

**OWENSBORO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**Special Called Joint Work Session with**  
**Daviess County Fiscal Court**  
**November 12, 2019 2:00 PM**  
City Hall  
101 E. Fourth Street  
Owensboro, KY

**1. CALL TO ORDER** – Mayor Tom Watson

**2. ROLL CALL** – Beth Cecil, City Clerk

Present:

Mayor Tom Watson  
Commissioner Pam Smith-Wright  
Commissioner Larry Conder  
Commissioner Jeff Sanford

Judge/Executive Al Mattingly  
Commissioner Charlie Castlen  
Commissioner Mike Koger

Unable to attend:

Commissioner George Wathen

**3. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION – DAVIESS COUNTY VS. METH** – Mayor Watson opened the meeting and explained that most federal funds are available to help battle opioid addiction. However, in the Owensboro-Daviess County area, the main issue is meth. Mayor Watson and Judge/Executive Al Mattingly chose the following goals for the meeting: help begin process to devise a strategy to secure federal funding to combat meth (avoid as much duplication as possible); ask the community to work collaboratively to eradicate meth; and educate federal partners to ask for their assistance in lobbying and advocating for funds (McConnell recently co-sponsored amendment increasing COPS Anti-Methamphetamine Program (CAMP) to \$13 million). Mayor Watson recognized Mark Lord with Congressman Guthrie's office; Jason Hassert in Rand Paul's office and Senator McConnell's field representative Timothy Gilliam. He also thanked Joanna Shake and Skyler Stewart with GRADD for their input and assistance. *Statistics and Funding Opportunities to combat Meth in Owensboro and Daviess County* packet was distributed (attached).

Dr. Ronsonlyn Clark, Rivervalley Behavioral Health (RVBH) and Sgt. Mike Nichols, Owensboro Police Department presented a Powerpoint (attached). Of note, between July 2015 and June 2017, substance use clients at intake at RVBH reported use of methamphetamine went up 55% from the previous year. Sgt. Nichols pointed out that the numbers reported in the presentation reflect only Owensboro Police Dept. and do not include Kentucky State Police or Daviess County Sheriff's Office. The majority of the meth available today is being manufactured south of the U.S. border and is being

brought into the community by cartels and is much more pure and dangerous. The traffickers use social media to sell and ship the drug via USPS, UPS, etc. Generally, it takes an addict 6-18 years of use before they will enter treatment for an average of seven (7) times to get clean. Daviess County Drug Court has been an effective and encouraging program within the community. Mayor Watson and Judge/Executive Mattingly encouraged everyone to attend a graduation if possible.

Commissioner Castlen asked the estimated number of meth users in the community. Dr. Clark explained that according to Mental Health First Aid, approximately five percent (5%) of a population is using meth. Sgt. Nichols expressed his concern with the court system's punishment of placing meth traffickers (with no addiction problem) into treatment facilities with addicts that are working to rehabilitate themselves. He requested assistance with state legislation to toughen the penalties for traffickers. Mayor Watson asked Sgt. Nichols and Dr. Clark to draft a piece of legislation to be passed to the elected officials in Frankfort. Dr. Clark's top priorities include: social detox program, increase drug court program, long-term program, and toughen penalties for traffickers.

Mayor Watson requested the stakeholders collaborate and advise the local elected officials' ways to help process their needs to the state and federal officials. Mark Lord (Congressman Guthrie's Field Representative) described the issues they are seeing in other second congressional district communities and the successful methods being taken to move forward. He indicated jobs, housing and treatment are necessary to combat the relapse cycle. Most federal money that comes through the State is being addressed through the Kentucky Office of Drug Control Policy. Van Ingram, Executive Director, has been visiting various cities in the second district to speak to the providers that are trying to address various elements of their own strategic plan. Mr. Ingram is helping identify resources when they come available and suggesting what types of efforts would be funded.

Sheriff Keith Cain addressed the meth issue he has been fighting for many years. He encouraged support to secure the U.S. borders to help combat the drug flow. Commissioner Conder mentioned the possibility of: hiring a Director for the Owensboro-Daviess Drug Alliance through a collaboration of funds, if available, through the City-County and possibly the hospital; and address the vaping issue. Commissioner Koger mentioned the possibility of grant money being used to increase police staff, in addition to treatment. Mayor Watson requested an update on the stakeholders' progress.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned by acclamation at 3:15 p.m.

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Thomas H. Watson, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Beth Cecil, City Clerk