Presented information about the Brown Act; all meetings of the legislative body of a local agency shall be open
and public, including discussion, debate and acquisition. The Brown Act prohibits direct communication, personal intermediaries or technological devices unless it meets the open and public requirements. Ms. Liberman reviewed exceptions, proper public postings/notifications, violations, and the rights of the public to be present and the ability to comment. Ms. Liberman stated the City Attorney’s office is always open to answer any questions about the Brown Act.

- Pastor Kevin Dieckilman asked Ms. Liberman to give a presentation on how members can work together in a positive way. Ms. Liberman stated the presentation was neither negative nor positive; the Brown Act lays out provisions, all discussions must be in an open agendized meeting. The public has the right to know before the legislative body has made any decision. The reality is that if members have conversations outside of the noticed public meeting related to the topics they are to make decisions on, the end result will be invalidated.

- City Manager, Eric Levitt stated the Brown Act is somewhat restrictive for the Heroin Task Force; Not One More can work without the restrictions. The Heroin Task Force has the responsibility of working under the Brown Act.

- Update and Presentation from the Simi Valley Police Department

- Captain John McGinty shared information regarding heroin related arrests for the period of January - March 2014:

  - Possession/sales of Heroin - 38 Arrests
  - Possession of Drug Paraphernalia – 92 Arrests
  - Overdose Calls SVPD Responded to – 18 Calls

Captain McGinty stated the benefits of the Good Samaritan Law; Methamphetamine possession arrests are almost double heroin possession arrests; heroin possession arrests are generally not as common as other illicit drugs since addicts use the drug very soon after acquiring it; the number of arrests should not be used to judge the magnitude of the problem.

- Captain McGinty reviewed school campus drug related activity that required SVPD involvement:

  - Royal High School - 2 arrests for marijuana and paraphernalia possession
  - Simi Valley High School - 1 arrest for being under the influence of alcohol
  - Apollo - 1 arrest for weapon (non-firearm)
  - Santa Susana High School - 0 arrests
  - Sinaloa Middle School – 1 report of student under the influence who released to parents
  - Hillside and Valley View Middle Schools - 0 arrests
  - K-9 campus searches – Two conducted at Royal High School and Sinaloa Middle School

In the future, Captain McGinty stated SVPD K-9 searches will be conducted with smaller details and greater frequency, using just one SRO and one dog. Law
enforcement believes that the searches are an effective deterrent.

- Kate O'Brien, Director, inquired if the Ranch Simi Recreation and Park District flyers are helpful. Captain McGinty responded that the flyers are available in the debriefing room; some officers hand them out more frequently than others. The flyers share the same information as the County's 211 Information/resource phone line.

- Pat Montoya, Not One More, questioned the difference between “formal” vs. “informal” arrest? Captain McGinty responded with a formal arrest a juvenile would be arrested and would proceed through the court system; an informal arrest would be handled by a Youth Services Officer and would include a warning, possibly mandatory check-ins and community service.

- Police Chief Mitch McCann, SVPD, responded to an inquiry about asset forfeiture monies kept at County (approximately $8K). He suggests that the Heroin Task Force prepare a memorandum with ideas to use the monies. The SVPD is in the process of deploying a mobile application, which should be available in the near future and will allow a person/student to contact the school's Student Resource Officer.

- Mike Judge, Task Force Chair, stated he is very proud of the Police Department and impressed by the work done by the Simi Valley Recreation and Park District and the Simi Valley Unified School District.

