

**SIMI VALLEY TASK FORCE ON HEROIN PREVENTION  
MEETING NOTES – MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2013**

- Call to Order/Pledge/Roll Call
  - Task Force Chairman Mike Judge called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. All Task Force members were present with the exception of Member Nolan.
  - Public Comments:
    - Eric Adler, English teacher with Valley View Middle School, spoke regarding the programs in place with the Simi Valley Unified School District and the Every Fifteen Minutes program, and the difference in attitudes between drinking and drug use. Not One More's efforts should be encouraged and permitted to conduct programs in the District's schools.
    - Ray Odrey, Simi Valley resident with a son who is a recovering addict and is actively involved in sober living facilities in town, spoke with regard to the funding challenges associated with getting addicts into recovery. He discussed the potential use of Drug Asset Forfeiture funds to support drug and gang diversion efforts, and to support enrollment into treatment programs. He further inquired regarding who in local government determines how these funds are spent, if the funds were properly distributed, where the funds were distributed, and if any of the funds can be allocated to help sponsor recovering addicts through programs which would qualify as diversion programs.
- ACTION:** Chairman Judge noted he would look into the matter, requested it be agendaized for the next meeting, and asked that Chief McCann attend to respond specifically to the inquiry.
- Maureen Mustachio (did not wish to speak), asked what took the City so long to recognize the problem of drug abuse. Task Force Chairman Judge stated the purpose of the Committee and its well-rounded membership is to address the problem now in conjunction with the enforcement efforts of the Police Department.

- Pastor Rick Fish with Live Ride Christian Church spoke regarding the recovery efforts of his son, Not One More (NOM) more involved in the school system, and would like to know about the progress made with NOM's work with the School District.
- The June 17, 2013 meeting notes were reviewed and received by the Task Force.
- An update on Drug Enforcement Activities was provided by Commander Livingstone from the Simi Valley Police Department:
  - Arrests for heroin through August 31, 2013 were up 26% from this time in 2012 partially attributed to increased enforcement activities; currently the Police Department is averaging 13 heroin arrests per month. It is the most common drug behind marijuana.
  - Currently two detectives are assigned to Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) narcotics task forces and two detectives are assigned to County narcotics task forces. The detectives working with the DEA work at a broader level and the local County task forces work with the Ventura County Sheriffs and deal with local distribution and pharmaceutical fraud.
  - Two additional detectives have been added to the narcotics unit to enhance enforcement efforts.
  - Regarding education activities, the School Resource Officers (SROs) attended Back to School Night at three middle and high schools for parent outreach. The objective was to get the word out that experimentation is possible, to remind parents to secure their own prescriptions, and to use the Police Department prescription drop off box. He reported that 3,000 pounds have been collected since inception in 2011.
  - Parents were advised to not let their children attend open invitation parties with a cover fee.
- Comments by Task Force Members to the Police Department report:
  - Pat Montoya inquired about activities that occur following an illegal substance arrest and whether information is provided on how arrestees obtain help. Commander Livingstone stated situations are handled on a

case by case basis, however, that the time the officer spends with an arrestee is invaluable time used for counseling. In some cases, there will be no cooperation. Informational materials and access numbers are provided depending on the situation. The Police Department hands out the “Drugs Destroy” flyers provided by the Recreation and Park District when contacts take place.

- Dan White stated that Officer Longdon gave good information at Royal High School’s Back to School Night. The Officer provided a message to the parents in attendance, and the abuse of prescription drugs is a pathway to heroin. He posed a question concerning the 13 heroin arrests per month, and inquired if the age groups encountered remain consistent. Commander Livingstone stated that the same age groups are being seen in arrest numbers.
- Kate O’Brien inquired about the Every Fifteen Minutes program and whether the program applies to the drug problem in addition to alcohol use. Commander Livingstone explained that the program rotates location every year and it is not specifically targeted at heroin but addresses driving under the influence, whether it is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Gene Hostetler inquired about the number of drug arrests that are prosecuted by the District Attorney’s (DA) Office. Commander Livingstone stated he would need to inquire with the DA but stated a good portion of them are prosecuted, but it depends on the circumstances of the individual case and mitigating factors. Member Hostetler further inquired if there are any live-in rehabilitation facilities in town and the Commander indicated there are not. Member Hostetler also inquired about the rate of property crimes which was reported to be down over the last several months.
- Susan Klimusko commented on the DA matter and noted that NOM and Pat Montoya are working with rehabilitation facilities, commenting that the DA is responsive when the arrestees take sobriety seriously.
- Dan White commented that the School Resource Officer (SRO) program is currently understaffed. Commander Livingstone stated the Police Department is working on balancing resources and is in the process of establishing a Community Liaison Officer position that will be knowledgeable about the resources in the community, County, and State.

Member White suggested an emphasis be placed on getting crime data information to the Task Force Board Members to assist them with program considerations.

