

**CHIPPEWA COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**
Workshop Meeting

A Chippewa County Board of Commissioners Work Session was held on Wednesday, July 10, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. the meeting was held at the Sault Ste. Marie High School's Strahl Theatre.

Commissioners Present: Chairman Jim Martin, Damon Lieurance, Jim Traynor and Justin Knepper

Other Present: Administrator Kelly Church, Karen Senkus, Shawn Baker, Kylie Thompson, Josh Doherty, Patrick McCoy, Robert Laitinen, Erin Daines, Lynn Farnquist, Maggie Merchberger, Jim Webb, Mick Leppien, Jill Schaefer, Anna Bonacci-Slater, Jen Steele, Brook Bergsma, Ciara Saint, Wendy Hughes, Ashley Young, Michael Bitnar, Lucas Gardiner, Damien Hopper, Shirley Farnquist and Barb Light.

Chairman Martin called the work session to order at 10:00 a.m.

Public Comments

No comments were offered.

Work Session

The purpose of this work session was to discuss the Opioid Settlement; talk about the goals that need to be established to utilize the monies provided from the settlement to reach those most in need. Today's meeting was to reach out to seek stakeholder engagement with those that have lived experiences from the Opioid epidemic. Chippewa County aims to utilize opioid settlement funds for the purposes of reducing the adverse impacts of the drug overdose crisis, preventing initiation of substance use and supporting treatment and recovery for those most profoundly impacted by the crisis.

Michigan Association of Counties Amy Dolinky gave a presentation to those in attendance with questions and answers during her overview; she shared information about distribution of funds, spending and reporting requirements, and the allowable uses of funds received by the County. The settlements outline specific strategies for utilization of funds; approved uses are for treatment, prevention and other strategies including training, support for first responders planning and coordination of uses; with the final determination by Corporation Counsel. The presentation then went into adopting spending principles they will use the monies to save lives, use evidence to guide the spending, invest in youth prevention focus on racial equity and develop a fair and transparent process for deciding where to spend the funding. Ms. Dolinky then shared some resources for the Opioid Settlement Funds and offered her contact information.

Discussion on a Steering Committee/Advisory Board composition with a lot of comments and ideas of who should be included and how big is too big for a committee like this; during the session the following were mentioned to be a member of the Steering/Advisory Board: Board of Commission member and alternate, EUPISD, Bay Mills Tribal Community, Sault Ste. Marie tribe of Chippewa Indians, City of Sault Ste. Marie representative (as there is talk about collaboratively utilizing funds), a Friends Against Narcotics

member , Community Action Agency, Hiwatha Behavioral Health, Great Lakes Recovery, MSU Co-op Extension, Sault Housing, MyMichigan, Drug Court, Mental Health Court, at list two members with lived experiences. Discussion followed.

Chairman Martin then asked for comments from all those in attendance to offer there top three needs that they would like to see the monies focused on, the following were offered: transportation, sober living, peer counseling in the jail, recovery coaches for multi-cultural needs, treatment center, education, access to primary medical care, evidenced based programs, work force, paying people in the field appropriately, withdrawal management care.

During this time a discussion of having a Resource Fair was brought up, and trying to make sure that everyone was made aware of these meetings and all support that is available in our County, as well as, the EUP.

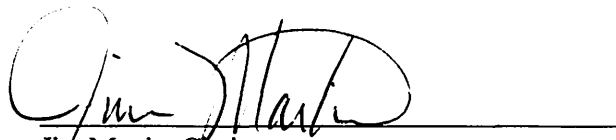
The next steps for the County will be to wait and see if we can join an assessment that is being offered at no charge with Mackinac County and to pass a resolution establishing the Steering Committee.

Commissioner and Chairman's Comments

Nothing additional as this work session was open throughout for discussion and comment and the Commissioners comments were included above.

Having completed the agenda items discussion, Chairman Martin declared the meeting adjourned; the meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.


Kelly J. Church, Recorder


Jim Martin, Chairman.