- Update from the Simi Valley Unified School District related to its implementation of strategies to combat heroin abuse

- Cheri Toyen, TUPE Coordinator, shared what programs SVUSD is providing to students to keep them on the right track. The programs include: Keeping it Real and Project Alert (middle school); Project End; Intervening with Teen Tobacco Users, TAP (middle and high school); classroom visits, guest speakers, Friday Night Live Mentoring Program (Royal High School students mentoring Sinaloa and Hillside middle school students, Simi Valley High School students mentoring Valley View Middle School students); providing resources: videos on substance abuse prevention, intervention resources on the SVUSD's website; flyers, anti-drug posters and public service announcements. Cheri Toyen also shared events that have taken place including the annual Distracted Driving Program, Every 15 Minutes (High School), Apollo's “Anti-Drug” assembly, NOM presentations (Pat Montoya), “Overtaken” NOM video (health and biology classes), Alternative to secessions, Saturday school, Action family counseling, PTA/PTSA parent night on February 20, 2014, Tobacco Bus, Straight Up Ventura County workshops, and a Reality Party for Parents on March 8. The SVUSD promotes positive activities for youth offering sports, afterschool clubs and more. Staff continues to educate the public through Meet & Greets, and shares pertinent information on the District and School websites (inclusive of an anonymous drug reporting link on SVUSD's home page).

SVUSD will offer a random voluntary drug testing program in the Fall of 2014 for grades 7-12; parents will be given the option to have their child tested at the Simi
Valley Hospital for a minimal fee. Students enrolled in this program will exit at graduation or before if parents request their child to be removed from the program.

- Rob Collins, Vice Chair of the Task Force, asked about the effectiveness of the anonymous drug line. Dr. Kathryn Scroggin, Superintendent of SVUSD, responded that it appears that there have been more cases of false reporting than true reporting. There have been one or two tips where administrators have been able to contact students.

- Pat Montoya, Not One More, shared that attendance was very low at the Straight Up, Ventura County Parent Night, held at Royal High School. He asked if the School District had promoted the event. Cherl Toyen and Dr. Jason Peplinski, SVUSD Director of Educational Services, responded that an all call via Parent Link had gone out; the information was also shared on social media and posted on websites. There were multiple events that evening that may have contributed to a smaller turn out than expected.

- Pat Montoya shared that when he speaks to youth groups, he has a good turn out and parents are very supportive.

- Update from the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District related to its implementation of strategies to combat heroin abuse.

- Danielle June, Recreation Specialist shared an overview of the collaborative efforts in programming, events, and media. Community Coalition United hosted events in December of 2013 and in April of 2014; staff attended the Regional Suicide Prevention Network (Kern, SLO, SB, VC) in December 2013; the Park District has had programming collaborations with Ventura County Behavioral Health and Community Coalition United such as mental health first aid training, with over 350 community members trained since August 2012, over 130 in this reporting period and monthly trainings continue to be available; RSRPD helped facilitate and implement Triple P Parenting Seminars, in collaboration with Interface.

RSRPD also provides pre-teen and teen specific programming; events and excursions, programming at the library, summer camps, teen travel, aquatics, academic enrichment camps, baby sitter training, programs at the Simi Valley Senior Center, and programs in partnership with Iceoplex in Simi Valley.

RSRPD also hosted the Reality Party for Parents in March 2014, in collaboration with Straight Up Reality, Community Coalition United, SVPD, SVUSD and others, The Youth Services Provider Meet and Greet was held February 12, 2014, 40 agencies participated. The Park District and Community Coalition United partnered in setting up a booth at the Simi Valley Days Parade in the fall.

RSRPD is hosting the Community Showcase on Saturday, April 26. The event will bring people outdoors to enjoy music, activities, an opportunity to volunteer and more. RSRPD continues to provide information in the community through media and brochures, such as the Drugs Destroy tri-fold brochure, RSRPD
**Report**er, the RSRPD website, which has had an additional 196 visits to the Drugs Destroy page since the last report. May is Mental Health Awareness Month.

- Discussion of "A Way Out: A Simi Valley Comprehensive Proposal Plan to Give our Young Adults a Better Path to Choose"

  - Kate Bennett, a youth community mentor and leader at Community Church works with youth whose parents are alcohol and drug users. Ms. Bennett presented her proposal and asked the Task Force to consider her ideas.

