



**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD
OPIOID SETTLEMENT TASK FORCE**
County of Champaign, Urbana, Illinois

MINUTES – Approved as Distributed on July 21, 2025

DATE: Monday, May 20, 2025
TIME: 6:30 p.m.
PLACE: Shields-Carter Meeting Room
Brookens Administrative Center
1776 E. Washington St., Urbana, IL 61802

Committee Members:

Present	Absent
Aaron Esry	
Brett Peugh	
Emily Rodriguez	
Ed Sexton (Vice-Chair)	
Chris Stohr	
Jennifer Locke (Chair)	
John Farney	

Others Present: Kait Kuzio (Grant Coordinator), and Megan Robison (Recording Secretary)

Agenda Items

I. Call to Order

Chair Locke called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

II. Roll Call

A verbal roll call was taken, and a quorum was declared present.

III. Approval of Agenda/Addendum

MOTION Mr. Sexton to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Stohr. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes

A. February 24, 2025

MOTION by Mr. Farney to approve the minutes of February 24, 2025; seconded by Mr. Esry. Mr. Farney noted that he was incorrectly marked as present at the previous meeting from which he was absent. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

V. Public Input

None

VI. Communications

None

VII. New Business

A. Probation & Court Services

Chair Locke reiterated the request from Probation and Court Services for that was approved in November 2024 for \$2,000 in funding to provide transportation for opioid-impacted probationers to and from in-patient treatment. Probation and Court Services staff are not able to provide this transportation due to staffing limitations.

MOTION by Mr. Sexton to recommend County Board approval of an intergovernmental agreement with Probation and Court Services for allocation of \$2,000 from the Opioid Settlement to provide transportation to and from treatment for probationers; seconded by Mr. Farney. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

Chair Locke explained that the Master Agreement for Transportation Services is the agreement draft to be executed between Probation and Court Services and the transportation provider(s).

MOTION by Ms. Rodriguez to recommend County Board approval of the Master Agreement for Transportation Services; seconded by Mr. Esry. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

B. Coroner

County Coroner Brauer stated that she is requesting funding to purchase a Randox Analyzer. She explains that this would provide capability to perform toxicology testing within their office and collect results within 30 minutes of the test. This would let them know if a decedent overdosed immediately, which could reduce unnecessary autopsies and help to quickly guide local public health responses based on this data rather than waiting eight weeks for results. Chair Locke asked for clarification on the eight-week timeline, wondering if that's how long it takes to get results from their third-party lab. Coroner Brauer said the results currently take four to eight weeks, six being average. Negative results can take around four weeks, but positive results tend to take a little longer. Ms. Locke indicated that four to eight weeks does not help with notifying the public of a potential bad batch. Coroner Brauer stated that is accurate, and it also delays the death certificate until they have the toxicology results.

Ms. Rodriguez asked for Coroner Brauer to address what an accurate understanding and count of deaths due to overdose could mean for County grant applications. Ms. Brauer explained she doesn't have experience in that area, and Ms. Rodriguez asked the County Grant Coordinator, Ms. Kuzio, what she thought. Ms. Kuzio stated that in grants, data tracks, proves and supports community needs. Ms. Rodriguez agreed that it is crucial to have this kind of data to report the real impact. Ms. Rodriguez added that she understands that there is also a concern about privacy, for example how a death is reported—one point of concern about this reporting is an overdose being listed as the cause of death, rather than something more neutral like "heart attack" or "heart issue".

Ms. Brauer responded that her office intends to keep better records. When a person asks for overdose numbers, it's easy to go through and find when overdose was the cause of death. But what's not included is when a person tests positive but that wasn't their cause of death. She mentioned that part of the reason this is difficult is because they're not all her cases. Coroner Brauer gave an example of a car accident in which the driver tested positive for several substances, but none of those were the cause of death—the cause was the car accident, so an overdose isn't listed and the toxicology is not listed as a contributing factor. Ms. Rodriguez asked if part of that would be because of how it's reported, often through obituaries. Ms. Brauer clarified that she meant through her office, not through obituaries. They would not list the overdose or a substance in their system because that wasn't their cause of death, and their office historically has not tracked those.

Mr. Peugh requested for procedure purposes that all applicants specify the approved uses they intend to meet on their physical application. Ms. Kuzio stated that the application is a new addition to the process and all applicants will be identifying the approved uses they will fulfill on their physical applications going forward.

Ms. Rodriguez added that if the approved uses to be fulfilled are not apparent by the proposal or the applicant, that would be best discussed at the beginning of the meeting. In addition to closure for families and other benefits outlined, this will also help to provide money to continue to address the issues. She also added that she's very happy the funds will be used and used correctly.

Mr. Farney asks if Coroner Brauer has an idea of the life-expectancy of this unit before it would need replaced. Ms. Brauer doesn't know that detail, but she discussed the maintenance plan available after the first three years. Mr. Farney asks if annual maintenance is included in the cost on the request, and Ms. Brauer stated that annual maintenance is included in that cost for the first three years, and it also includes the cost of supplies for the first year. Mr. Farney asked if the pipettes are proprietary to which Coroner Brauer said they are not and they could find a cheaper alternative. Mr. Farney asked if the Coroner has spoken with any other departments about how the device could benefit them, and she has not done that yet—only other coroners.

