



**Franklin Mayor's Drug Task Force**  
 Task Force Meeting Minutes  
 Thursday, August 13, 2015  
 5:00pm – 7:00pm at Bessie Rowell Community Center

**Present:**

<i>Name:</i>	<i>Sector:</i>	<i>Name:</i>	<i>Sector:</i>
<i>Angela Lynch</i>	<i>Coalition Coordinator</i>	<i>Andrea McFall</i>	<i>Franklin Resident</i>
<i>Elizabeth Dragon</i>	<i>City Manager, City of Franklin</i>	<i>Taylor O'Connor</i>	<i>Healthcare Intern</i>
<i>Melissa Lee</i>	<i>Healthcare</i>	<i>Tamara Feener</i>	<i>School Board, SAU 18</i>
<i>Chief Goldstein</i>	<i>State, Local or Tribal Governmental Agency with Expertise in the Field of Substance Abuse</i>	<i>Joe Giunta</i>	<i>Religious/Fraternal Organization: Franklin Elks</i>
<i>Mayor Ken Merrifield</i>	<i>City of Franklin</i>	<i>Werner D. Horn</i>	<i>State Representative</i>
<i>Jason Vezina</i>	<i>Parent</i>	<i>Karen Darling</i>	<i>Civic/Volunteer Group (Choose Franklin, Franklin Jr. Youth Group)</i>
<i>Bill Grimm</i>	<i>Healthcare</i>	<i>Barbara Olson</i>	<i>Franklin Resident</i>
<i>Scott Burns</i>	<i>School Board, SAU 18</i>	<i>Sandi Bleggi</i>	<i>Franklin Resident</i>
<i>Lucy Natkiel</i>	<i>Hill Resident</i>	<i>Skyler Boudreau</i>	<i>FHS Student, Junior</i>
<i>Mandy Boudreau</i>	<i>Parent</i>	<i>Lacee Boudreau</i>	<i>FHS Student</i>
<i>Paul Boudreau</i>	<i>Parent</i>	<i>Amy Kowalczyk</i>	<i>FHS Student, Sophomore</i>
<i>Linda Eldridge</i>	<i>Grandparent/Resident</i>	<i>Daniel Plichta</i>	<i>Other Organization Involved in Reducing Substance Abuse: Recovery</i>
<i>Marilee Horn</i>	<i>Franklin Resident</i>	<i>Marcia Feener</i>	<i>Franklin Resident, CCNTR</i>
<i>Bob Lucas</i>	<i>Franklin Resident</i>	<i>Alan Grill</i>	<i>Religious/Fraternal Organization: Franklin United Methodist Church</i>
<i>Lynn Haskell</i>	<i>Youth-Serving Organization: Merrimack Juvenile Diversion Program</i>	<i>Randi Rocco</i>	<i>Religious/Fraternal Organization: Youth Pastor</i>
<i>Bill Doherty</i>	<i>Franklin Resident</i>	<i>Judy Tilton</i>	

**Angela Lynch** welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. After brief introductions from everyone in the room she reviewed the meeting guidelines that coalition members came to a shared agreement on at the July coalition meeting and then briefly went over the agendas that were supplied at people's seats.

### **Mayor's Minute**

Grateful to all for coming to our monthly meeting. It is exciting to see so many show up to a monthly coalition meeting. How many attended the FACT production of Rumpelstiltskin? What he has to share tonight is very similar. The reason that our coalition supports activities such as FACT Camp 1. How many remember the book *The Catcher in the Rye?* , Brought this book up because there is a particular passage that has struck him for a long time. This particular passage is when Holden Caulfield is talking about what he wants to do with his life. He then read that paragraph to the group because he feels that while this isn't so much a precise reason, or a precise mission that he has for the task force, but that it is a poetic description of what he thinks that the Task Force is all about: "I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around—nobody big, I mean—except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff—I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and catch them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be."

And so, I am here to encourage all of you to be catchers in the rye. Be a coach, teach Sunday school, join the book club; do something to show our kids that there is a healthy way to live and that they don't need to seek out artificial means of happiness.

### **Overview of the Franklin Mayor's Drug Task Force**

Realizing that there are a lot of new community member's joining us, we wanted to take a few minutes to give an overview of what our coalition is and why we are here. We hope to make a difference and to prevent our kids and community members from misusing and/or abusing substances. Our coalition, all of our sectors and reps in our community that are here tonight and more not present at this meeting, are extremely important and we all play a role in this prevention piece. So, we are all working together on a plan to help prevent substance misuse in our community. We are currently a funded coalition, funded by federally through what is called the Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant and we are funded through till this September 29, 2015 which will mark the end of this five years of funding. So we began back in 2009. Ken called a meeting with interested folks in the community and said let's really get together, put our brains together and think about what we can do to make a difference in our community with alcohol and other drug use. And out of this, came a group that really focused hard on creating an Action Plan and applying for this federal grant to help us with our efforts. So we've come a long way in five years and we have re-applied for another five years of funding through the DFC grant program and hopefully we will be able to continue and reinforce the work that we've done and bring about some new opportunities in our work. We should be finding out very soon, within the next month or so, about that funding. So for those of you who have been with us will likely remember toward the end of last year that we went through quite a process of gathering