  - A need for a place for students to live who are residing with parents who are using drugs or are struggling with alcoholism. Those students need a place to live where they can learn about living free from substance abuse. She would like to purchase an area of land and build a house where kids can learn how to live productive lives.

  - A need for a network of community mothers and fathers (at least 20 adults) who are willing to be called at all hours of the night for any of these kids to get help in order to build relationships with positive role models who are not their parents.

  - A collaboration of every single organization in Simi Valley to meet monthly and discuss progress and failure. Incorporate teens who have overcome addiction and help the community understand what they are missing and why their peers are using.

  - Pat Montoya, Melissa Siebers, Kate O’Brien and Kate Bennett had a discussion including: Teen ALANON; a list of people willing to open their home during a crisis.

  - Mayor Huber suggested finding a grant. He also suggested putting the request on the agenda, for discussion, at the next Tri-Agency meeting of the elected leaders and City Manager, Superintendent and District Manager of the City of Simi Valley, Simi Valley Unified School District, and Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.

  - Pastor Dieckilman and Pastor Weir will take it back to their faith based organizations.

- Update Regarding the "Drug Free Youth in Town" (DFYIT) Program

  - Samantha Argabrite, Assistant to the City Manager reported, a SADD Chapter is establishing at a local high school and that SVUSD will begin implementing random drug testing in the fall. Ms. Argabrite requested the Task Force consider deferring action related to the DFYIT program until the SADD chapter and the School District’s new drug testing program have time to demonstrate results. At that time, it could be determined which services are needed to fill any gaps.
ACTION: Chair Judge stated, defer action until the middle of the school year and receive a report from the SVUSD, determine what elements would be needed to fill the gap and the DFYIT program could be reconsidered if needed.

- Discussion of Agencies Updates Regarding Implementation of the Recommended Strategies to Combat Heroin Abuse

- Pat Montoya of Not One More stated that NOM supports the members of the community; works with recovering addicts; educating parents of the drugs available and what to look for if they suspect a family member is using; and they work to remove the stigma and shame associated with drug abuse.

Sunday afternoons at 1:00 they offer sessions, they work with recovery houses, bring in speakers to inspire young people to become role models, work with sport teams and high schools, the Boy Scouts and university students to provide age appropriate information. NOM provides a 24/7 crisis hot line and www.notonemore.com; they assist families in navigating the available services; including grief programs, family groups, weekly functions, such as “Many Moms” a group for mothers. NOM works with recovery houses, Action family counseling; and the Task Force on Heroin Prevention. NOM is establishing chapters in Ojai, Pittsburgh, New York and Seattle. NOM celebrated its second anniversary on February 12.

- Task Force Reports

- Pastor Weir of Simi Valley Community Church, discussed The Landing, a program for at risk students (last year there were 4 students, and now there are 17), which provides a place for students to encourage each other to not take part in destructive behavior; six adults work with the youth to provide a positive and encouraging place for students.

- Pastor Dieckilman discussed combining the faith based community with the other community agencies, such as working with Danica Selvaggio of Big Brothers and Sisters. The faith community hosts a Single Moms dinner once a month and offers child care; there are Heroin Anonymous (HA) meetings at the church, and have expanded into the second night; they are working with the Samaritan Center and all other faith based organizations in the community.

- Eric Levitt, Simi Valley City Manager, brought forward the issue of the state legislature discussing NARCAN; a drug that can counteract the effects of Heroin. The issue is the medical procedure. It is proposed that the City write a letter of support of the legislation so law enforcement agencies could have the option of having it available to them, however it would require further research before being implemented.

- Mayor Bob Huber is in support of the City Manager writing a letter, with recommendation by Heroin Task Force, in support of studying this issue. He stated that the recommendation is not in favor of using or not using NARCAN, but in favor of more research and discussion.
• Melissa Siebers is not in support of the recommendation.

