



## State of New Jersey

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE  
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CHRIS CHRISTIE  
*Governor*

KIM GUADAGNO  
*Lt. Governor*

NEIL VAN ESS  
*Acting Chairman*

CELINA GRAY  
*Acting Executive Director*

### MINUTES

#### **Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse**

**November 19, 2014**

#### **Call to Order**

The two hundred ninety third regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Elected Chairman Neil Van Ess.

#### **Open Public Meetings Act Statement**

Chairman Van Ess announced that notice of this meeting was provided in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21).

#### **Roll Call**

Katelyn Assenheimer called the roll. Members present and absent were noted for the record.

#### **Bylaws Provision**

Chairman Van Ess asked for a motion to continue operating under the Emergency Powers of the 2010 Bylaws. Gregg Benson made this motion, which was seconded by Robert Zlotnick. After a vote, the motion was approved. (Y-8; N-0; ABS-6)

#### **Approval of October Minutes**

After a brief discussion, the October 2014 minutes were approved. (Y-8; N-0; ABS-6)

#### **Chairman's Report**

Chairman Van Ess thanked the members for their attendance at the meeting. He introduced two new members to the Council, Donna DeStefano and Dr. Susan Neshin. He also thanked Kevin Meara and Paul Ressler for their service to the Council.

Mr. Van Ess stated that the focus of today's meeting was military veterans. He stated that he was very proud of the efforts New Jersey and the Governor's Council had made in regards to

supporting the military. Mr. Van Ess shared some the many challenges faced by veterans that he encounters in the course of assisting fellow veterans with benefits, and highlighted the particularly unique challenges faced by female military personnel and veterans.

### **Presentation: Veterans Haven South**

Colonel Walter R. Nall from the Division of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMAVA) presented the Veterans Haven South program to Council members. Veterans Haven South, located in Camden County, is a vocational and transitional drug and alcohol-free housing program for homeless veterans. It is funded by DMAVA and the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The program primarily serves people in the Camden and Philadelphia area who are between the ages of 46-55.

This program has a zero tolerance policy with drug and alcohol abuse. In order to be accepted into the program, a person must be drug and alcohol free for 21 days. They must also have a source of income as well as be emotionally and physically stable.

The facility consists of 55 beds, a computer lab, laundry room, fitness room and dining area. Staff is on-site 24 hours a day and includes a social worker, registered nurse and addiction and vocational counselors.

Veterans Haven South is divided into three phases which lasts three to six months. The phases consist of treatment, self-reclamation and community reintegration. After a veteran has completed the program, staff will work with this person to obtain a job that will help support them in the years to come.

Robert Zlotnick thanked Colonel Nall for his presentation and also invited him to speak on his radio show in the near future.

Acting Executive Director Celina Gray thanked Colonel Nall for his presentation and also thanked DMAVA designee Dorinda Sapp-Nall for informing her of this program to present to the Council.

### **Presentation: New Jersey Vet2Vet**

Program Manager, Terrell McCain, presented the New Jersey Vet2Vet program to the council members. NJ Vet2Vet is a peer-to-peer program that has been in operation for 10 years.

Vet2Vet is a free 24-hour, seven day a week confidential hotline that offers peer support to veterans as well as their families. This hotline helps veterans navigate resources that are available to them by providing referrals to providers with military expertise. The hotline is staffed by clinicians as well veteran peer counselors.

This hotline has reached a call volume of 18,422 incoming calls and 35,992 follow-up calls from April 2005 until October of this year. The most common issues that callers ask for help for are depression, mood disorders, substance abuse, family and marital issues, and aggression.

Vet2Vet also conducts outreach events with the National Guard, DMAVA and veterans affairs centers throughout the state.

Mr. McCain emphasized that Vet2Vet is not a program competitive with other programs but is rather an additional resource that works inclusively with other programs to provide support for those in need. A person calling into the hotline also does not need to be a veteran from New Jersey.

Council member Wanda Moore suggested that a conference call be held to have more collaboration from different state departments and agencies in regard to addressing veterans' needs. She said she would be available to spearhead this call if anyone was interested.

### **Resolution: Recognizing November 11<sup>th</sup> as Veterans Day**

In light of Veterans Day being celebrated the previous week, Acting Executive Director Celina Gray read a resolution recognizing November 11<sup>th</sup> as Veterans Day. After a vote, this resolution was approved. (Y-13, N-0, ABS-0)

Ms. Gray also presented a plaque to Dorinda Sapp-Nall, the DMAVA designee for her and her agency's collaboration with GCADA for the development of the Veterans Guide.

### **Acting Executive Director's Report**

Acting Executive Director Celina Gray again welcomed Donna DeStefano and Dr. Susan Neshin to the Council and thanked Kevin Meara and Paul Ressler for their time and dedication to the Council.

She invited Kevin Sullivan to briefly share an update on the Alliances and other Governor's Council business, and offered continued thanks to all those working to address Alliance program deficiencies.

Mr. Sullivan informed the members that he had been meeting individually with the county coordinators to review their FY15 Strategic Plan deficiency checklists. He also shared that the Guidelines Workgroup had been meeting to finalize the municipal Strategic Plan application for the upcoming FY16 grant term.

Mr. Sullivan also shared with the Council that the GCADA regulations proposed for readoption have been finalized and approved by the Office of the Governor's Counsel and will be published in the New Jersey Register in December.

Mr. Sullivan thanked the members for their cooperation in completing the New Jersey State Ethics Commission's online Ethics Briefing. He also reminded members of the requirement to complete an Attendance of Event form if they are invited to any activity or event because of their membership on the Governor's Council. Approval of the Attendance at Event form is required prior to participation in the event.

Ms. Gray discussed the pharmacy bag that was included in Council member meeting packets. This bag was created by the Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey and includes the "Addiction Does Not Discriminate" logo. The Partnership will distribute these bags to 700 independent pharmacies throughout the state.

Ms. Gray shared that next month she will be attending the Department of Human Services' Stakeholder's Communication Group, whose goal is to address stigma in both mental health and addiction. She will also have more information on the opioid "warmlines" next month.

Lastly, Ms. Gray thanked the staff, Chairman Van Ess and the Council members for their work and dedication through the last few months.

### **Other Council Business**

Donna DeStefano shared that Ocean County has had 100 Narcan overdose reversals. She also stated that Ocean County would be launching a 10-week intervention program for those who have been administered Narcan.

Lynn Kovich shared that on November 25<sup>th</sup>, the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services would be meeting with Ocean and Monmouth county hospitals to explore protocols that would connect those who have had overdose reversals by Narcan to treatment. This treatment would include low dose medication as well as other interventions.

Dr. Susan Neshin informed the members that Jersey Shore Addiction Services has distributed vouchers for 30 days of free treatment related to substance abuse and to date 20 of the vouchers have been used.

### **Public Comment**

Kevin Meara thanked Ms. Gray and Chairman Van Ess for their leadership during his membership on the Council. He also congratulated Ms. DeStefano and Dr. Neshin for their appointments. He stated despite not being reappointed to the Council, he would attend as many meetings as he could.

### **Adjournment**

Elected Chairman Neil Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 12:16 p.m.