

Appendix 2

1st Recovery Residence Public Meeting **June 26, 2013** **Tallahassee – 10am – 1pm**

Welcome/Introduction – Rob Siedlecki

- Mission/plan – submit by October 1 to Governor

Upcoming Meetings

- July 10 – Delray/Palm Beach County – Drug Abuse Foundation
- August 5th – Tallahassee

Phone

Rachael Merlan – Palm Beach Legislation
Mike Aldach – ARC – Sober House
Lawrence Leeds/Priscilla Richards – Plantation
Neara Sangar

Strategy – Hayden Mathieson

- Public Meetings instead of Workgroups
- Page on website for public comment.
- Recovery Residence instead of Sober House
- Will expand focus to all substances instead of just alcohol

Public Comment

- **John Lehman** – Florida Association of Recovery Residences (Affiliate of National Association of Recovery Residences [NARR])
 - o 13 certified members / 25 being considered / 40 more interested
 - o Assure that residence is a safe and nurturing environment.
 - o City of Delray has done much to accommodate recovery residences.
 - o Mark Woods will be at July 9 working lunch – zoning inspector
 - o FARR website has the definition of a recovery residence and standards. *(Hayden to post on website.)*
- **Mark Fontaine** – Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association (FADAA)
 - o How to divide difference with people supporting each other and the commercial aspect.
 - o “Managed” – some sense that the resident is drug and alcohol free? Define as it is not clear in its current context in proviso.
 - o Licensure – anyone doing treatment has to be licensed – where’s the fine line between licensed and recovery piece? Is the housing part licensed – if so doesn’t that cover that component/continuum of care?
 - o Ethical business practices
 - o Registry vs. licensure
 - o Data critical
 - o Look at accreditation and certification.
- **Joe McCann** – Ballard Partners, representing Delray Beach
 - o The definition of a Sober House is the concern. What it is and isn’t.
 - o Drug testing?
 - o Need to separate out the true houses versus the entities doing “business” – collecting insurance, etc.

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- **Terrill Pyburn** – City Attorney for Delray Beach
 - o Want to end the abuses of the residents for those not running within the law.
 - o Want accountability
 - o Needs to be a standard – background checks, penalties, life-safety inspections
 - o Have been deaths due to overdose, people sent to hotels instead of the hospital.
- **Aimee Diaz Lyon – Metz, Husband and Daughton, P.A.**
 - o Want to be a source of information.
 - o Representing The Watershed Treatment Programs
- **Beth Ann – The Watershed Treatment Programs**
 - o Safe productive environment
- **Lawrence Leeds – Director of Planning, Zoning and Economic Development, Plantation, FL**
 - o Cities are responsible for 1,000 foot spacing requirement.
 - o Concern – do state agencies have the resources? Are they in the position to enforce regulation
 - o “Management” is key
 - o Problems with outside visitors visiting residents of recovery residents – cause problems when they go to visit
 - o There are issues with parking
 - o Is it the intent of the law to preempt the local zoning laws?
 - o Zoning requirements similar to ALF’s
- **Jeffrey Lynn – Delray Beach**
 - o Owner/operator of recovery residence
 - o Stigma/fear – protected class – cannot continue to discriminate
 - o DCF is not adequately funded to regulate at this level
 - o Sober houses are being advertised as the entry point for recovery and it is actually the exit point.
- **Rachael Merlan – Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation**
 - o Acupuncture, urine testing, etc being done in some homes
- **Michael Aldach – ARC – Recovery Residence Owner/operator**
 - o Caregiving vs. legislation
 - o Peer driven certification and legislation is needed (licensure is needed)
 - o 58 standards – American Association of Adult Communities
 - o Need licensure and association that Halfway house owners can join
 - o Addressed reasons why houses have a high failure rate – need basic needs met. Money does not follow the client. They need more than housing.
 - o Legislation as well as peer input is needed.
- **George Jan – resident of Delray Beach / Recovery Residence owner/operator**
 - o Has run a recovery residence for 20 years.
 - o Has worked with Delray Beach using census to define single family home (3 unrelated individuals)
 - o Location – is it a business or a residence? How does that work with Americans with Disabilities Act and the Fair Housing Act?
 - o Business Model – how to run a recovery residence – he offers a 1 year lease – runs as an apartment
 - o Structure and operation – do drug testing (\$3.95 – over the counter is what he pays) – this is not a medical procedure
 - o How will we manage these houses? Either state licensure or peer association.
 - o Helped found South County Recovery Residence Association 15 years ago – worked with city, police, etc. Through voluntary basis nothing will happen.

