

## **Missoula City Council Public Safety and Health Committee Minutes**

**August 25, 2021**

**12:35 PM**

**ZOOM Webinar**

**Members present:** Stacie Anderson (chair), Mirtha Becerra, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, Julie Merritt

**Members absent:** John P. Contos, Heather Harp, Jesse Ramos, Amber Sherrill, Sandra Vasecka, Bryan von Lossberg, Heidi West

### **1. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS**

#### **1.2 Approval of the Minutes**

##### **1.2.1 Minutes of August 18, 2021 PSH meeting**

No quorum present.

### **3. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

#### **3.1 Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG 2021) MOU**

Scott Hoffman, assistant chief of the Missoula Police Department presented information regarding the Edward Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (JAG 2021) application. This year, \$63,580 has been allocated to the police department, with \$14,676 of that amount being shared with Missoula County. He then explained the breakdown of how the funds will be used.

(No quorum present.) Set a public hearing on September 13, 2021 for public notification of JAG 2021 grant application and approval of the required MOU with Missoula County for the application.

AYES: (5): Stacie Anderson, Mirtha Becerra, Jordan Hess, Gwen Jones, and Julie Merritt

ABSENT: (7): John Contos, Heather Harp, Jesse Ramos, Amber Sherrill, Sandra Vasecka, Bryan von Lossberg, and Heidi West

**Vote results: Approved (5 to 0)**

#### **3.2 Health Department Update on prevention of underage cannabis use**

Presentation started by Leah Fitch-Brody, Missoula County Health Department substance use disorder prevention coordinator. She discussed the various organizations involved in preventing substance use among Missoula County youth. She discussed their work with parents on how to talk to their youths about substances, on-going trainings and events. Their main focus on substances include alcohol, vaping and marijuana, which are the most widely used substances by youth.

Steve Schmidt with Drive Safe Missoula DUI Task Force discussed the density of cannabis dispensaries in Missoula. The Public Health Institute of Oakland, California, recommends one dispensary per every 15,000 people. With this calculation, Missoula should have only eight dispensaries, but actually has 45 dispensaries in Missoula County as of 2021.

Shannan Sproull, project coordinator for Missoula Substance Use Disorder Connect, an initiative through United Way, discussed the research surrounding the nation, and specifically Colorado and Washington following their legalization of recreational marijuana. She explained that marijuana is the most popular illicit substance in the United States, and adolescents and young adults are among the highest users. Potential adverse outcomes of marijuana use in youth include: an increase use of other substances, new onset psychosis, suicide, marijuana-related motor vehicle crashes, and neurocognitive decline over time, including educational underperformance.

Faith Price, community prevention coordinator for All Nations Health, works with youth on substance use and suicide prevention. She gave suggestions for the committee to ponder that may decrease the use of substance use. Some of the suggestions included: high prices through excise tax, not allowing attractive marketing practices, prohibiting flavor additives and public smoking and vaping of cannabis.

In response to Ms. Sproull's comment regarding the concentration of dispensaries around downtown and the northside, Alderman Jordan Hess liked idea of tying zoning into the health equity metric.

No action-information only

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

1:24 p.m.