- Mayor Bob Huber commented on the addition of two youth officers and asked for additional information. Deputy Chief McGinty stated that there were three School Resource Officers (SRO), with one paid for by the School District through grant funds, and further noted that the Chief is committed to expanding the role of the SRO and using the resources that currently exist before requesting additional funding. Mayor Huber asked that the Chief provide a memo regarding officers besides School Resource Officers.

ACTION: Mayor Huber requested an analysis on how comparable cities are funding their SROs be conducted and presented. Commander Livingstone stated that in other jurisdictions, SROs do receive funding from school districts, and that Chief McCann has requested an analysis be prepared with more data to come forward with regard to SROs and the funding methods used by other cities and school districts.

- Update regarding the “Drug Free Youth in Town” (DFYIT) Program presented by Samantha Argabrite, Assistant to the City Manager:
  - The program is in place in thirteen Santa Clarita schools with nearly 850 students enrolled as of the end of the last school year.
  - Staff’s recommendation is for the Task Force direct staff to further research the cost and logistics of the program, and seek funding from the City Council, Simi Valley Board of Education, and Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District Board of Directors to do so.
  - The licensing, tracking system, and technical support is \$15,000 for three years, (\$5,000 per year), and Santa Clarita’s budget includes \$107,000 for administration including the drug testing component of the program. An administration budget of approximately 50% would be anticipated in Simi Valley based on a fewer number of schools in Simi Valley.
  - If the Task Force would like to implement the program, further staff research would be required, including further program cost analysis and cost allocations.

ACTION: Mayor Huber and Dan White would like to see the item be considered by their respective agencies.

- Discussion of Agencies' Updates Regarding Implementation of the Recommended Strategies to Combat Heroin Abuse:
  - Larry Peterson, General Manager of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District (RSRPD), reported that during the period of June through August, 2013, RSRPD continued to make its "Drugs Destroy" tri-fold flyers available to the public via its website, in the District's Offices, handed out by Park District rangers, and they are continuing to work on other methods to increase distribution to other venues. The flyers were also handed out during the Simi Valley Days Parade and anti-drug banners were walked through the parade route.
  - Activity brochures were distributed to 47,000 households in the City, Oak Park, and parts of unincorporated Ventura County, and included brief articles about drug and alcohol abuse and resource listings for those seeking assistance.
  - RSRPD hosted a "Reality Party for Parents" in June where a mock teen party that parents could tour was put on, and then participate in a debriefing session where parents could ask questions and gain resources.
  - Ventura County Behavioral Health and the Community Coalition United has offered a free, 12-hour Mental Health First Aid USA training course through RSRPD. A class was held in August, with additional classes planned for the fall.
  - Various activities continue to be advertised on the RSRPD website including programs offered by Ventura County Behavioral Health, Interface Children and Family Services, the Simi Valley Public Library, the City of Thousand Oaks, Ventura County Public Health, and the City of Thousand Oaks Police Department.
  - Employment, volunteer, and recreational alternatives are being promoted and encouraged through various RSRPD programs.

Comments and Questions from Task Force Members to the Recreation and Park District report:

- Gene Hostetler asked where the public can get information about the programs and activities presented. Mr. Peterson noted that they are included in the Reporter magazine which is mailed out and is available on the District's website.
- Mayor Huber inquired about using Channel 10/Simi Valley Television as an avenue to publicize activities and program. Mr. Peterson stated it has been used in the past, though possibly not during the last three month period.
- Pat Montoya commented on the Mental Health course and that it is mostly offered during the day time, and inquired if there is there a way of getting one offered during evening hours. Mr. Peterson noted that the program is conducted by Ventura County Behavioral Health staff and RSPRD is working with them to offer a condensed program that still provides the information fully.
- Simi Valley Unified School District Report:
  - Dr. Scroggin reported that, over the summer, the School District met with the Pastors who are now members of the Task Force, and discussed how members of the faith based community and youth pastors can become involved with making connections with students on school campuses, and they are now being welcomed to campuses.
  - Additionally, Dr. Scroggin reported that the District began to explore programs which would provide voluntary random drug testing. The District has made contact with Simi Valley Hospital and is scheduling a meeting to discuss partnership opportunities.
  - a meeting is being scheduled with Not One More to discuss the possibility of having speakers in the classroom.
  - The School District will electronically distribute the Park District brochure with the school newsletter.
  - Dr. Scroggin further discussed what a random drug testing program was like when she was principal at Simi Valley High School. The program was for athletes and those in extracurricular activities, and students signed a

compact agreeing to remain drug-free and agreed to random drug testing, where only the parents received the results of the tests.