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- Everyone in city of Delray that rents has to have a rental sticker on their car. (clarification by Terrill Pyburn)

Follow-up comments:

- **Jeffrey Lynn** - Needs to be a functional way to assure that person has gone through proper treatment before entering sober house.
- **Mark Fontaine** – good point – need to regulate enticement/advertisement
 - In terms of licensure – is the “requiring you to live here” licensed? How many licenses have been revoked because they are not adhering to what they should do? Are there different areas of the state where this occurs most often
 - Hayden – please propose question to Chris Weller via e-mail – today is an information gathering meeting.
 - Mark to propose.
- **Jim Henry** – other states we could look at as a model?
 - Rob – looking at data – will submit information to the group
 - John Lehman – there are four states to my knowledge
- Sober house information will be posted on the main SAMH page – there will be a link.

Ended at 11:10am.

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**Recovery Residence Public Meeting
2nd Public Meeting – West Palm Beach
Wednesday, July 10, 2013
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

Welcome/Introduction – Rob Siedlecki, Assistant Secretary for Substance Abuse and Mental Health

- Explanation of proviso language and handout given to public
- Upcoming Public Meeting: Wednesday, August 5, 2013 in Tallahassee, FL

Public Comment

Richard Radcliffe, Executive Director, Palm County League of Cities

- Delray Beach is the epicenter for sober houses
- Problem is the people on the fringes/outskirts
- There was a task force set up to deal with situation but it is incredibly difficult
- Represents 38 municipalities
- Similar to pill mill epidemic
- Lack of regulation is a problem
- State needs to step up and regulate
- All counties are effected
- Some form of licensure or registration is needed
- Everyone agrees that the State needs to step up
- He has been dealing with this issue for several years
- Two people have died this year in sober houses
- People need our protection

Jaye Epstein, Planning and Development Services Director, Hollywood, FL

- City is a victim of social service type agencies
- This is ADA and the same as all of us living together to collect stamps
- Small facilities are slum lords
- People are on the street harming neighborhoods
- We can separate group homes, so we should regulate – they are a poison if not regulated

Pamala Ryan, City Attorney, City of Riviera Beach

- Ensure survival of legitimate rehab facilities and they self regulate themselves
- Problem is with sober houses that aren't regulated – can't track them
- Some come under the landlord/tenant ordinances – others don't come under these ordinances because they say they don't have to
- There are noise issues, fights, petty crimes, etc
- There is a correlation between the type of people that live there and the crimes and other issues
- Some mechanism is needed to control the noise
- Police are not the best use of resources to respond to this
- We want some type of regulation – better served if state provided uniform regulation
- Need to know how the sober houses operate, the number of sober houses – we (the city) want to know

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Mike Aulbach, Project SOAR

- He is a housing provider in Fort Lauderdale – 80 units for men
- Unless sober houses are regulated, there will be a lack of clean, affordable housing, mismanagement of money and medication
- Tried self regulation in Broward County but unless the regulation is mandated, everything else won't work – need mandated regulation
- Hospitals will refer to anyone
- Need to manage medications
- Not much disposable money for these people after they pay their bills
- State needs to let licensed treatment providers know they have to use accredited/registered sober house provider

Terrill Pyburn, Assistant City Attorney, City of Delray Beach

- Mr. Aulbach's ideas are excellent
- Self accreditation is a good idea but concerned that if it's not mandated then people won't adhere
- Want abuses in sober houses to end
- The City of Delray Beach wants legislation and wants the Department of Children and Families to support it

Rose Mascitelli, Parent

- Glad to see that the Department of Children and Families is wanting to check into licensing
- She has been in the recovery community for years
- She has seen a lot of abuses – personally known someone that has suffered abuses in a sober house
- Hospitals refer people to sober houses
- People are strong arming residents of sober houses
- There is no security in sober houses
- Better regulation is needed

