

Opioid Abatement Advisory Board Minutes

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

10am – 11am Remote via Zoom

Present: Sarah Toste, Marina Lent, Anna McCaffrey, Brice Boutot

Also Present: Ally Gittens Dias (Mosaic TTA), Kalasiddhi Thapa (BUSPH), Cheryl Sbarra (Mass. Assoc. of Health Boards), Jaden Thackston (BUSPH), Martina Thornton (County Manager),

Funding and “Formula” Discussion

- Issue: Not all towns have transferred their opioid settlement funds into the county’s pooled account.
 - Edgartown signed the pooling agreement but continues to hold its money (“half-pooled”).
 - Oak Bluffs did not pool at all.
- Proposed Solutions:
 - Either agree to a weighted billing formula based on proportion of funds received from the state (population-based), designed by Martina Thornton using the Opioid Abatement Lookup Tool:

	Est. total distributions	Weighted %	Weighted against total means finding a weighted average or proportion, where specific values have varying levels of importance rather than being counted equally. Instead of dividing by the total number of items, you divide by the total of all the weights.
Edgartown	\$305,284.89	0.48	
Aquinnah	\$18,583.01	0.03	
Chilmark	\$23,493.85	0.04	
Tisbury	\$250,907.78	0.39	
W Tisbury	\$37,390.55	0.06	
Gosnold	\$4,389.99	0.01	
	\$640,050.07	1.00	

- Another option is for Edgartown to contribute a set amount directly instead of using a complex formula.
- Outcome: The group could not vote on amending the inter-municipal agreement (IMA) or on the billing formula due to timing; the topic will return to a future agenda.

Community Assessment Progress

- Survey Work (conducted by students Jaden Thackston and Kalasiddhi Thapa):
 - Four surveys developed (English & Portuguese):
 1. Community members
 2. Civic & faith-based organizations
 3. Direct service providers
 - Outreach includes social media (Islanders Talk), email, text, and printed QR flyers.
 - Paper copies distributed at the Red House, Chicken Alley, and Health Imperatives.
 - Portuguese translation provided by Fernando to increase outreach to the Brazilian community.
- Stakeholder Interviews:
 - Active collaboration with service providers, schools, faith-based organizations, and law enforcement (e.g., Major Amanda Cimino of the Sheriff's Office).
 - Key finding: inmates often have substance-use issues but limited access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT); desire for stronger connection between the jail and social services.
- Upcoming Focus Groups:
 - Community members focus group scheduled at the Red House.
 - Future rounds may include faith-based groups and service providers.

Approvals and Motions

1. Invoices Approved:
 - Jaden Thackston: 141 hours @ \$20.83/hr = final portion of stipend (\$5,000 total).

- Kalasiddhi Thapa: 135 hours @ \$20.83/hr + \$18.05 Zoom subscription reimbursement.
- Motion by Marina Lent; second by Anna; approved unanimously.

2. Extension of Work:

- Both students to receive 100 additional hours each at the same hourly rate (\$20.83), to complete data analysis and final report.
- Motion by Marina, second by Anna; approved unanimously.
- Sarah clarified funding remains adequate within the overall abatement budget.

Outstanding Actions & Next Steps

- Finalize and vote on the funding formula/IMA amendment at an upcoming meeting.
- Continue survey promotion and data collection through mid-June.
- Conduct focus group(s) and begin qualitative and quantitative analysis of survey results.
- Next meeting: June 17 at 10:30 a.m.
- Sarah to coordinate with Brice and Martina on Edgartown billing and town fund pooling.
- Next focus for the board: complete assessment report and decide how future opioid abatement funds will be strategically spent.

Meeting adjourned at 11:02am

Opioid Abatement Look-up Tool: <https://www.mass.gov/lists/municipal-abatement-payments>

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Toste