

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ALCOHOL, OTHER DRUGS & YOUTH SERVICES

February 18, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Chairman Thomas called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Thomas, Barry, Vincent, Kantor, O'Neil

Messrs.: R. Stevens

1. Presentation by Hope for New Hampshire Recovery of the Hope Connections program.

Chairman Thomas stated we are looking for a motion to allocate \$201,000 from the Opioid Abatement Fund to Hope for New Hampshire Recovery related to associated program costs.

Alderman Kantor asked can we have Randy Stevens come up please. First of all, I just want to say thank you so much for everything that you do. It is remarkable. I was wondering if this includes any needle exchange or anything to do with needles.

Randy Stevens, hope for NH Recovery, responded no.

Alderman Kantor stated that is my big thing. I 100% support you. Thank you for that clarification.

Alderman O'Neil stated it looks like this is broken down into peer support team and administrative costs and then case management. Can you just give an example of each?

Mr. Stevens answered peer support specialist is a person with lived experience like myself who connects and creates mutuality with individuals who are experiencing homelessness, addiction, and have been justice involved. We try to normalize the process. Peer support is more emotional support and connecting them to resources and things like that. Case management is more like we identify a need that you need to get done like get into housing or PCP care and we help you get that right now.

Alderman O'Neil asked are you expecting to bring some additional staff on.

Mr. Stevens responded yes.

Alderman O'Neil asked ballpark and I am not holding you to the number but how many in each category.

Mr. Stevens replied for peer support I have a person who is going to be leading that team already. I recently hired someone to join the team without this funding so we could get that person out into the community. I will be hiring one more peer support specialist on top of that and then a case manager.

Alderman O'Neil asked is it safe to say two people.

Mr. Stevens answered yes.

Alderman O'Neil asked and how many in case management.

Mr. Stevens replied it is two people including the case management. It will be a four-person team.

Alderman O'Neil asked so one of them is already on board.

Mr. Stevens answered two of them are.

Alderman Barry stated Randy I know we had a meeting last week in reference to this and the importance of the \$75,000 for the case manager because something I have brought up quite a few times is the importance of having someone within, for example, 39 Beech Street; someone that is going to individually talk to people in there to find out exactly what their needs are whether they have mental health issues or drug issues or homeless issues. You with Hope are going to work to get this done so we can finally hopefully get people out into the community and get them into transitional housing if possible. Whatever their needs are, we need to move forward with them to get them out of the shelter experience. Shelters to me are a temporary thing. We are here for everyone but there comes a time when people have to move along and we have to assist them in finding treatment or whatever they need going for. Thank you for everything you do.

Alderman Vincent stated so this \$201,000 is going to jump start this going. Can you tell us what your plan is to pay for this going forward? This is just a jump start from the city to get these people going and from that point you have the ball and are going to run with it in the future. What is your plan to fund this going forward?

Mr. Stevens responded my plan is kind of multi-faceted. One is the more people I bring on, like using case management and getting people connected to Medicaid and the more people I bring into the Hope Center and the more peers I have to support them I can bill for those services.

Alderman Vincent replied so billing Medicaid is the plan.

Mr. Stevens stated that is the main plan; yes.

Chairman Thomas stated I also want to thank you. You and Hope have done an amazing job. I thank you. I know it is not an easy job at all. I also want people to know that in two weeks Chief Cashin will be bringing forth a proposal to the CIP Committee to donate a car from the Fire Department that is nearing the end of its life. He will be using a grant to replace the car they currently have. We are not going to deal with this tonight but we will have a vote on this in the future.

*On motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman Kantor**, it was voted to allocate \$201,000 from the Opioid Abatement Fund to Hope for New Hampshire Recovery related to associated program costs.*

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Vincent**, duly seconded by **Alderman Kantor**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Hammond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Clerk of Committee