George Jahn, Director, Sober Living in Delray (member of Florida Association of Recovery Residences-FARR)

- Owner/operator of 200 bed sober house, member of drug task force, resident of Delray Beach, and mathematics professor
- There is a need for regulation
- Too many people without correct inclinations, funding that are getting in the sober house field
- Have long worked with the City of Delray Beach and FARR
- There is a financial motivation to get into and out of this field
- Delray Beach is far ahead of the curve in regulating or trying to regulate sober houses
- He has been told that his sober house facility has less calls about residents or the facility than other facilities
- People have to have somewhere to go to get help and get their lives together – and people do get their lives together
- There are other facilities that do all the bad things that everyone talks about
- Big government isn't the answer – FARR is the solution
- It's private industries working together to solve the problem – it's been done in California

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Linda Porter, MSW, RCSWI, Owner, Legacy House

- Own/operate a sober house
- She is very involved and interested in this issue
- She has done research on CARR in Connecticut
- Her sober house has been successful, safe, and healthy
- Neighbors are okay with her sober house
- She has asked people to leave her sober house
- Small community or a task force should regulate sober houses
- Big government doesn't need to get involved

James Dubois, Mayor, Town of Lake Park

- Issue of sober houses came to his attention about 10 years ago
- He is the mayor of Lake Park, FL
- The city attempted to get state legislation passed several years ago
- The expansion of the sober house industry has increased
- There are unregulated providers
- The ability to regulate sober houses at the municipal level isn't possible – no uniformity
- There is no way to provide a business model in the municipality regulatory environment
- Not sure how he feels about self regulation
- Lowest common denominator is how you protect the public, the general public, and patients
- How do you provide general level of service

Todd Bonlarron, Legislative Affairs Director, Palm Beach County

- Similar to pill mill epidemic
- He hears from his municipalities that they have sober houses
- He thinks that there are hundreds and hundreds, if not thousands of sober houses – playing into a potential crisis
- There needs to be background checks
- Need registration database, fire safety codes – need database to know who and where these sober houses are
- There are activities going on in sober houses that need medical standards, treatment services are being provided to clients in sober houses
- Partnership with pill mill regulation could be duplicated here – same thing with the massage parlors
- Delray Beach is catalyst for information
- Municipalities are very restricted on what they are allowed to do
- One registry, one oversight

Jennifer Gomez, Principal Planner, City of Pompano Beach

- Pompano Beach supports state legislation
- Received more complaints about sober houses than any other issue
- Issues with trash, substandard maintenance, parking etc
- Pompano Beach tried to pass regulations at the city level similar to group homes – however, gave up after outside counsel said the city couldn't pass the regulations

Ronald Boehl, President, Cresthaven Civic Association

- We have been dealing with the problem of people keeping up housing, parking, etc
- No one knows how many sober houses there are – we need to know how many there are
- Needs to be licensed and regulated

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- Highlands area has a lot of sober houses
- Tried to get code enforcement officers to help with the situation but those individuals no longer work in code enforcement
- He could take you to areas where you wouldn't get out of your car

David Lipman, Certified Recovery Coach, RedX Services, Inc.

- On Delray Beach Drug Task Force
- Recovery coach – in recovery for 25 years
- What do you do with clients in sober houses that do get drunk and cause problems because there is a treatment facility around to help?
- What do you do with people who come out of regulated facilities?
- Member of FARR
- Believes in privatization and self regulation
- Solution – West Care in Clearwater which is funded by the government and private funding, provide non-medical detoxification and 3 month outpatient

D. Ada Hall, Legal Aide/Case Management

- A floater, legal aide
- Trying to use police, state and federal government to put a bandaid on the problem
- Need proper insurance to keep people in facilities for long enough time so that they are able to qualify for halfway house
- Need to look deeper than regulation – have a moral obligation to give back
- These people are no different than people suffering from cancer, heart disease
- People need continuity of family
- Need to be regulated by the Joint Commission and the Department of Children and Families
- Need to give these people more detoxification, days in treatment to help them before returning them to society

