

**Meeting Minutes
Thurmont Addiction Commission**

**February 8, 2017
7pm - 9pm**

Attendees:

Commissioner Jay Churchill	Commission Chair, Voting member
Commissioner Mike Randall	Commission Co-chair, Voting member
Commissioner Rachel Hubbard	Voting member
Commissioner Kim Kerens	Voting member
Commissioner Edward Schildt	Voting member
Commissioner Myra Derbyshire (Secretary)	Non-Voting member (alternate)
Town Commissioner Martin Burns	Town Council Liaison
Genesis Treatment Service	Invited representatives
Brooks Behavioral Health Services	Invited representative
Serenity Treatment Center	Invited representative
Westminster Rescue Mission	Invited representative
General Public	

Meeting Minutes recorded by Commissioner Derbyshire

Commission chairman Jay Churchill gave the opening remarks: He asked how do we move forward as a community? He invited the visitors to attend future TAC meetings, then introduced the chairs of TAC pillars. He said that it takes a village to address these issues and that the commission needed their help and would be honored to have it. He also asserted it was important to strengthen the dialogue between TAC and these groups. He then asked the chairs of the three pillars to introduce their pillars:

Prevention Pillar: Commissioner Mike Randall explained that he has ties with the various local sports organizations. He explained that the pillar recognizes the impact of the opioid crisis on kids all the way up to seniors, and there is no one group not affected.

Education and Awareness Pillar: Commissioner Ed Schildt described the pillar's educational events that are open to the community which include the upcoming "Introduction to the Enemy" to be held at Lingular High School on Feb 28th at 6:30pm. Their pillar has had lots of interactions with the Thurmont/Northern Frederick County community, including in the schools and a monthly speaker series with presenters on a variety of topics - the first one this month on "step 1 to recovery". Other efforts include Narcan training, they are developing a resource compendium, a drug-awareness flyer that introduced TAC and signs of drug addiction was distributed via a town mailing, and additional

educational pamphlets are in development. He added that more events are being considered with the goal to engage more of the local community,

Support and Recovery Pillar: Commissioners Myra K. Derbyshire and Rachel Hubbard briefly summarized recent pillar work including, attending a Harm Reduction Program at the health department with follow up questions via email, presenting to the Emmitsburg ministerium regarding the message of hope that recovery is possible and that the recovery of the family is possible. She mentioned that various foundations were represented on our pillar including the RJ's Lasting Strength Foundation and Richard Carbaugh's Hope Foundation and summarized some of their activities. The pillar has also been organizing with the health department to conduct free Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) recovery coach training in Thurmont in April and has been helping the education and awareness pillar meeting with suggestions of speakers for their monthly series.

Commission chairman Jay Churchill summarized that TAC is designed to be broad and at the same time targeted at specific things and with the full support of the town government leveraged strategically. He then asked to learn more about the invited visitors and the mission of the organizations they are representing. He asked them to be open in telling the commission about the efforts of their organizations and reminded the attendees that this meeting was not be video-taped.

1. Genesis Treatment Service: Dawn James, chief operating officer Genesis treatment service; specializes in opioid treatment, in addition to their programs in Westminster and in Woodlawn, they recently opened a program on West Patrick street in Frederick. Ms James introduced Joel Prell (the owner, jprell@genesistreatmentmd.com, phone 410-982-8364) who was interested in reaching out to the Thurmont community. He explained that they were well-aware of the local crisis from the media. He discussed transportation for clients to Intensive Outpatient Therapy (IOP), explained their program is flexible and that it has been very effective as it relates to reduction of drug use. Their focus was to help families as well as the clients.

Genesis provided additional information in responding to questions from commissioners: It provides methadone maintenance, suboxone and outpatient (IOP) and that it considers counselling a critical component of their program. They manage dual diagnosis cases and include mental health work. They accept state insurance and consider needs assessment for payment. David Heard, Jr. was then introduced as the Director of Business Development, and our contact for the Frederick program dheard@ahelpinghandtreatment.com 443-301-3772 (cell) and as their point of contact to TAC.

Town Commissioner Burns followed with more questions: he asked them to explain further about transportation. Specifically, he asked how are our local people to attend a program in Frederick? J. Prell responded that Genesis's Westminster program takes Medicaid and has vans that shuttle clients. He indicated he unsure know how it will work in Frederick, but they are working with the health department on this issue. He realizes that there is not yet a bus stop on West Patrick Street that is practical for their new site.

2. Brooks Behavioral Health Services. David Brooks (Owner/Clinical Director) explained that he had previously worked with the health department but left in October trying to attack the issue from a different perspective. He was a program manager in a criminal field, and had a niche in criminality, and served in a criminal assessment capacity for the courts. He shared that he has

seen 100 patients in the first 3 months of his program. He explained that he is discussing the possibility of using the Christian radio station in Thurmont as a facility for his program during the day. The approach of Brooks Behavioral Health Services is to correct behaviors, to recognize what might be that is leading someone down the path of incarceration and to help correct that path. He indicated client's criminal behaviors often include forging bad checks and breaking into cars. The focus of this program is less focused on addiction, per se, and more on their aberrant behaviors – with the premise that by correcting these misaligned behaviors, many of the other issues will also be resolved. He brings his breadth of experience from the health dept, drug court, and veterans court so clients are familiar with who he is – 80% of his clients connect with him via Facebook.

David Brooks provided additional information responding to questions from commissioners: His program works with live cases and not by expunging cases. Assessment is all evidence-based. All clients have a substance abuse problem and he sees clients from age 16 and up.

