

DRUG-FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION

MEETING MINUTES

01-14-2025

INTENDED OUTCOMES OF MEETING:

Share status of community connections/meetings, upcoming events and build knowledge/capability.

AGENDA ITEMS:

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS: D-FAC Website: <https://www.drugfreeac.org>

The meeting of the DRUG-FREE ASHLEY COUNTY COALITION was called to order at 4:15 p.m. on January 14, 2025, at UAM-CTC in person and on ZOOM by Eric Shoffner, Chair 2024/2025. Technical difficulties delayed the start of the meeting.

IN PERSON		ZOOM
DeVonda Brown	Dennis Maxwell	MSgt Josh Adams
Officer Robert Black	Mike Neal	Tempest Alexander
Janie Carter	Chief Johnny Oliver	Alexis Anderson
Sherri Hendrix	McKenzi Reynolds	Vivian Guimbellot
Harry Hillier	Michael Reynolds	Katie Hernandez
Jennifer Johnson	Arlyn Richards	Rick Matheny
Rayce Johnson	Lisa Riels	Sharron Mims
Ryker Johnson	Eric Shoffner	Lisa Thureau (Strategies for Youth, Cambridge, MA)
Officer Brandon Kelley	Tracy Streeter	
	Elizabeth White	

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Noting a correction needed to add Baker Coulter for his cash donation to the Coalition, minutes from the December 10, 2024, meeting were approved as corrected with Tracy Streeter initiating the motion and Dennis Maxwell following with a second. The motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/INTRODUCTIONS: First time attendees in person were introduced. Michael Reynolds, McKenzie Reynolds dad, accompanied her. DeVonda Brown is a recruiter for CASA (an organization that supports and advocates for youth in foster care). She had previously attended on Zoom.

NEW MEMBERS: There were no new members since the December meeting.



UPCOMING EVENTS:

JANUARY 28, 2025

The second annual D-FAC Youth Summit will be held at the Hamburg First Baptist Church ROC Activities Building. Coordinators are planning the event based on requests from the students and with follow-up from Robert Holt, the Youth Consultant who has been working with the Coalition over the past two years.

Coordinators are working with the student youth groups on the Johnny's Ambassador project for peer-led presentations about the dangers of today's marijuana. More information will be shared as the project develops.

DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS:

Vice Chair & Project Director Mike Neal gave an overview of by-law changes being discussed by the D-FAC officers. The exact wording of the changes will be sent to the members at least two weeks prior to the February meeting. The changes are in regards to changing the levels of members to only two: "Active" and "Supporting" by combining some of the description of the existing level of "Extended" and incorporating that into the "Supporting" level. Another projected change is to combine the positions of Secretary and Treasurer into one position and rather than being an elected position, it would be one appointed by the Executive Committee. Clarification of the makeup of the Executive Committee and the voting rights of those members will be addressed. Voting on the by-laws will be done at the February meeting by members who are eligible to vote. Members who have attended at least three meetings are eligible to vote one time.

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Program presenters are needed for 2025! Please let Mike and your Sector Leaders know if you are feeling like it is your turn to express why your sector is important to the work of the D-FAC Coalition!

COALITION SECTOR	REPRESENTATIVE-LEADER	PRESENTATION-PROGRAM
Youth	McKenzi Reynolds	
Parents	Mandy Morris	
Law Enforcement	HPD Chief Johnny Oliver	January 2025 Chief Oliver/Officer Kelley
Education	Tracy Streeeter	
Businesses	Kristi Stocker	
Media	Dennis Maxwell	
Youth-Serving Organizations	(To be filled)	
Faith-Based Organizations	Ronnie Donaldson	
Civic & Volunteer Groups	Sherri Maxwell Hendrix	
Healthcare Professionals	Dr. Barron Griffin	
State, local & tribal agencies	Sharron Mims	
Treatment	Yolanda Johnson-Martin	

PROGRAM: Hamburg Police Chief Johnny Oliver addressed the members and stated that Ashley County does have bad drug problems. He said we know that Fentanyl is deadly and now there is one "out there" that is even worse. He said that the Coalition is needed and that it does take all of us (the village) to keep our kids and citizens safe. He stressed that enforcing the law is the primary role of law enforcement but that they also need to be compassionate and that we need to start educating our children at a younger age than ever before. Chief Oliver said that the School Resource Officers (SRO's) are important in educating, enforcing, and building healthy relationships with our youth.

He introduced Officer Brandon Kelley who made an excellent presentation. Officer Kelley said that vapes are the number one problem in the schools and that vapes are being confiscated that contain THC, but that even vaping nicotine in high concentrations can cause seizures. His PowerPoint presentation is attached to the minutes. He answered questions and gave statistics and examples of why we should be concerned and continue to work together to prevent drug and alcohol use among our youth. He stated that he is the person who teaches the Drug-Free curriculum developed through the efforts of the Coalition to eighth graders in Hamburg and that he feels it is very good information. Lisa Riels commented that the SRO's in both Hamburg and Crossett have been great to work with us.

The Juvenile Drug Court Coordinator, Vivian Guimbellot made two comments in the Chat Box:

1. "THC vapes are out of control. We have 12 kids with drug court and other programs that are addicted to those THC vapes.
2. They have websites you can order vapes from and have them mailed to your home with no verification of age needed."

Chairman Eric Shoffner commented that hallucinogens are now life-threatening. The concentrations that were available in earlier years have totally changed.

Janie Carter commented on the work done by Arlyn Richards in keeping the website interesting and informative. She noted that Arlyn has recently done some editing and rearranging of categories and information. She encouraged members to stay informed regularly with what is being posted.

In Kind Contributions: Coalition members were reminded to report in-kind service hours and donations to Janie Carter, Interim Treasurer.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at UAM College of Technology-Crossett

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m. and minutes were submitted by Janie Carter.