Andrew Burki, CEO, Life of Purpose

- Social Worker
- Currently in recovery
- Concerning because people don't make the distinction between the types of sober houses – the good and the bad
- The good sober houses keep people alive
- There are sober houses that he doesn't allow his clients to go to
- When people do well they are an asset to the community
- What is the alternative? (Wants people in the community to consider this question)
- This is a nationwide problem – we either need to help these people out or else people are going to continue to be picked up by police, keep going in and out of the system
- Government should support to mandate referrals to ethical places – the government doesn't have the resources to regulate
- State needs to get behind FARR

Patrick Noble, Deputy Sheriff, Broward County Sheriff's Office

- He would like an answer to the following question: What tool, if not legislation, do advocates of self regulation plan on using to regulate?

Alan Tobason, Owner/Operator, Purpose House Transitional

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- Director and owner of sober house
- Advocate of sober houses
- Has 5 sober houses
- Says that he houses are great neighbors
- Judges refers to his sober houses

Michelle Michon, Assistant, Legacy House

- An assistant at Legacy House (a sober house)
- She is also a resident at Legacy House – she is a recovering heroin addict and alcoholic
- Very structured house with curfew, drug testing, etc.
- Legacy House works with courts and jails
- Grateful for recovery
- Without a structured environment, she wouldn't be able to maintain recovery
- Believes in regulation – medications need to be regulated and there needs to be a separation of dually diagnosed houses
- The belief that all sober houses are bad is the greatest fallacy
- There is such a great need for sober houses – when people transition out of treatment, they need these type of places

Alton Taylor, CEO, Drug Abuse Foundation of Palm Beach County

- Should make sober houses a more consistent player in the recovery environment
- The only answer is government regulation
- Self regulation is important but state regulation is also needed – self regulation isn't the answer
- Some people got involved to make a quick buck and people should be run out of town – need regulation to do that
- We need to protect the vulnerable people
- Too many Floridians subject to abuse and they don't have their government protecting them
- Had a young woman dropped off in the parking lot of his facility by a sober house and his medical staff had to revive her in the parking lot
- If we cared about this population, then we would regulate sober houses
- The government has to be involved, self regulation isn't enough

George Jahn, Director, Sober Living in Delray (member of Florida Association of Recovery Residences-FARR)

- In response to Sheriff Deputy Patrick Nobles' question:
- Red light tickets don't stop people from running red lights again – it's the fines and revoking of licenses
- You have to bleed the bad sober house operator financially and on referrals and this will shut them down
- No regulation is poor regulation
- Good, honest sober house operators will adhere to self regulation
- The problem with sober houses has happened in the last 5-8 years – treatment is too expensive
- He uses an over-the-counter drug test panel that costs \$5.00
- He has heard that there are some sober houses charging \$4,000-\$6,000 per drug test and some sober houses are testing 3-5 times a week at this price
- Need the Office of Insurance Regulation and the Department of Health to get involved

Marianne Miccoli, Democratic Committee Person

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- Claims a lot people are speaking out against sober houses because of fear of retaliation from sober house owners
- She has 11 sober houses in her area
- She presented drug test results that floated onto her neighbor's property
- Need to stop sober houses from popping up in neighborhoods
- She said that outside one of the sober houses in her area there was a guy doing a drug deal
- Need regulation

Lela C., Pompano Beach Resident

- Showed pictures of sober house and the conditions outside of the building
- Claimed that there is a sober house in her neighborhood and that the house next door has children living in it
- Residents in the sober house wander around the neighborhood and beg for money from neighbors
- She had one of the residents of the sober house approach her at 1:00 AM while she sat in her car in her driveway
- Residents of the sober house are picked up by other individuals and they go and have sex in the car while parked in other neighbors driveways
- She says that there are nine (9) mattresses outside the sober house in the picture shown to the audience
- The sober house has rats with rabies
- We need more than just a buffer – need a distance limit
- We all want people to get better but this isn't good for the people living next to sober houses
- We want to know how many sober houses there are
- Something needs to be done – the State needs to help
- People are moving out of their neighborhoods because of the sober houses

