

Community Policing Committee
MINUTES of meeting January 13, 2020 7 pm
PUBLIC SAFETY MEETING
OPIOIDS, DRUG USE AND ABUSE

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Scott Warnock called the meeting to Order at 7 p.m. and welcomed the guest speakers and the citizens in attendance. Councillor Warnock, Councillor Bumstead, Councillor Raymond and Mayor Walker were present along with CPC Committee Members. There was a full house of local residents for the meeting.

2 . Panel participants presented information about the scourge of opioids in Simcoe County, what programs are available to seek help and treatment, and discussed the impact on health, youth, the community at large, and families trying to cope with the crisis. The slide presentations are available at tay.ca under the Community Policing Committee page.

SPEAKERS

Christine St. Amant, a public health nurse with the Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit, described the Simcoe Muskoka Opioid Strategy (SMOS) a multi-sector comprehensive strategy aimed at reducing opioid harms in Simcoe and Muskoka. The SMOS Action Plan addresses prevention, treatment, harm reduction, enforcement and emergency action. A major goal is the reduction of stigma. Naloxone kits for emergency application are available free of charge through the health unit. More information can be found at smdhu.org/stopoverdoses.

Constable Aaron Coulter, OPP, spoke of the increasing community impact through the lens of first responders who answer 911 emergency calls of overdoses. They also carry Naloxone to revive someone who has overdosed. He spoke of the increasing prevalence of deadly fentanyl and carfentanil mixed into other street drugs and the need to call 911 in the event of suspected overdose.

Dr. John Weeks, Director of Waypoint Centre for Mental Health, spoke of research into the terrible toll on mental health of addictions and the stigma that accompanies these illnesses. He spoke of the impact of opioids on the respiratory system and the brain. He also discussed the rising prevalence of opioid addiction, the need for intensive treatment, and the lack of treatment beds to meet the crisis.

Dr. David Bayfield, ER Physician, Georgian Bay General Hospital. In addition to his role as an ER doctor responding to medical opioid emergencies at Georgian Bay Hospital in Simcoe County, Dr. Bayfield described his involvement at Georgian Bay Clinic in treating opioid addictions with methadone and suboxone which can assist in recovery.

Melissa Hurst of Simcoe County Moms for Overdose Awareness spoke compellingly of her experience with the tragic death of her beloved son Luke, age 19 due to an opioid overdose. Two other members of the group were in attendance, and requested that the public sign a petition to request that the Federal government declare the opioid crisis a national public health emergency to stop this epidemic. Their petition can be found on their website at smfoa.ca

3. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 after the panel members addressed numerous questions from the audience.

4. Next meeting

The next meeting is a Committee working meeting on February 10, 2020 at 7 pm.