

LEPC Meeting Minutes
July 12, 2016
12:00 pm Walters State Community College

The meeting was called to order by Interim Chairperson Candy Lamb of Lakeway Regional Hospital. Invocation was given by Lt. Billy Gulley. The pledge of allegiance was led by Candy Lamb.

Old business – Candy Lamb introduced Chris Bell who informed the LEPC that Vice Chair Mattea McCann recommended that the Preparedness Expo be put on hold until 2017. Mattea reports that there is interest but it will not be possible to implement until a later date. Director Bell also reminded the LEPC that Chief Sarah Rose stepped down as LEPC Chairperson and that Candy Lamb had agreed to act as Interim Chairperson for the remainder of 2016.

Director Bell then opened the floor for any other old business. No old business was brought up.

Director Bell then turned the meeting back over to Candy Lamb who provided some information about herself and her position at Lakeway Hospital. Afterward, she introduced Detective Sargent Gary Bean.

Det. Sgt. Bean gave a brief history of his career with the Morristown Police Department, which includes nine years in the narcotics division. He spoke on the trends of drug use in the community and what is being done to combat it. He explained the mental state of addiction, and how it is a process that occurs rather than an instant reaction. He explained that people function at a specific level, and when a drug is consumed/ingested the first time, it gives the user a high, and when the drug has been metabolized, the body returns to the normal state. With extended use, the starting functional point is lower, the high becomes lower, and the after affect drops the body's functionality to a lower point than where it began. This leads to addiction in order to be able to simply function.

Det. Sgt. Bean explained the drug trends are currently Fentanyl laced pills, Flakka or Gravel (bath salts), synthetic cannabinoids, and caffeine powder. He went through each one, explaining how they affect the user and what forms they take. He explained that Fentanyl is the most powerful pain relieving drug on the market; 100x more powerful than morphine. The most counterfeited pills that contain Fentanyl are Percocet and Xanax. Flakka or Gravel are bath salts, though not like the kind you purchase at Wal-Mart. The most common effect of this drug is an increase in body temperature, which often causes users to shed clothing. It also causes "excited delirium" such as paranoia, hallucinations, aggressions, and even suicidal thoughts/attempts.

The next drug, synthetic marijuana, can be ingested through vaping, as can many of the other drugs. If the drug is water soluble, Det. Sgt. Bean explained, it can be vaped. He also, discussed caffeine powder, which can be easily purchased online. One teaspoon of this 100% pure caffeine is the equivalent of 25 cups of coffee. THC is another drug mentioned, which can come in the form of candy or gummies, leading kids and teenagers to accidentally overdose because they are unaware of what they are actually consuming.

The last drug described was DXM, which is the active ingredient in cough suppressant. The average age of use and abuse of this drug is twelve years old.

Det. Sgt. Bean explained that the most commonly abused drugs in the area are: meth, suboxone, oxycodone and oxymorphone (prescription drugs), Xanax, and heroin.

In 2015, 58% of drug busts were for meth, compared to a 0% rate in 2012.

Overdosing statistics also vary depending of the type of drug used. In 2006, Hamblen County had 25 overdose deaths. In 2010, 53. In 2015, there were 29. As of July 2016, there have been 22 overdoses resulting in death. The ages of these deaths can range between 13-76. The majority of overdoses in 2015 were from individuals 50-70.

Det. Sgt. Bean indicated he expected to see an increase in marijuana, vaping, and synthetic with THC as the common drugs of choice. This may lead to an increase of overdoses.

Det. Sgt. Bean turned the meeting over to Chris Bell who opened the floor for discussion. Chrissy Hicks of the Health Dept. discussed the issue of drug-dependent babies being born and their effort to work with the jails, CEASE Shelter, and other avenues to provide birth control and information to women so they will not get pregnant and have a drug-dependent child.

Lakeway Hospital representatives spoke on the issue of individuals coming to the ER for drugs. David Mooneyham from Colgate Palmolive spoke of the issue of workers being on different drugs that their tests cannot catch and the issue of having individuals in a work environment being a potential danger to others.

An additional issue of doctors prescribing rights was brought up as a method to cut down on prescription drug abuse.

Mayor Brittain asked, "what can the community do?" Det. Sgt. Bean answered that the best course of action is to get information out to the public, restrict prescribing rights of doctors, and work together to continue to find other solutions.

New Business – There was no new business.

There were no other questions and the meeting was turned over to Candy Lamb. Candy opened the floor up for announcements. Chrissy Hicks of the Health Dept. announced a Zika tabletop for Wed. July 13 at 8 am at the Health Dept. building.

Chris Bell recognized Davy Crockett Restaurant for their generous lunch donation.

There were no other announcements and the meeting was adjourned.

The Morristown LEPC would like to thank ***Davy Crockett Restaurant*** for supplying the meal for this meeting.
Our next scheduled meeting to be held on October 11, 2016.