information and community data from concerned citizens and all those sectors within our community that went into writing our second grant application. However, we know that whether or not we do get awarded another five years of funding, our coalition work will remain strong and we'll continue following the action plan. Our action plan is available, so for those who need or would like a copy, please grab one. We will be looking at this document more, a little later on in the meeting.

So the Action Plan is really our coalition's "road map," a tool to get us to what we hope to accomplish as a coalition and again, we all play important roles in accomplishing what is in our action plan. You'll see that many of our strategies in our Action Plan, have to do with youth in our community because the DFC grant program is really focused around youth and how we can prevent youth from using and misusing substances. Thus, that is why we recently, as well as in past years, have sponsored youth from our community to take part in some really exciting opportunities for them to build their leadership skills and to learn strategies that they can use with their peers within their own schools and community to help them get prevention messages out there. Because we know that most kids are not using substances. And depending on who you ask, that opinion differs. So we want our youth to be empowered and to be able to share that message and others with their peers.

### **Congrats to FHS students**

We know that kids really learn best from their peers. With that being said, that is why tonight we want to pay some special attention and recognition to our youth that are in the room. Because the work that they are doing, the work that they have recently accomplished and will do, is helping us to meet our action plan and broaden our reach within the community. Which really addresses both of the focal points, or goals, within our action plan: building a coalition that is strong and sustainable, and helping to prevent substance misuse. So, by having these youth here and to celebrate the work and give them the opportunity to share with us what they have learned, it's really just a brief opportunity to recognize them and let them know how important it is: what you have accomplished and what you can do, and that there are a group of citizens sitting here and many more who are not in the room, that support and thank you for your efforts. Also, thank you to the youth joining us tonight. It certainly wasn't mandatory for the youth to share their experiences with the group, but we welcome them to share if they're comfortable.

Skyler shared her experience with attending the Dover Youth to Youth (Dover Y2Y) summer program. One project that really stuck out to her, was an activism project called the Spencer's Gifts project. What they do, is that every summer a group of Dover Y2Y kids will go into the mall in Dover and try and purchase pro-substance/pro-marijuana products from a selection of stores, Spencer's Gifts being one specifically but also Lids and a game store and also a kiosk that sells cellphone cases. Skyler was a part of the team that went in to Spencer's and was on a mission to purchase a pro-marijuana shirt. So, basically the point is that they begin with the older kids going into the store and they try to see how low in age that are able to successfully purchase a pro-marijuana product. Skyler was able to not only purchase the shirt with no problem and the

clerk actually tried to convince her to buy another product with similar messaging. The age that they got it down to was 11 or 12 years old. Skyler also went to Lids to be the one to reach for products for a younger kid, to buy a hat with pro-marijuana image/messaging. Skyler also was tasked with making it very clear that the younger kid was the one purchasing the product. At this store, they again had no trouble.

Skyler is going into her junior year in high school. Her description of the project surprised many coalition members in the room and generated some questions. One such question asked about what happened with these stores who were selling. Skyler explained that Dover Y2Y produces and hand-delivers letters to the stores either thanking the store for not selling to the youth or describing their concerns with their experience. They then wait to see if the store changes their operations for the better and/or to respond. Dover Y2Y then may call a press conference about the situation if they feel it's needed to bring awareness to what's going on. The group also expressed curiosity of the store's policies and also how empowered employees feel to turn away sales to those how may be under a certain age, etc. Skyler shared that to her knowledge, she doesn't believe that the stores have such policies, that it is really just a moral decision. It was also discussed, that legislative action would need to happen however that is both time consuming and financially consuming. Concerns not only about the sales to youth, but to the fact that these products are so widely available and sold in the first place was brought up. Werner explained that the items sold in stores is largely due to societal norms and so not a legislative decision.

Thanks to Skyler for sharing!

Amy was one of three students that attended the N.H. Teen Institute. She noted that during her time there, they did talk about alcohol and other drugs, but that it went much further. They mostly learned how to solve problems within their lives and create scenarios that will help others and themselves. Also huge disc on LGBT community that everyone was eager to talk about. There were so many diff things to do. There were different events and activities to talk about drugs, self-harm, and how to help people with their problems and how to deal with your own. Melissa asked Amy how she felt when she arrived versus how she felt when she left. Amy said that when she arrived, she felt skeptical and wasn't sure that she was going to make any friends, but when she left she was crying because she didn't want to leave. Amy is going into her sophomore year. Amy's grandmother shared that she felt that this was a great opportunity for Amy to be involved in, and that more children should be involved in something like this because it would help them focus on and work through these tough subjects that need to be addressed. And if the kids are more aware of all of this, then more people all around would be. Our kids are our future and they're the ones that are going to carry all of this information and these ideas into the future.

