



Measure #: 2024-043

TOWN COUNCIL MEASURE SUBMITTAL

Date: 11/27/2024

Submitted By: Town Manager

Telephone #: 508-699-0100

MEASURE DESCRIPTION:

Allocation of \$23,000.00 of the Opioid Settlement Funds for the INTERFACE Referral Contract with William James College

Signed: Michael D. Borg

Digitally signed by Michael D. Borg
DN: cn=Michael D. Borg, o=Town of North Attleborough,
c=US, ou=Town Manager, email=mborg@nattleboro.com
Reason: I am the author of this document
Location: your signing location here
Date: 2023.11.22 09:37:54 -0500
Print PDF, Editor Version: 11.0.1

PURPOSE AND JUSTIFICATION:

This measure seeks to have the Town Council approved the use of \$23,000.00 of the Opioid Settlement Funds to secure the services for a one year contract with INTERFACE Referral Service provided by William James College. This is a joint effort between the Town and School Department and would provide coverage for all residents of North Attleborough.

INTERFACE Referral Service is an Initiative of William James College (WJC). The primary goal of INTERFACE Referral Service is to promote and facilitate access to outpatient mental health services for individuals within subscribing towns and cities who are permanent residents of such town or city and/or who are full-time students in the public school system of such town or city (the foregoing individuals, collectively, "Eligible Individuals.")

The opioid crisis has significantly impacted communities across the nation, including North Attleborough. The settlement funds provide an opportunity to address this crisis holistically, recognizing the intrinsic link between opioid abuse and mental health issues.

Research consistently shows a strong correlation between mental health disorders and substance abuse, including opioid addiction. Individuals struggling with mental health issues are more susceptible to opioid misuse as a form of self-medication. Therefore, addressing mental health is a proactive step in tackling the opioid crisis.

PREVENTITIVE: The William James Interface Referral Service can serve as a preventative measure. By providing early intervention and mental health support, we can potentially reduce the likelihood of individuals turning to opioids as a coping mechanism for untreated mental health issues.

COMPREHENSIVE: Many individuals battling opioid addiction also face mental health challenges. The referral service offers a comprehensive approach, ensuring that these individuals receive not only addiction treatment but also care for underlying or co-occurring mental health conditions.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

ATTACHMENTS:

REFER TO SUB-COMMITTEE: Finance

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PURPOSE AND JUSTIFICATION CONTINUED:

RESILIENCE: Investing in mental health services strengthens community resilience. A community better equipped to handle mental health issues is more prepared to combat and recover from the opioid crisis, creating a healthier environment for all residents.

Fulfilling the Intent of the Settlement: The use of opioid settlement funds for this purpose aligns with the intent behind these funds – to remediate the harm caused by the opioid epidemic. Enhancing mental health services directly addresses one of the root causes and consequences of this crisis.

During the first term of this collaboration, INTERFACE will establish a dedicated webpage for North Attleborough on their current website. This page will be overseen by our appointed liaison. It will feature tailored information for the residents of North Attleborough and the public school students, providing detailed guides on how to navigate mental health services. Additionally, it will include links to local resources aimed at facilitating access to mental health and wellness services in the area.

Therefore, I respectfully request that \$23,000.00 of the Opioid Settlement Funds be allocated to the INTERFACE Referral Contract with William James.