



## CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS CLERK OF COMMITTEES

September 13, 2017

### REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

| Attendee Name      | Title             | Status  | Arrived |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------|---------|
| John M. Connolly   | Chair             | Present |         |
| Mary Jo Rossetti   | Vice Chair        | Present |         |
| Matthew McLaughlin | Ward One Alderman | Present |         |

Others present - Chief David Fallon - SPD, Nancy Bacci - HHS, Doug Kress - HSS, Annie Connor - Legislative Liaison, Maureen Foster - Alex Foster Foundation, Mary Cassesso - CHA, Colin Beatty - Column Health, Mark Albanese - CHA, Chris Wendt - SPD, Patty Contente - SPD, JoAnn Riviuccio - SCAP, Rositha Durham - Clerk of Committees and several other representatives from Column Health.

The meeting took place at the Column Health facility at 401 Highland Avenue in Somerville and was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Connolly and adjourned at 7:20 PM.

#### Approval of the May 22, 2017 Minutes

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| <b>RESULT:</b> | <b>ACCEPTED</b> |
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**199520: That the Administration prioritize a public health initiative to control the opiate abuse epidemic, including nearby health and educational institutions and any other available resources.**

Mr. Beatty informed the committee that Column Health is an outcome focused clinic that began two years ago in Arlington and has grown to a total of four clinics. The clinic's staff coordinate to get people the right type of care and clinical pathways and use data to follow patients more effectively and to share data when regulations allow. Chief Fallon said that police officers are trained how to treat people with drug addiction. Ms. Contente's work for the City of Somerville involves getting individuals where they need to be. Some people who are struggling with addiction are homeless or transients, making follow-up difficult. The systems are challenging and sometimes people may relapse, but she is starting to see people come back and is working with family members. Mr. Wendt shared some metrics about fatalities and noted that the spring and fall seasons see more fatalities than the summer and winter months. Two years ago there were 15 fatalities, last year there were 14 and this year there have been 10. Most non-fatal overdoses occur among white males with an average age of 35. There have been cases of people

in their 50's and 60's dying from overdoses. Dr. Albanese and others from Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) attended the meeting and told the committee that CHA will service anyone who walks through the doors and will help them understand drug addiction. Ms. Cassesso spoke about CHA's programs for the homeless, training and having social workers in the libraries. Mr. Kress spoke about screening all 10th graders in Somerville High School to find risk levels and said that the city's Health Department has been working with CHA and other community partner and wants to start screening 7th graders, as well. School and office nurses are being relocated and alternative places are being sought. Ms. Foster would like to see more action on drug addiction and said that she meets with a group of parents at Column Health every month who have lost someone to addiction. JoAnn Riviuccio spoke about getting information out to the community about drug addiction and getting help and suggested that families have a plan if they find out that their child might have a drug addiction.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> |
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| <b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b> |
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**203739: That the Director of Health and Human Services report in writing to this Board by October 1, 2017 on the progress of supportive efforts with our community's non-profits to address substance abuse.**

Mr. Kress will send an email to the committee on the progress of the supportive efforts.

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| <b>RESULT:</b> |
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| <b>KEPT IN COMMITTEE</b> |
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