- Pat Montoya asked whether the District is working with the Student Councils and what are those groups doing about drug awareness: Dr. Scroggin stated she would inquire with principals and report back on what they have done and what they have plans to do in the future.
- Rob Collins provided additional comment on the drug testing program that previously existed, noting that while it was an expensive program, he is excited about the potential of bringing back such a program.
- City of Simi Valley:
  - The Simi Valley Police Department has continued enforcement and parental education programs.
  - Staff attended the Tri-Agency Drug Summit with Thousand Oaks and Santa Clarita with a recording of the event distributed to Task Force Members.
  - Simi Valley Television (SVTV) will air two Public Service Announcements, one on teen prescription drug abuse and one on heroin abuse.
  - A Teen Lounge was opened at the Simi Valley Public Library on July 1 which offers ongoing programs.
  - The City is working with the Free Clinic to include drug and alcohol prevention and treatment resources at their upcoming public Health and Fitness Expo.
  - The City of Santa Clarita's *Heroin Kills* Symposium was publicized on the City's website
  - The City Council declared September 14, 2013 as Heroin Awareness Day in Simi Valley.
  - The City distributed the updated Directory of Social Services to Task Force Members.

- Staff has met with the School and Park District representatives to discuss partnership opportunities in implementation of the DFYIT program.
- Staff will attend the Ventura County Drug Abuse Summit which will focus on prescription painkiller misuse, abuse, and dependence.
- Susan Klimusko remarked she will also be attending the Ventura County Health Program.

Pat Montoya provided the Not One More Report:

- Action Family counseling is being held on the weekends. The goal is to reach out and bring support to parents who are struggling with childrens' addictions.
- Working with parents and addicts at sober living homes.
- Working on showing documentaries to 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in SVUSD.
- Working on developing age appropriate presentations for 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade to be presented in district schools.
- Have been meeting with faith based groups and Kevin Deickilman has been working with NOM. Local gyms are providing support by offering free memberships to recovering addicts. Also free involvement in baseball and football programs.
- Continues to work with employers to assist those in recovery to get jobs.
- Has secured financial support for a local sober living facility. Susan will be attending the "Fed Up" rally in Washington DC.
- Scheduling a Patriot NOM day with Eric Kramer, former pro quarterback who also lost a child to heroin, to speak with kids.
- Susan Klimusko reported she started NextDoor.com which is a cyber neighborhood watch.
- Would like to get bus stop locations back for messages.
- Discussion of the Role of the Faith Based Community with the Task Force:



- Paul Weir of Simi Valley Community Church met with Dr. Scroggin.
  - Kevin Diekilman of Simi Hills Christian Church. One third of the churches in town are represented tonight. 32 churches in town are unified in this effort. Dealing with two areas: prevention and recovery. Working to develop alternatives to drugs.
  - Blended family ministries is an area they are working on to help step families work on the family unit. And working with single moms and reach them.
  - Overcomers offers free music programs, open gym nights. Working on the issue of “there is no place to go”, and to address this they are working on a program at the Town Center.
  - Mic Check is a program with poetry, music and other events that are planned to take place each month, and is trying to connect with bands in the City to provide entertainment.
  - Street Lights is a program that is working in the areas where issues are most serious and knock on the doors in those neighborhoods.
  - An LLC has purchased a site to build a 50 bed rehab facility to be constructed in town.
- Task Force Member Reports:
    - Susan Klimusko extended the offer to other organizations to post information on NOM’s website.
    - Gene Hostetler thanked Commander Livingstone for distributing the “Drugs Destroy” fliers.
    - Samantha Argabrite reported that on June 17<sup>th</sup> two new members from the faith based community were appointed to the Task Force and it’s anticipated they would work as liaisons.
  - Audience comments
    - Kathy Davidson (no address given), stated that she did not hear anything about parental involvement and noted they need to be included in outreach efforts. When parents allow the children to do drugs at home, they condone their behavior.

- Debbie (no last name given), acknowledged the support of Pastor Kevin, stated that her husband is an addict and that addicts are the most capable of reaching out to others, and they should be involved in the assemblies at schools.
- Teresa Heir commented she is excited about the information that the Park District has distributed, and inquired about what type of information solicitors need to display. Commander Livingstone stated that when in doubt, the Police Department should be contacted and to not take the solicitation at face value. She further inquired on how to get the word out about non-legitimate information; Commander Livingstone stated that the Department can publicize the information through their Facebook page and Nixle. With regard to the Park District, she inquired if patrol has been stepped up. Task Force Member Hostetler encouraged the public to call either the Park District or the Police Department if illegal activity is observed in parks.
- Eric Robertson, pastor, stated he was excited about the activities he has heard regarding the outreach taking place, and reiterated that parents are also part of the problem which is an entirely separate issue. He works with rehabilitation in-home and it is a one-year program, noting that it is a successful program.
- Janette Dagestania, Red Ribbon Chairperson at Royal High School and Sinaloa Middle School, stated she is thrilled about what she has heard this evening re: educating kids in schools.
- Eric Alder stated he was happy about what he has heard this evening, and is impressed with how quickly the faith based groups have been able to get into the schools. Thought that Every Fifteen Minutes took place at every high school every year and is disappointed that it rotates, and suggested that NOM may be willing to help with fundraisers. He encouraged that other programs be instituted as well.

Deputy Chief McGinty provided the Good Samaritan law reminder. An individual is immune from prosecution if you report an overdose and you are also under the influence.

ACTION: Next meeting to be scheduled for January and minutes to be distributed prior to the agenda packet.

- The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.