

MINUTES

Purpose: Engage Okaloosa County community members in a health improvement process through an open, two-way dialogue to impact harmful events such as pedestrian injuries, falls, and substance use and to reduce the housing burden.

Attendees: Bernard Johnson, Florida Power and Light; Christy Craig, Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa); Trisha Dall, FDOH-Okaloosa; Daniel Payne, City of Fort Walton Beach; Emily Tash, DOH-Okaloosa; JB Whitten, City of Crestview; Jeffrey “Greg” Cain, Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services; Jeremy Morgan, City of Fort Walton Beach; Karen Goodson; Karen Brown, Crestview Housing Authority; Leann Calabro, City of Fort Walton Beach Fire Department; Robert Bage, Fort Walton Beach Police Department; Sheila Fitzgerald, Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners; Elizabeth “Beth” Smith, DOH-Okaloosa; Gabrielle Smith, CDI Head Start; Lida Fratangelo, North Okaloosa Medical Center; Ryan Mims, Florida Department of Health in Walton County; Stephanie Barnello, Ascension Sacred Heart.

Opening – Elizabeth “Beth” Smith

- Elizabeth “Beth” Smith opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
- Emily Tash reviewed the meeting’s purpose and agenda. She also shared results from the Community Engagement Survey from the previous meeting.
- Minutes from the November 14, 2022 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Finalize Action Plan – Robert Bage

- Chief Robert Bage opened discussion by referencing the Overdose Summit and how his perspective on the opioid crisis changed. Multiple attendees shared their agreement and expressed interest to incorporate substance use into the group.
 - Emily shared the Healthy Behaviors OCHIP group is currently working on substance use, including opioids, nicotine, and alcohol.
 - Attendees requested the topic be moved from Healthy Behaviors to Healthy Communities. Emily and Beth suggested collaboration instead.
- Beth reminded attendees the groups’ priority areas were formulated based on Community Health Assessment data and community feedback at the Okaloosa Health Summit. The prioritization process led to the current group priority areas.
- Attendees discussed multiple avenues for collaboration.
 - Sheila Fitzgerald suggested Healthy Communities members attending both OCHIP meetings share updates when meetings are opened. The group agreed.
- Attendees also discussed the importance of a multi-sectoral approach.
 - Greg Cain raised the concern that the opioid crisis is a vital public safety issue. Attendees agreed this is a community issue on all ends.
 - Chief Bage emphasized strategies to address fentanyl need to be different than previous opioid or drug-related interventions, as they will likely be unsuccessful due to the nature of fentanyl overdoses and its deadliness.

- Mayor JB Whitten shared there has been a 93% increase in fentanyl deaths within two years in Okaloosa County. Attendees agreed this requires urgent action.
- Members also stated the continued importance of the group's previous priorities and discussed the relationship between housing and substance use recovery.

Action Items – Robert Bage

- Attendees discussed updating the group's goals, objectives, and strategies. They agreed to insert an overarching word to replace injury that encompasses injuries and overdose incidents. Emily will update them by the next meeting.
- Members discussed the action plan for strategies related to pedestrian injuries.
 - Attendees suggested posting signage throughout the county for motor vehicles and utilizing a media campaign. Chief Bage suggested using a simple message to address common misnomers related to motor vehicles and pedestrians.
 - The group expressed interested in a shared message across organizations for the campaign, utilizing flyers, infographics, and short videos.
 - Sheila informed the group that October is Pedestrian Safety Month. Attendees agreed it would be good to coordinate messaging for that timeframe.

Open Discussion – All

- Sheila Fitzgerald provided an update on the county's request for proposals to develop affordable housing. Proposals are due in February, and they anticipate a March to September or October timeframe for the project.
 - The Affordable Housing Committee will meet on February 2nd at 1:00 PM at the Okaloosa County Administrative Building. The meeting is open to the public.
 - She also shared [two resources](#) via email for the group to review linked [here](#).
- Leann Calabro shared the Fort Walton Beach Fire Department developed a Community Assistance Referral and Education Services (CARES) program to conduct outreach and assist individuals who may frequently call 9-1-1 or utilize EMS services due to lack of other support. Their goal is to be proactive and prevent falls and other incidents that can place burden on the healthcare system.
- Emily suggested meetings last an hour and a half moving forward. Attendees agreed.

Closing – Emily Tash

- Emily Tash thanked attendees for participating and asked them to complete the meeting evaluation form to provide feedback.

Next Meeting –Thursday, February 16th at 9:00 AM at DOH-Okaloosa in Fort Walton Beach

Action Items	Owners	Deadline	Status
Update group goals and objectives	Emily Tash	Next meeting	In progress
Report out updates on Healthy Behaviors OCHIP group	Healthy Behaviors members	Each meeting	Ongoing