

MINUTES

Purpose: Engage Okaloosa County community members in a health improvement process through an open, two-way dialogue to reduce the impact of harmful events such as pedestrian injuries, older adult falls, and substance use and to reduce the housing burden.

Attendees: Emily Pickens, Florida Department of Health in Okaloosa County (DOH-Okaloosa); Petra Maddens, DOH-Okaloosa; Lauren Hobbs, DOH-Okaloosa; Amanda Colwell, DOH-Okaloosa; Greg Cain, Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services; Katie Scott, DOH-Okaloosa; Robert Bage, Fort Walton Beach Police Department; JB Whitten, City of Crestview; Karen Brown, Crestview Housing Authority; Sheila Fitzgerald, Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners; Tim Gibson, City of Fort Walton Beach; Jason Fulghum, Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office (OCSO); Shane Bininger, OCSO; Devon Ravine, City of Fort Walton Beach; Mikiko Tucker, City of Fort Walton Beach; Karen Goodson, Elder Services; Robert Schohn, Fort Walton Beach Police Department; Fauzita Conway, White Wilson Medical Center; Bobby Wagner, City of Destin; Michael Howell, OCSO; Shannon Tait, OCSO; Tamara Young, City of Destin; Randi Lippy, HCA Fort Walton Beach-Destin; Anthony Sawyer, Fort Walton Beach Housing Authority; Chris Hawkins, CDAC Behavioral Healthcare

Opening – Emily Pickens

- Emily Pickens opened the meeting and welcomed attendees.
- Minutes from the July 20, 2023, meeting were reviewed and approved.
- Emily shared Community Engagement Survey results from the previous meeting.

Action Plan Updates – Robert Bage and JB Whitten

Housing

- Chief Bage introduced the [Okaloosa County Housing Survey](#) developed by the county to gauge public opinions about housing affordability, needs, and types of development.
- Sheila Fitzgerald added that the survey will close on September 4th, 2023. Afterwards, Okaloosa County plans to move towards strategy development by researching best practices in other counties to determine what strategies are most appropriate here.
- Robert reiterated the importance of the survey and asked the group to push the survey out.
- Mayor Wagner shared that [Florida Senate Bill 102](#), also known as “Live Local Act,” supersedes local governments’ requirements regarding zoning to allow for streamlined development of affordable multifamily rental housing in mixed-use zoned areas. Sheila added that there will be a webinar for local governments regarding the “Live Local Act” on August 23rd. Details to register can be found [here](#).
- Emily stated that Catholic Charities was unable to attend this meeting to discuss the barriers to housing including credit score, criminal records, and arrest records. Anthony stated that the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH), Housing Choice Voucher (section 8), and permanent supportive housing programs are limited due to these issues. Karen Brown added that there are new HUD requirements that have come out that will go into effect January 1st, 2024.

- Emily asked the group how funding for affordable housing is sourced. Sheila stated that the current county affordable property was purchased with Neighborhood Stabilization Funds (NSF) and that the county has NSF funds in reserve that may be used for additional affordable housing units in the next few years. Emily proposed that the group continue the discussion on housing at the September meeting.

Injury Prevention

- Robert recapped the groups previous idea for injury prevention: to develop a CARES Program to reduce older adult falls with assistance from EMS and other first responders.

National Pedestrian Safety Month: Video Progress

- Devon Ravine shared that all the three videos have been filmed and the last component will be added next week. A rough draft will be shared via Dropbox for review before the next meeting.
- Emily asked if the videos could be translated to Spanish and if a 30 second clip could be made from the videos to use in social media advertising. Devon will meet with Chance to determine feasibility. Mayor Wagner added that having closed captions on would reach a wider audience.

National Pedestrian Safety Month: Marketing Outline

- The group discussed advertising opportunities. Mikiko Tucker stated the media kit is almost complete and will be available in Spanish. Mikiko will contact WEAR for advertising. Fauzita Conway will advertise in the White Wilson Medical Clinics. Other possibilities include hospitals, and government buildings.

National Pedestrian Safety Month: School Poster Contest

- Captain Fulghum stated that he, Captain Holloway, the SRO Captain, and the SROs are all on board to distribute the poster contest flyers throughout the schools and will coordinate to pick up the posters after the event. He will confirm that OCSO can be used as a central location for poster collection. OCSO is still waiting to hear back from schools regarding participation in Walk, Bike, or Run to School Day. Homeschools will be reached through social media and poster drop off will be available at the libraries associated with the Public Library Cooperative.
- Emily provided details of the poster competition. Posters will be due October 4th. The Community Traffic Safety Team will be the acting judges and will announce the winning posters on October 17th. There will be one winner each from elementary, middle, and high school grade levels. The winners will receive a prize from Fort Walton Beach Police Department, a certificate signed by Okaloosa County mayors, and their posters will be posted in hallways of government buildings. Mayor Whitten suggested hanging all posters in the hallways of government buildings, schools, or libraries to raise more awareness.