• Chief Police Mitch McCann stated that the SVPD has been looking into the legislation and there are concerns about liability issues and medical oversight; and more information regarding the options of delivery, such as inhalant versus injection, need to be researched. Chief McCann is in favor of the recommendation that the City study the legislation. decides.

• Paul Kover, Not One More: adamantly against this drug becoming available without the knowledge of what can happen if it is not administered correctly.

**ACTION:** A motion by Kate O’Brien and seconded by Mayor Bob Huber, the City Manager will draft a letter in support of legislation.

• Samantha Argabrite, Assistant to the City Manager, reviewed events that have been calendared since the last Heroin Task Force meeting in September, 2013 as well as actions the City has taken since that time.
  • May 20 – Youth Council has invited a speaker to present a Drug Prevention Update.
  • April 26 – The Youth Employment Service is hosting its annual Job and Career Expo.
  • April 15 – Youth Council members invited local Southern California Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) Liaison, Katherine Kasmir (also Straight Up Ventura County’s Executive Director) to help develop a local SADD chapter onsite at a SVUSD school campus
  • March 18 – Straight Up Reality Party hosted by SVUSD, Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, and SVPD. The event promotion included a targeted SVTV slide, website community event post, and an E-notification.
  • February 12 – In partnership with the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District, hosted the Simi Valley Youth Services Providers Meet and Greet, bringing together 40 youth-serving organizations to share resources and discuss collaborations.
  • January 29 – City staff attended the Ventura County Children’s System of Care Agency 101 Resource Fair.
  • SVTV continues to air public service announcements developed by the Ventura County Behavioral Health Alcohol and Drug Programs related to teen prescription drug abuse and heroin abuse.
  • Working with bus shelter vendor to re-post the Heroin Kills panels at the bus shelters throughout the community.
  • Simi Valley Library offers a wide variety of programming for teens to provide positive alternatives, and programming for adults, such as Triple P – Positive Parenting Program.
• Audience Comments

  • Pat Kelly with Not One More: Is not in favor of the widespread availability of NARCAN; it is already in the community. Training is available and if used correctly is effective; if done incorrectly, it can be very complicated. First step, call 911; support the respiratory system, NARCAN is also available in the ambulances. Mr. Kelly does support the recommendation to study the matter further.

• Future Meeting Date

  • August 28, 2014 6:00 p.m.

    ACTION: Next meeting to be scheduled for August 28, 2014 and minutes to be distributed prior to the agenda packet.

• Mike Judge provided the Good Samaritan law reminder. An individual is immune from prosecution while reporting an overdose and is also under the influence. The Police will come, the ambulance will come and the reporter will not be prosecuted.

    ACTION: A motion by Mr. Collins and seconded Ms. O'Brien, the meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.
DATE: August 28, 2014

TO: Task Force on Heroin Prevention

FROM: Eric J. Levitt, Simi Valley City Manager

SUBJECT: Agenda Item VII. Presentation and Discussion regarding “Straight Talk – Real and Local Testimonials”

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended the Task Force discuss the proposed “Straight Talk – Real and Local Testimonials” program.

OVERVIEW

The Simi Valley Police Department, Ventura County Behavioral Health, and Straight Up Reality Ventura County will present a proposed program, “Straight Talk – Real, Local Testimonials” to the Task Force on Heroin Prevention.

The proposed program will incorporate real life testimonials from recovering drug addicts under the age of 25 to be presented in local secondary education schools, under the supervision of Straight Up Reality Ventura County. The recovering addict will have ideally attended the school where they would speak, in an effort to provide more relatable information to the students.

The program, as proposed, would assist in the prevention of drug use by demonstrating the risks and realities of using drugs, including heroin, but could also be valuable for students who are beginning to experiment with drugs for them to see the consequences of that behavior. It will increase awareness for not only prevention but those students who may already be considering or using drugs.

SUMMARY

It is recommended the Task Force discuss the proposed “Straight Talk – Real and Local Testimonials” program.

Eric J. Levitt, City Manager
City of Simi Valley