Chair Locke clarifies that while there would be a cost associated with supplies to utilize this device, there's also a cost to send samples out to a third-party lab—she asked Coroner Brauer how those compare. Ms. Brauer said after the cost of the device, each test will cost \$40-\$50 to do one test and about \$25 to do two tests at a time. To send samples to their third-party lab currently, the cost per test is \$380 and she just got the price increase for the next two years. She also adds that they do toxicology testing for every autopsy. Chair Locke asked if this toxicology test using the new device would be admissible for court purposes or to benefit the State's Attorney's Office. Coroner Brauer said she and State's Attorney Rietz have discussed that and they would do it on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Stohr asked what is being tested and what the device is and does. Ms. Coroner stated that they would do what they do currently—collect blood, urine, and vitreous, if they have it. They typically have to send two tubes of blood to the lab, which is about all they can collect, and this device would not require as much.

Mr. Peugh stated the device would save the Coroner's Office money, and theoretically she could also charge outside counties for testing, so future supplies could potentially be charged for to help cover the costs of testing in the future. Coroner Brauer agreed and stated that when they can do two tests at a time, that would also help to reduce the cost.

Mr. Esry asked if Ms. Brauer knows how much her office spends on testing in a year or how many tests they do on average. Ms. Brauer said the current budget for testing is \$65,000. In 2023 they did 250 toxicology tests, 196 in 2024, and so far this year they have done 75. She also added that depending on additional testing that needs to be added, the cost per test can increase drastically—one additional test costing about \$700 in addition to the standard fee. This isn't very common, but it does happen. Coroner Brauer said the biggest thing is that this device can get them results in 30 minutes. Mr. Farney said his quick math shows the device pays for itself in one to two years, getting the results in 30 minutes will help all parties involved in the process.

MOTION by Mr. Stohr to recommend County Board approval of the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Coroner's Office and Randox Evidence Multistat Analyzer; seconded by Ms. Rodriguez. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

C. Champaign-Urbana Public Health Department

Chair Locke introduced Joe Trotter, Harm Reduction Program Coordinator at CUPHD, and asked him to review his request. Three items are included in this request: 1. 12-months of supplies, whereas their first request was primarily for syringes, this request will include all other supplies that are used to reduce the spread of disease and other harms. 2. Sharps disposal—they don't have a great option right now for clients to drop off and dispose of used supplies. They're requesting funding for a sharps disposal kiosk that would be like a heavy-duty postal mailbox that would allow people to dispose of sharps. There's no technology, it's all mechanical; Clients can drive up, use the kiosk for disposal, and CUPHD would service emptying the kiosk. 3. Is a piece of equipment that is very popular in the harm reduction community. It's a vending machine that would replace CUPHD's current storage box outside of their building that is available for clients during nights and weekends. The current box is rusty, old, and is not able to be secured to the ground. This new machine would be bolted into the ground, would hold a variety of products, and would allow them to have better tracking of supplies collected this way and by whom. The program is anonymous so it would not be high detailed information, but basic demographic information and where they are from would be beneficial.

Ms. Rodriguez asked if there's a way to connect site-specific uses emptying off at a sharp site like this or would that be contained by the person. Mr. Trotter said the disposal kiosk does not collect any type of data. They do still distribute sharps containers to their clients, and they return them or CUPHD picks them up, so they get a little data that way, but this would be more like a drop box.

Mr. Farney clarifies that the current process is that during business hours, clients go into CUPHD and talk to a person, which Mr. Trotter confirmed. Mr. Farney asked if the vending machine would only be available outside of business hours so that clients are still going in and speaking to someone during business hours. Mr. Trotter agreed and said that is best practice and will be the model.

Mr. Peugh asked where the location of the vending machine would be. Mr. Trotter stated the one they selected is rated for outdoor use, would be bolted to the ground, and would be essentially where the old box is on their property now. There are security cameras and lights, and they are also looking to building out weather protection. They are still planning this, but are considering the transition, security, lighting, and privacy.

Mr. Peugh asked if CUPHD was receiving grant funding previously for harm reduction supplies. Mr. Trotter stated that they did receives some funding, and because it was state and not federal dollars, they used it primarily to purchase syringes—there are restrictions on federal dollars being spend on syringes. Mr. Peugh suggested that they continue to apply for grant funding for supplies and syringes, which Mr. Trotter said they will do.

Mr. Sexton asked about the security and how the machine would be used. Mr. Trotter said this is very important because they don't want anyone to empty the machine. The vending machine would give CUPHD more control over how much the client can take, how often they can come back, and it would also help them to analyze the data and prepare when they see a client consistently returns for supplies.

Members discussed possible locations and areas not to place the box.

MOTION by Ms. Rodriguez to recommend County Board approval of an Agreement with CUPHD for the purchase of harm reduction equipment and supplies; seconded by Mr. Sexton. Upon vote, the **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

D. Next steps

Chair Locke explained that upcoming requests are coming from local fire protection districts and first responders, helping to get the money further out into the community using the GIS Dashboard data they collected.

VIII. Other Business

A. Date of next meeting

Members will plan to meet on June 16th.

IX. IX.Chair's Report

Chair Locke thanks Mr. Stohr for his service on this task force, and Mr. Stohr said it's been an honor, and he wishes them well.

X. X. Adjournment

Chair Locke adjourned the meeting at 7:06 p.m.