Ryan Collison, President, Infinity Behavior

- He was in a sober house and found it to be very helpful
- There are bad sober houses
- Wants to know how the State is going to regulate with two (2) people in the Department of Children and Families Regional Substance Abuse and Mental Health Office

Joanne Naumann, Neighborhood Improvement Division Manager, City of Ormond Beach (via phone)

- Most of the local regulations that come into play are because most are bad sober house operators
- Living next to a sober house causes stress for the neighbors
- These type of facilities need regulation at the state and local level with distance and zoning requirements

Fausto B. Gomez, Lobbyist (via phone)

- Been involved with the sober house issue since George Sheldon was Secretary of the Department of Children and Families – the Department did a census under former Secretary Sheldon
- The Department's report was vastly incomplete
- There needs to be rights of individuals and individuals in the community
- The Department of Children and Families needs to work with the Legislature to craft a solution
- He will be in Tallahassee this legislative session pushing legislation

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John Lehman, President, Florida Association of Recovery Residences (FARR)

- Wanted to address Lela C. that previously spoke to the audience
- This is the reason why FARR exists – to address those issues of the bad sober houses
- The house in the picture is not one of the good sober houses
- He explained the FARR accreditation process
- FARR's website is www.farronline.org
- Wanted the audience to be aware that some sober houses will claim to be accredited by FARR when they are not

Andrew Burki, CEO, Life of Purpose

- Also addressed Lela C. that previously spoke to the audience
- We hate those sober houses like the one that was in the picture she showed
- We're all trying to address the same problem
- The reality is that the Department of Children and Families gets their funding cut every year
- Self regulation is needed

Suzanne Spencer, Chair, Drug Task Force of Delray Beach

- This is a supply/demand problem – the demand is within our control and we can control this
- The people attending the meeting in person are probably overwhelmed
- We have the power to change this by what we teach our children
- The solution is a combination of self regulation and government regulation
- It's not okay to just drop this issue in the hands of someone else, the community needs to help as well
- We need to treat the whole person in treatment – the problem has to be treated on all levels and not one agency can solve this problem
- Other communities need to get together to help solve the problem
- If there hasn't been a perfect solution, where are the solutions that have worked?

Lela C., Pompano Beach Resident

- Wants the following to be considered to be put into legislation:
 - o Allow cities to pass zoning ordinances relating to unmarried, unrelated individuals living in a house (single family neighborhood)
 - o Distance limitations

Closing Remarks – Rob Siedlecki, Assistant Secretary for Substance Abuse and Mental Health

- Thanked everyone for attending and participating
- Staff will type up meeting minutes
- The next meeting will be on August 5th in Tallahassee, Florida and individuals can participate via video teleconference (VTC)

Meeting concluded at 12:30 PM

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**Recovery Residence Public Meeting
3rd Public Meeting – Tallahassee
Monday, August 5, 2013
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

Welcome/Introduction – Rob Siedlecki, Assistant Secretary for Substance Abuse and Mental Health

- Introduction and explanation of proviso language
- Summary of prior public meetings and review of lessons learned
- This is the final public meeting

Public Comment

Felicia Scott, Program Coordinator, City of Riviera Beach, Civil Drug Court

- Concerned that sober houses are not regulated
- Recommends revising language in Chapter 397, F.S., relating to “professionals” to regulate sober houses
- There needs to be inspections, some type of license, peer support groups, special registration to follow up with sober houses, no minimum length of stay
- When the court send someone to sober house under court order, there’s no accountability, reinforcement
- Peers that are running these sober houses have no knowledge, experience running these sober houses

Aimee Diaz Lyon, Metz, Husband & Daughton

- Represents Watershed Treatment Programs
- Thanked the Department for holding meetings
- Wants to be a resource on this issue

Joe McCann, Ballard Partners, Delray Beach

- His position is known
- Thanked the Department for holding public meetings
- Will defer to Terrill Pyburn for further comments on the matter

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Susan Harbin, Legislative Advocate, Florida Association of Counties

- Attending meeting to gather information
- Talked to counties and found out that most counties are unaware of sober houses until there is a problem