National Pedestrian Safety Month: Events

- Mayor Whitten stated that Chief Bage had suggested launching National Pedestrian Safety Month with a news conference on October 2nd. Chief Bage, Mayor Whitten, and Amanda Colwell or Beth Smith will lead the conference with support from other representatives from social service agencies, community organizations, local government, and law enforcement. Karen Brown added that having local sports coaches would gain more attention from youth. Mayor Whitten will reach out to coaches for support. Sheila stated she will ask a county commissioner to attend and will

ask if there is space and available to host the conference at the County Commission Office.

- Emily reminded attendees that October 2nd is Walk, Ride, or Roll to School Day. DOH-Okaloosa will be helmet fitting at participating schools and will order safety themed promotional items to distribute during event.
- Michael Howell stated that the Florida Sheriffs Association is putting together a statewide task force called "Operation Safe" from August 21st-August 25th. This program focuses on traffic enforcement in and around school zones, including school bus activity. There will be a press conference on September 12th to announce the data on enforcement action across the state.
- Sheila shared that the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) plans to meet September 19th. She asked if the group would like to recognize a proclamation on Pedestrian Safety Month at that meeting. Emily will send details to Sheila and Sheila will begin drafting the proclamation.

Action Items – Robert Bage and JB Whitten

National Pedestrian Safety Month: Video

- PIOs will finish shooting and editing the videos. They will send a draft to the group prior to the next meeting.
- Finalize video promotion plan in September. Current ideas include newspapers, social media, hospitals, clinics, United Way, and city chambers.

National Pedestrian Safety Month: Marketing

- Mikiko will finalize the media toolkit and have it translated into Spanish.

National Pedestrian Safety Month: School Poster Contest

- Emily will share the Pedestrian Safety Month poster competition flyer with the group. All members will distribute the flyer accordingly.
- Mayor Whitten will develop a certificate for the winner and acquire signatures from Okaloosa County mayors.

National Pedestrian Safety Month: Walk, Bike, Roll to School Events

- Captain Fulghum will contact the SRO supervisor to request SROs determine which schools are hosting an event. The group will finalize event plans in September.

Open Discussion – ALL

- Mayor Whitten shared that Crestview is planning to place more affordable housing units on a vacant property the city recently acquired.
- Anthony Sawyer shared that Fort Walton Beach Housing Authority (FWBHA) finalized their tax credit board. They are beginning phase one of redevelopment and their first project will be building a 62-unit senior housing facility. There will be a Fort Walton Beach City Council workshop on September 19th to gather public ideas regarding affordable housing.
- Mayor Wagner shared that Destin Healthcare Rehabilitation Center is partnering with White Wilson Medical Center to create a new facility to tentatively open by next month.
- Randi Lippy shared that she specializes in inter-prevention. She can provide a variety of trainings including Stop the Bleed and fall prevention.

- Mayor Whitten announced that an international program on opioid education is going to be launched and will be funded to local Rotary Clubs. Crestview plans to combine their rotary club with their Opioid Task Force to combine efforts on opioid education.
- Emily shared that DOH-Okaloosa is hosting a Community Drug Endangered Children's (DEC) Training on September 29th from 11:00am-2:00pm at Crosspoint Church in Niceville. Organizational leadership is strongly encouraged to attend, and lunch will be provided. Click on this [link](#) to register.

Closing – Emily Pickens

- Emily thanked attendees for participating and asked them to complete the meeting evaluation form to provide feedback.

Next Meeting – Thursday, September 21st at 9:00 AM at DOH-Okaloosa

Action Items	Owners	Deadline	Status
Take public opinion survey on housing issues	ALL	September 4 th	In progress
Share Pedestrian Safety Month poster competition flyer for distribution	Emily Pickens	ASAP	Complete
Develop three pedestrian safety short videos based on group agreement	Chance Leavins, City/County PIOs	September 21 st	In progress
Present video draft to group for final edits	Chance Leavins	September 21 st	Not started
Request FWB mayor involvement in IOAD and poster contest	Robert Bage	September 21 st	In progress
Develop poster flyer for OCSD and contact Beach TV	Allison McDaniel	ASAP	In progress
Develop media toolkit for pedestrian safety month	Mikiko Tucker	September 21 st	In progress
Determine OCO SRO involvement in poster contest and request school event info	Jason Fulghum	September 21 st	In progress
Purchase poster contest prizes	Robert Bage	September 21 st	Not started
Develop poster winner certificate with the signatures of Okaloosa County Mayors	JB Whitten	September 21 st	Not started