



# OCONEE COUNTY OPIOID RESPONSE TASK FORCE

Regular Meeting Held at:

**January 19<sup>th</sup> at 10AM**

Council Chambers, Oconee County Administrative Offices  
415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC

## Members

**Aaron Zeller, MD (Chair); Scott Krein (Co-Chair); Lekesha Benson  
Michael Carroll; Richie Caudill; Tim Rice; Caitlin Pope;  
Alan Sayre; Jon Holland; Zac Smith**

The Oconee County Opioid Response Taskforce met on Friday, January 19th, 2024 at 10am in County Council Chambers, located at 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla SC. Members present included Aaron Zeller, Michael Carroll, Caitlin Pope, Alan Sayre, Jon Holland, Richie Caudill, Lekesha Benson, and Staff Liaison, Zac Smith.

Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, notice of the meeting, date, time, place of meeting and agenda were posted on the bulletin board at the County Administrative Offices, 415 South Pine Street, Walhalla, SC, and the County Council website [www.oconeesc.com]. In addition, it was made available [upon request] to the newspapers, radio stations, television stations and concerned citizens.

## Minutes:

- 1. Call to Order:** Dr. Aaron Zeller called meeting to order at 10am.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:** Dr. Aaron Zeller
  - Motion made by Mr. Alan Sayre, Second by Mr. Jon Holland. No Discussion. All in favor 7-0.
- 3. Discussion Items:**
  - **Adoption of Meeting Schedule:**
    - 2/16, 3/15, 4/19, 5/17, 6/21, 7/26, 8/16, 9/20, 10/18, 11/15, 12/20
    - Motion to approve by Mr. Alan Sayre, Second by Ms. Lekesha Benson. No discussion. All in favor 7-0.
  - Community Support Applications:
    - Mr. Zac Smith and Ms. Brittney Martin brought up that the rough draft of the Community Support Applications are finished. Mr. Zac Smith distributed the rough draft applications to the Taskforce for everyone to review.
    - Ms. Brittney Martin discussed how the application will make the organizations be held accountable for their projects and funding. Suggestions and recommendations are welcome in the draft phase of the application. The recording of measurable outcomes will be mandatory and we will need to know if they receive funding from elsewhere while filling out the application.
    - Ms. Lekesha Benson asked if there are any funding guidelines or a minimum amount they can ask for? Ms. Brittney Martin replied that we have an allotted amount, but the Taskforce can decide if there needs to be any anticipated cap in the budget.
    - Dr. Aaron Zeller stated that there needs to be more discussion on amount limits in the future and asks if the application will be online? Ms. Brittney Martin replied with discussion on sending application packets to organizations who have reached out with interest in obtaining funding. Dr. Aaron Zeller recommends the amount of expected funding be added.

- Mr. Jon Holland asked how many organizations have reached out for funding. Ms. Brittney Martin replied with stating that eight organizations have reached out.
- Mr. Michael Carroll recommended to have measurable outcomes for established organizations who have received funding from Oconee County or SCORF. Discussion was followed on this.
- Mr. Alan Sayre, we cannot alter the application process for one organization or person. Further discussion completed.
- Dr. Aaron Zeller not opposed to a lengthier application process for higher amounts of funding. Mr. Zac Smith replied with an explanation on the Quarterly Reporting Templates. Dr. Zeller mentioned that organizations with requests higher than six figures should be required to do in-person presentations. Ms. Lekesha Benson asked if there could be a funding cap of \$25,000 for pilot programs. More discussion was followed.
- Dr. Aaron Zeller asks Mr. Zac Smith and Ms. Brittney Martin if the application is close to where they would like it. Dr. Aaron Zeller recommends having a checkbox added for past outcomes. Also, to make potential awardees aware of the tier process.
- Dr. Aaron Zeller recommends that the Taskforce looks at opening up the application process up to organizations on 4/1/24. Before then, an application needs to be finalized and funding requests are to be turned in.
- Dr. Aaron Zeller asks if the County Departments have to go through the process. Ms. Brittney Martin replied with stating that the county departments and council usually approves/denies requests. Mr. Jon Holland mentioned that knowing what the county was doing would be helpful.
- Mr. Zac Smith walked through the Opioid Response Coordinator budget with the Taskforce. No questions or discussion.
- Dr. Aaron Zeller requests the thoughts of Oconee County going through the taskforce to apply for funding. Mr. Jon Holland and Dr. Aaron Zeller agreed that focusing on non-profits would be key. Mr. Alan Sayre disagrees due to the facts of keeping it a fair and just process. More discussion was followed.
- Mr. Richie Caudill asks if there is any funding for handing Narcan out to private citizens for restock. Mr. Zac Smith stated that he will check with other non-profits and the hospital to check. Does not know of anything like that in Oconee County.
- Mr. Michael Carroll recommends that applications be in by 4/1. From there review them on 4/18 and 5/17 at regularly scheduled meetings. Mr. Zac Smith would like to have the application approved and out in the public by March.
- Mr. Michael Carroll asked if the Oconee County request for funding can be used as a test run for the Community Support Application. No issues were brought up. Mr. Alan Sayre stated that with a matter of procedure that he requests a motion be made to use Oconee County as the test run of the Community Support Application. Mr. Michael Carroll made the motion, second by Mr. Alan Sayre. All approve, no discussion.
- Mr. Zac Smith stated that Mr. Ashley Williams from Oconee Addiction Recovery and Solutions (OARS) has reached out to him regarding the taskforce touring the OARS Facilities. Mr. Alan Sayre brought up the concern of conflicting interests and quorum. Ms. Brittney Martin stated that if the taskforce goes together that it would have to be advertised as a meeting. She stated that the best recommendation would be to go on your own as a citizen. Mr. Alan Sayre stated that the Board should not make it a habit to visit facilities wanting funding due to time constraints. Mr. Zac Smith will be sending Mr. Ashley Williams' contact information to the taskforce over the weekend.

**4. Adjournment:** Motion made by Mr. Alan Sayre with a second from Mr. Jon Holland. Vote of 7 to adjourn, 0 to oppose.

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