Thank you Amy for sharing with us!

A huge round of applause to all of the youth (present and absent)!

**The group took a 15 minute break and took part in making and enjoying their own ice cream sundaes!**

### **Our Action Plan**

Angela briefly reviewed some changes to the Action Plan. The Action Plan is now color-coded to aid us in reviewing the document and what it is we have already done, what we are working on and what has yet to really be worked on. Some things to mark as “completed” are those regarding the Environmental Scan project. Something that we’ve begun, with the help of coalition member Glen Feener, is the Certificate of Compliance with stores. We’ve also done a PSA with the Franklin Youth Initiative (FYI) on the dangers of marijuana use on the developing brain. Angela also put out an “ask” to those in the room: If there are any items or activities outlined in this action plan that you or someone you know would be willing to help us with, please get into contact with her or another Leadership member.

Melissa took the moment to describe (or remind) the group that the strategies outlined in our Action Plan are based off of those that are evidence-based/proven to work, focusing on environmental strategies. However, we encourage members to share ideas with us. Just get into contact with Angela or Melissa! Also, each Action Plan is a one-year Action Plan (based on our grant years). Bill D. asked about how we evaluate our work. We collect data from the community and youth using our Community Day Survey, our annual Coalition Survey (for that goal one primarily) and our primary source of evaluation data is from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) which is collected by the state every 2 years (odd numbered years). We also conduct forums, focus groups and one-on-one meetings/interviews to collect more qualitative data with members of the various community sectors. Bob also noted that this is really a “living” document that changes as needed to best suit our community’s needs.

A question came up about our focus on the three substances: Alcohol, Marijuana and Prescription Drugs. What are we doing in response to the rise on heroin and meth/other illicit drug use? Response: Our process for choosing the substances that we focus on is a lengthy, involved process where we focus on our community data and hold community forums where we discuss the data and what’s being seen within our community, and from there we hold focus groups and one-on-one interviews with sector representatives within the community to delve deeper in those areas that seem need it from this process. So our community works together to pinpoint our three substances we focus on. We also recognize that in working on reducing these substances, especially prescription drug misuse and abuse regarding the use of substances like heroin, we should be able to reduce the use of those other illicit substances. Also, as our coalition feels necessary, our Action Plan is a living document and we have that ability to address other needs as they rise if we so choose and/or collectively feel it’s needed. It was also noted that in addition to looking at prescription drugs, we also need to look at many over-the-counter drugs. Another member also noted that with much of the issues we hear of in the news, we are past prevention and moving into intervention, treatment and recovery. So Melissa took a moment to

highlight the public health Continuum of Care and that we can no longer work in silos, but we need to bridge those gaps and work together as we can. So we play a role in those partnerships within the continuum, but our coalition focuses on prevention.

### **Teen Challenge USA Choir Event**

Alan Grille shared an upcoming event: This is a Christ-based drug and alcohol addiction recovery group. However, they also have some very powerful testimony. So he is hoping that this group can help promote the youth in our community to listen to their testimony. This will be on Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>. Also, there is a recovery center in Manchester, but this particular group comes from Massachusetts. The group said they they'd be happy to help promote this event and we'll discuss this more

Judy shared that she is very familiar with Teen Challenge. They fundraise constantly and this is one of the recovery groups that will go with what the parents can afford. It is important to help support them and help them promote this.

Alan will get the digital flyer to Angela.

### **Coalition Updates**

#### **1. FACT 1**

Last month, on July 30<sup>th</sup>, Franklin Area Children's Theater (FACT) 1 Camp performed Rumpelstiltskin. This camp has been sponsored by our coalition because it has a focus on "acceptance" and "self-confidence" and the children generally get to participate in writing the script, as well as being a theater skill-building opportunity for the children.

#### **2. Hazardous Waste Day**

On Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, three coalition volunteers helped bring awareness to our local Rx Drop Box as well as appropriate Sharps disposal information to community members on the City's annual Hazardous Waste day. They were so successful in reaching their fellow community members that they ran out of materials and over 400 total materials were given out from 8:30 am to 11 am (that's doubling last year's numbers). A big thank you to our volunteers: Tam Feener, Marcia Feener and Andrea McFall. Amazing work!

#### **3. August City Council Meeting**

At the August City Council Meeting, Franklin Youth Initiative (FYI) advisor Lauren Pearsall helped Elizabeth present the Environmental Scan project recently completed by the FYI students in Spring 2015, to our City Councilors. This is a part of an action item that is laid out in our current action plan under our objective to increase community collaboration and the strategy for Communications and Marketing.