3. Serenity Treatment Center: (<http://serenitytreatmentcenter.com/programs/clinical-care/>) was represented by Georgia, who explained that Serenity has treatment centers in both Frederick (301-898-2627) and Hagerstown (301-732-5328) with a tradition of Intensive Outpatient Service. Clients are 18 and older and include those using Maryland Medicaid. She explained that they do run women's only groups and that services include mental health evaluations, urine testing, Vivitrol injections, etc.
4. Westminster rescue Mission: Angela Phillips, Director of Development, (aphillips@WestminsterRescueMission.org) explained that they are a 9-month (long-term) faith-based residential addiction recovery program that currently serves only men. This program is cost-free to their clients but supported through public philanthropically. It typically serves 25-30 clients per night, 6 hours-a-day/6 days-a-week. The program includes individual and peer counselling, Narcotics Anonymous, and attending local churches of their choice. The program's belief is that addiction will not be cured by more drugs and it is therefore abstinence-based. The treatment center sits on 30 acres of county land.

Angela Phillips provided additional information on response to questions from commissioners: The issue of detox is handled before the clients are admitted into their program.

Further discussion ensued:

Visitor Joel Prell (owner Genesis) added that what is needed is an agency to connect the dots, there is a need to develop crisis centers: he asked if the group knew that Frederick has a crisis center. Addicts are in need of treatment in a safe place where they can be assessed, see a doctor and nurse and get into treatment immediately. He suggested this coordination between the different groups is critical.

Town Commission Burns added that this is exactly why TAC was formed – to address this coordination issue. He challenged the visitors on their level of interactions. He added we have to be open to considering multiple different approaches in order to make a dent in this epidemic.

Commissioner Derbyshire added we need to work at reducing the stigma and supporting the recovery community to come out of the shadows.

Karen Schildt added that she and Commissioner Ed Schildt facilitate a support group on Wednesday evenings for family members of those in active use or in the recovery process. This support group meets every Wednesday at 6pm in Frederick at the "Austin Addiction & Mental Health Center. 12-20 people regularly attend. The first Wednesday of each month they also offer a bereavement group at the same time and location.

Commissioner Churchill reinforced that coordination and sharing is important, that the commission is trying to get this information out there and asked the visitors how TAC can help facilitate these goals.

Commissioner Churchill added that Chasity Fox (RJS lasting Strength Foundation) is a valuable contributor to the commission and that they provide among other things funeral expenses. Chasity added that in addition they have provided money for transportation to rehab in Florida and Ohio and provided a Christmas celebration for children that lost parents to overdose. She added that the foundation has been in existence for 7 months and that they help with money for rehab, Vivitrol copays, are involved in overdose awareness and run an annual "Hope for Change" festival in Baker Park that includes Hepatitis C and HIV testing along with Narcon training. This summer the festival will be held August 11th and includes recovery artists Twitch, Joe Nester, and others. Additional long-term goals are for a recovery home and a detox center.

Members expressed an interest in bringing detox to the County.

Commissioner Churchill concluded this part of the meeting thanking everyone. He urged the visitors to please not stop communicating with us, that the evening had generated multiple ideas, and that it was important to continue the discussion, and referred them to the Town of Thurmont Addiction commission's webpage for pillar email etc...

The visitors invited to stay for the duration of the TAC meeting that focused on business issues, but it was recognized many would likely choose to leave.

Upon resuming the TAC meeting, TAC January commission minutes written by Commissioner Derbyshire were approved, unanimously.

Vicky Grinder discussed the progress she and Commissioner Hubbard have made towards TAC becoming a 501(c)(3) and future grant writing. She mentioned the pamphlets in the electric inserts and progress on the TAC website.

Vicky Grinder and Commissioner Rachel Hubbard reported they met with artist Becky Pearl who is willing to offer a Saturday morning art lesson and is interested in offering an art scholarship for one person in recovery per semester, and possibly therapeutic horse therapy at Rocky Ridge Rescue. Commissioner Derbyshire was very interested in learning more about this.

Prevention Pillar report: Commissioner Mike Randall reported that the TAC Facebook page had 3,500 visitors, is updated daily, and that announcements could be posted usually within a day. He updated us on progress on the presentation at the senior center with the health department. He reported hearing the sentiment that there was "nothing for these kids to do". In response,

the pillar is considering developing a bi-monthly publication to circulate in a similar way to the Banner with an accompanying online presence that would publicize activities of interest in Northern Frederick County such as high school activities, sporting events etc... A meeting is planned with Deb Spalding to discuss the logistics of this idea.

Commissioner Jay Churchill reminded the commission that we will discuss the upcoming Harm Reduction- Needle exchange program at the next TAC meeting.

Education and Awareness Pillar report: Commissioner Ed Schildt reminded TAC that the upcoming presentation in their monthly speaker series is to be given by Terry Austin who will discuss recognizing substance abuse and initial steps to take towards recovery. The next speaker in the series after Terry Austin, will be Rena Larkin who will discuss the impact an addict's addiction has on their family. The commission was then asked to consider whether some of these events could be televised and perhaps held in the Town Hall to facilitate broadcasting. Town Commissioner Burns asked that the pillar consider including stories of hope and successful recovery.

Support and Recovery Pillar activities were reported earlier in the meeting.

Others:

Commissioner Rachel Hubbard presented a draft TAC mission statement and said that it needs approval to go forward with 501c3. it was decided that mission statement should be distributed to the commissioners by email to continue discussion and finalized promptly.

Town Commissioner Burns challenged the commission to think what a recovery facility or Rec center would look like, to think of TAC's long- and short-term goals, and to think of philanthropic ways of raising money etc... He suggested perhaps inviting someone from the Ohio facility mentioned by Chasity Fox to present on their success in starting such a facility.

Commissioner Jay Churchill suggested TAC now develop a strategic plan. He offered to write and send a letter to the commission for approval, thanking today's invited presenters.

Meeting adjourned at 9pm.