



State of New Jersey

GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

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PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

TAHESHA L. WAY
Lt. Governor

NEIL VAN ESS
Acting Chairman

CELINA LEVY
Executive Director

MINUTES

Governor's Council on Substance Use Disorder

July 15, 2025

Attendance: Neil Van Ess (Chairman), Celina Levy (Executive Director), John Armato (Public Member), Sweta Kansagra (Public Member), Gisele Pemberton (Public Member), Cornell Williamson (AOC), Michelle Graham-Lyons (DCA) Lashunda Omida (DOH), Don Hallcom (DHS), Briana Menjivar (DOL), Tiffany Wilson (LPS)

The three hundred and ninety fifth regular meeting of the Governor's Council on Substance Use Disorder was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Acting Chairman Neil Van Ess.

Open Public Meetings Act Statement

Mr. Van Ess announced that notice of this meeting was provided in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 – 10:4-21). In addition, Mr. Van Ess stated that public comments were to be provided electronically, through the GCSUD website contact portal between the hours of 10am and 1pm on the day of the meeting and must state "Public Comment" in the subject line.

Roll Call

Katelyn Assenheimer called the roll. Members present and absent were noted for the record. Mr. Van Ess informed the Council that this meeting would be for informational purposes only due to the lack of quorum.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Van Ess welcomed everyone to the meeting. He shared the Governor's office has successfully moved the GCSUD to a sustainable funding source and will be receiving funding from the Cannabis Regulatory, Enforcement Assistance and Market Modernization Fund along with the \$5.4 million budget now provided through the Underage Deterrence and Prevention Account that flows through the Cannabis Regulatory Commission.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Celina shared that she was pleased about the establishment of a new funding source for GCSUD and its Alliance to Prevent Substance Use Disorder. Ms. Levy stated that this funding provides the kind of stability and sustainability that ensures the program will continue to serve New Jersey's communities.

The Governor's office is in receipt of the Master Plan for review, and after any input is incorporated, then it will be presented to the Master Plan subcommittee for final review. It will then be presented to the Council for adoption.

Deputy Director Rebecca Alfaro is working with DMHAS on the completion of the funding process and is continuing to work on the remaining funding. More updates will be available at the next Council meeting.

The next phase of development in MAGS is underway with site visits and budget modifications being available in the system.

The Guidelines workgroup met over the summer and have created new guidelines for the FY27 grant term. A new funding formula has also been created with expected rollout in the fall.

Ms. Levy thanked the Council members for their guidance and support, the County Alliance Coordinators for their good work, GCSUD staff for moving the office forward and to Neil Van Ess for his ongoing leadership and support.

Adjournment

Mr. Van Ess adjourned the meeting at 11:10.