#### 4. August Franklin School Board Meeting

On Monday, August 17<sup>th</sup> the Franklin Youth Initiative (FYI) advisor, Andrea Costanzo, will be presenting the Environmental Scan project recently completed by the FYI students in Spring 2015. This is also a part of an action item that is laid out in our current action plan under our objective to increase community collaboration and the strategy for Communications and Marketing.

#### 5. September School Board Meeting

Tam Feener graciously set up a time for the Franklin Mayor's Drug Task Force to give a presentation to the Franklin School Board about the coalition, our work and especially explaining the importance of an integral piece to achieving our goals as well as being the often priority population for our work: our youth.

#### Volunteer Opportunities!

- Life of an Athlete pre-season meeting (Aug. 22nd, 5-7pm)
- FHS Open House (Sept 10th, 6-8pm)
- FMS Open House (Sept 9th, 6-7pm)
- PSS Open House (Sept. 22, 5-6:30pm)

#### Coalition Ambassador Workshop/Training Opportunities

Angela explained that there is a timely opportunity coming up for coalition volunteers. Although it is not mandatory for coalition members to attend one of these trainings before volunteering for a public event, it is highly recommended so that our volunteers are comfortable and more fluent with our content and materials, and are skilled at beginning and continuing conversations about our coalition and the topic of alcohol and other drug misuse with fellow community members.

<u>Session #</u>	<u>Volunteer Name:</u>
#1 (Monday, August 31 <sup>st</sup> from Noon to 1 p.m. at BRCC)	Lynn Haskell
	Bill Doherty
	Marcia Feener
	Randi Rocco
	Andrea McFall
#2 (Wednesday, Sept. 2 <sup>nd</sup> from 5:15 to 6:15 p.m. at Franklin Regional Hospital in the Board Room)	Barbara Olson
	Alan Grill
	Karen Darling
	Bob Lucas
Unsure of which session	Sandi Bleggi

#### Comments/Updates from the room

- Barbara told the group about “Not even once” book covers were being passed out in Manchester. Getting the messages into schools is incredibly important. Barbara also shared that she has created a play that depicts the journey of a youth that gets into drugs.
- Jason mentioned that the FHS Chem-Free After Prom Committee is starting up again on the 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm, so they’ll be doing quite a bit of fundraising. If anyone is interested, contact him.
- Chief Goldstein shared some things he’s seen/heard recently that has surprised him: NPR said that there is a quiet epidemic in NH on drug problems. The surprising piece to him, was where they came up with the description of “quiet” because this is not a quiet issue. To add to that, a presidential candidate was quoted to say “I have to confess, I was surprised. I did not expect that I would hear about drug abuse and substance abuse and other such challenges everywhere I went.” How do you not know that there is a national problem and run for presidency? This isn’t a personal attack, just concern that such intelligent people do not know.
- Werner told us that NH is still inside that continuing resolution to keep state agencies funded and this includes critical funding for substance abuse money and so, the more people who communicate with everybody from the governor on down to let them know how they feel on the subject. That is going to be really helpful when it comes time to meet and get a budget for NH stabilized, it’s going to be an 18-month budget now because it’s probably not going to take place before the New Year. So people should reach out to the governor and to all of your representatives on down and let them know that keeping substance abuse money as a political chip is not appropriate.
- Karen shared information about the Franklin Junior Youth Group, sponsored by the Franklin Parks & Recreation department. It is now beginning their fourth year. It is a group for middle school students, that Karen facilitates, and it is really all about empowering them to make good choices for themselves and to look at their community and see themselves as agents for positive change. So it is kind of an inner and outer thing. It is spiritual, so not about any one religion. It is for anyone of any religious background and it is around honesty and truthfulness and building that up. So, just to spread the word about this group for both middle school students and it is really for high school ages and older to be what’s called “animators” for this group (this is what Karen does) so if anyone is interested in learning to play that role and get involved to put them in touch with Karen or through Krystal at Franklin Parks and Recreation.
- Tam Feener shared that the Franklin School Board is meeting the following Monday. Laurence Cartel will be presenting on his art and then showing one of his art cars. Franklin will be working on creating an art car with some FHS students, which is very exciting. After this presentation, Angela and the Franklin Youth Initiative group will be presenting the Environmental Scan project to them. So anyone who is interested, please join them. Also, there will be a City election coming up in October so please get out and vote as it is very important!

- Jason noted that the conversations don't have to end at 7pm. The meeting is over, but if you'd like to stay and talk for a little while longer you are free to do so and it is encouraged.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.**

*Submitted by Angela Lynch*

*A big thank you to Jason Vezina for being our timekeeper!*