Casey Cook, Legislative Advocate, Florida League of Cities

- Continues to hear from member cities in Southeast Florida, Northeast Florida and Tampa – this is a statewide issue
- Don't know how many sober houses there are in the state
- Not interested in going after the good sober houses, interested in going after the bad ones – the bad ones keep reopening under different names for the purpose of making money
- Recommends registry at state level or allow counties to handle the sober houses at the local level

Mark Fontaine, Executive Director, Florida Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association (FADAA)

- Thanked the Department for holding the public meetings
- It's a complex issue
- Need to protect consumers
- Living in recovery may not mean they're a consumer (consumers are generally thought of as people living in a residence in recovery)
- There's a lack of clarity in the definition of sober houses – type and kind of program need to be defined
- Individuals in recovery are vulnerable
- Commercial recovery residences need to be registered
- Voluntary accreditation
- Licensed treatment providers, drug courts, and other referral sources need to be encouraged to refer to only accredited recovery residences
- DCF has authority to regulate prevention and treatment with exemption for religious organizations
- Treatment providers with existing housing should be covered under existing licensure
- Recovery residences that provide treatment need to be licensed as treatment providers
- Recovery residences are not a place to have counseling sessions, get medication – it's a place to live
- Local ordinances and police are mechanisms of control that are already in place – but the lack of authority to take action is an issue
- Proceed with caution when creating registry – there needs to be anonymity so as to protect the facilities
- DCF should investigate unethical business practices and take action
- Many owners/operators of recovery residences have had prior criminal justice involvement and are felons – if you do background screenings, you'll be putting a lot of people out of business
- Shouldn't use background screenings to prevent these people from providing services

Pam Booker, City of Port St. Lucie

- This is an issue in her jurisdiction
- City is currently handling issues of reasonable accommodation

Bernie Smith, Daytona Beach (via phone)

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- Legitimate sober houses seem to be functioning well – no code or police issues
- Daytona Beach is having issues with unlicensed sober houses
- There are about a dozen bad sober houses – police response and code enforcement issues (but there really aren't a large number of reports with these facilities)
- Unregulated sober houses tend to be in high crime areas – think they are contributing to high crime but do not have empirical evidence to prove it

Diane Clark, Operation PAR (via phone)

- Concurs with statements made by Mark Fontaine

Alan Stevens, CEO of Behavioral Health of the Palm Beaches (via phone)

- Switching to more traditional model
- There are unregulated sober houses popping up
- Riviera Beach called him to ask how to regulate their sober houses
- Had a death in Juno Beach (teen was being housed in hotel and drowned while swimming in the ocean)
- Florida model that is get a quick license for outpatient treatment isn't working – allowing sober houses to pop up and many people are getting sick
- Taxing burden on DCF to monitor – can't always monitor the housing situation
- Wants to help control the growth of sober houses

Richard Radcliffe, Palm Beach League of Cities (via phone)

- Dealing with this issue for more than 5 years
- Similar to pill mill situation
- This problem is exponential – municipalities keep calling each week about sober houses
- There is no way to see how many sober houses there are throughout the state
- Cities need to turn to the state
- Self-regulation in conjunction with state regulation
- When state got involved with the pill mill situation it worked
- People are dying

Jeffrey Lynne, Attorney, Weiner, Lynne & Thompson, P.A. (via phone)

- Represent 20 substance abuse treatment providers
- The state needs to make the decision to say “no, you can't open treatment center” or say “yes” and educate those individuals
- There are powerful civil rights laws on the books – treading carefully on slippery slope
- Sober houses are not the issue – no empirical evidence that sober houses cause higher crime, etc
- Very little policing of treatment providers
- Need to have the ability to review/revoke licenses for sober houses and treatment providers – similar to the role of the Board of Medicine in the Department of Health
- Sober houses are used by treatment providers like venus fly traps
- Many sober houses and treatment providers have urinalysis labs
- Problem is not sober houses or people in these facilities – this is consumer protection issue
- Controlling the money is the way to regulate sober houses
- For profit entities cause level of conflict
- Need to create a board to regulate sober houses and license, investigate, and audit these individuals
- Cut off the money and these people will go away

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John Lehman, President, Florida Association of Recovery Residences (FARR) (via phone)

