

BUDGET TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

July 28, 2023 9:30 - 11:00 am

Hybrid: In-person at the Community Health Institute/JSI and virtually on Zoom

Attendance

| Name | Attendance |
|---|------------|
| Task Force Members | |
| Traci Fowler (Co-Chair) | In person |
| Matt McKenney (Co-Chair) | In person |
| John Burns | In person |
| Karen Collins | In person |
| Annette Escalante | In person |
| Kate Frey | In person |
| Powen Hsu | In person |
| Lauren McGinley | In person |
| Cheryle Pacapelli | In person |
| Rick Frost | In person |
| Public | |
| Beth Murphy | In person |
| Liz Biron | Zoom |
| Liaison(s)/ Subject Matter Experts/ Invited Guests | |
| | |
| Center for Excellence on Addiction/JSI Staff | |
| Amy Daniels | In person |
| Becca Spaulding | In person |
| Olivia Skaltsis | In person |

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Welcome & Introductions

Introductions complete in person and on Zoom. One member of the public was present.

Approve Previous Minutes

A member raised a concern that the approved language from the last meeting regarding the \$400K recommended to go to SSPs may not meet the goal of getting that money out into harm reduction contracts as fast as possible. It was clarified that while the task force cannot recommend RFP vs. amendment, the task force can recommend expediting these funds.

Another member suggested using an example of expediting the process, e.g. amending an existing contract. Annette Escalante made a motion to amend the minutes to current language of recommendation to add another sentence onto the existing recommendation: "The task force recommends to have the state amend the existing harm reduction coalition contract as of September 1, 2023." Cheryle Pacapelli second. Traci Fowler called for a vote. All voted in favor, except for Kate Frey, Matt McKenney, and Powen Hsu, who abstained due to the fact that they were not present at the last meeting.

The need for a formalized process when making recommendations and escalating them to the department was discussed, and members raised a concern of having no formal process, which will delay decisions. Amy Daniels mentioned that the Data Task Force has designated liaisons from DHHS that attend meetings who are not official members and do not vote. It is possible to request this of DHHS for the Budget Task Force as well. Specifically, the Budget Task Force may benefit from a designated liaison from BDAS.

There was a question about whether the liaison in the meeting would have final decision-making power on Budget Task Force recommendations; it is important to ensure that any recommendations are still brought to the Governor's Commission for their final decision. Another member agreed that the language regarding the DHHS liaison could be misconstrued to imply that the liaison would have the final

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decision-making power, preventing recommendations from being presented at the full Commission meetings. Amy advised that there will be further discussions amongst the Chair, co-chairs, and DHHS, so there is more opportunity to clarify the intentions of requesting a DHHS liaison.

The SSP recommendation is a slightly different case since this was already voted on and approved previously, so it does not need to be voted on by the Commission again. A written, formal memo to the department could be an avenue for notifying DHHS of recommendations that come from the meetings.

Update on Opioid Abatement, Upcoming Dashboard, and Crosswalk Changes

JSI has been working with Liz Biron from DHHS to build out a much more detailed picture of what the Governor's Commission is investing in, at the request of the Commission. A good starting framework has been established, and within this dashboard, there are links to every contract approved by the GNC. Currently, language is being pulled to identify a scope of work. Using this dashboard, it will be easier to identify money that is not being used, what money is being used, what currently funded organizations are doing, and how those funded organizations and activities align with the Governor's Plan. The current plan is to unveil the dashboard at the August full Commission meeting, opening it up to public input.

A member recommends that non-members of the Governor's Commission be given access to the financial dashboard, in order for the Budget Task Force to do their best work. Voting Budget Task Force members should be treated as Governor's Commission members in this regard. This could be as simple as allowing the co-chairs to share the dashboard with Budget TF members. This recommendation would go to the Chair, cc Katja Fox and Jill Burke from DHHS.

Traci inquired about whether all task forces should have access. While the answer to this question was unclear, it was agreed upon that at the very least, the Budget Task Force needs access to the financial dashboard.

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Kate Frey made a motion to have the Budget Task Force formally request in a memo a liaison from DHHS to act in an advisory capacity to attend these Budget TF meetings, and to have the Budget TF chairs forward the financial dashboard to the Budget TF voting members only for the purposes of doing the work intended by the Task Force. Lauren McGinley second. All in favor. None opposed or abstained.

Amy then discussed the forthcoming updated crosswalk. Currently, the crosswalk includes FY24 SOR, Opioid Abatement, and DHHS investments by strategy. The intention is to eventually list all initiatives by major funding sources and by strategy, including DHHS block grant, ARPA, SOR, Opioid Abatement, etc. This crosswalk could potentially be included in the Annual Report, which is due in October.

It was discussed that there is difficulty capturing data from Medicaid. It is often underreported and can affect the crosswalk. In particular, the difficulty in capturing Medicaid data may make it appear as though there is less activity occurring in the areas of treatment and other reimbursable services than there is. A member recommended looking at the SAMHSA funding (drug-free communities, etc.) that goes directly to towns/municipalities. These could be additions in future updates. Amy confirmed that the investment dashboard will have details on the recipients of the funding.

The importance of language of Governor's Commission recommendations was discussed briefly; some current funding has been misinterpreted and has made deploying the funds difficult. This is the downside of being too granular in recommendations.

Upcoming Timeline for Budget TF and Commission Meetings

Traci discussed the upcoming timeline for 2023, including collecting public input from September to October. Recommendations for FY25 need to be submitted by December. Early information would need to be given to DHHS by early November.

The Budget Task Force's proposed process was reviewed again, with the addition of language around "needs identified." This process and timeline should be shared in the

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August Governor's Commission meeting. Traci suggested having a joint workgroup before August between the Budget and C&C Task Forces to develop this timeline and process, especially regarding public input.

Cheryle, Matt, Traci, and Karen volunteered to be part of that work group and suggested meetings be held remotely and for longer than 60 minutes. JSI will discuss this with the Chair and DHHS at an upcoming meeting. Any decisions made at this work group meeting will need to be brought to Patrick and Katja promptly.

JSI to look at calendar invitations to ensure all members have up to date timing – John Burns mentioned not having the correct invite.

At this point, 3 members had left the meeting and there no longer was quorum. Meeting went into informal discussion.

Public Comment

No public comment.

Decisions/Recommendations Made

1. The minutes from the previous meeting on May 26th, 2023 will be amended to add a sentence to the motion for a recommendation originally given in 2019 regarding syringe service programs to better clarify the recommendation.
2. The Budget Task Force will formally request via memo a liaison from DHHS to act in an advisory capacity to attend Budget Task Force meetings.
3. The Budget Task Force will formally request that Budget Task Force chairs be permitted to share the financial dashboard with all Budget Task Force voting members for the purpose of doing the work intended by the Task Force.

Next Steps

- The next Budget Task Force meeting will be held on September 29th, 2023 at 9:30 am.

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- JSI will get approval for a joint workgroup between the C&C and Budget Task Forces to workshop the recommendations process and timeline at an upcoming meeting.
- JSI to ensure calendar invitations for Budget Task Force meetings are for 120 minutes instead of 90.
- The Budget Task Force Chairs will recommend they be able to forward the financial dashboard to all Budget Task Force voting members.
- Budget Task Force Chairs will request a liaison from DHHS to act in an advisory capacity to attend Budget Task Force meetings.