- Thanked the Department
- Agreed with Mark Fontaine's comments, especially the need to define recovery residences
- We have to define what recovery residences are and are not
- FARR has fined recovery residences as existing in four different levels
 - o Level 1: Like Oxford House
 - o Level 2: Monitored, the "commercial recovery residence"
 - o Level 3: More structured, life skills, training, relapse counseling – not treatment
 - o Level 4: A treatment provider that offers a recovery residence. Must be open to the public, not a closed loop system (can't be restricted to clients in treatment provider's facility)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Fair Housing Act (FHA) often pit cities against recovery residences and residents
- There is a proliferation of sober houses popping up in Palm Beach
 - o Many are in it to make quick money
 - o One of the reasons why FARR came about
 - o Want to differentiate between the good and the bad
- FARR has 14 certified members and 21 in the process of becoming certified – expect that a majority of those 21 entities will pass and become certified
- Without state requiring treatment providers to refer to only accredited recovery residences, the problems will continue – will still have bad actors
- FARR needs DCF to stipulate that treatment providers refer to accredited recovery residences
- FARR doesn't have to be the only accrediting organization and accreditation should be voluntary

Terrill Pyburn, Assistant City Attorney, City of Delray Beach (via phone)

- Thanked the Department
- Agrees with all that has been said
- This is a complicated issue – no easy answer
- Combination of self-regulation and state licensure or registry
- Treatment providers should only refer to certified recovery residences – this will help to not create an additional burden on DCF
- DCF should work with the Attorney General's Office to investigate fraud and patient brokering issues
- A concern is that the well regulated cities will push the bad sober houses to other parts of the state to cities where there is less regulation

Linda McClarin, City of Boca Raton (via phone)

- Should use combination approach to regulation

Jeffrey Lynne, Attorney, Weiner, Lynne & Thompson, P.A. (via phone)

- There was a pill mill task force that was very successful - may be setting up something similar was be useful
- Need multidisciplinary task force with different players that understand what's going on
- Need licensure reinforcement

John Lehman, President, FARR (via phone)

- Comment on Jeffrey Lynne's statement

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- Problem is not with sober houses, it treatment providers – bad actors are taking control
- Support task force with creation in Attorney General's Office

Bob Welsh, Commissioner, City of South Miami (via phone)

- Police departments need to maintain logs of call to sober houses

Michelle Michon, Assistant, Legacy House (via phone)

- Assistant to Linda Porter (Legacy House)
- Greatful to DCF and FARR
- Waiting to be FARR accredited
- Anonymity of providers needs to be protected
- Smaller sober houses are not the problem – the smaller sober houses are better able to meet the unique needs of the residents
- When you come to a sober house you should have already gone through treatment
- Need regulation but not big government regulation

Donya Brit, Miami

- Retired sergeant from Miami Police Department
- Agree with self-accreditation
- It's important for sober houses to exist
- There are a lot of civil rights violations, including HIPAA and personal property
- Transitional housing are not facilities
- Wants to be a member of FARR
- No one has done a study, no empirical evidence
- Police have crime stats – could use this information to help determine how many sober there are
- Need to be aware of civil rights issues, HIPAA, and anonymity of residents

P. Hudson, Neighborhood Resident (via phone)

- Need some place to put these people
- There are more people in these houses than there are supposed to be
- People in recovery are put in with people still needing treatment
- People open sober houses and they don't care who they take in
- Letting all kinds of people co-mingle
- No one cares about the next generation
- Take them out of the hospital

Jeffrey Lynne, Attorney, Weiner, Lynne & Thompson, P.A. (via phone)

- Clinical directors don't have stringent qualifications for treatment services (treatment services are only counseling services)
- The lack regulation and enforcement by DCF is inviting abuse
- Raise standards for treatment providers
- Treatment field is an underground community/economy
- Need to reexamine 65D-30, F.A.C., Chapter 397, F.S., and authority of DCF
- Comprehensive approach, not just regulating sober houses

Mark Fontaine, Executive Director, FADAA

- This is really a regional problem that needs to be addressed

Appendix 2

- When get licensed for intensive outpatient treatment, do they have to declare the location(s) of residence(s)?

Hayden Mathieson, Interim Director of Substance Abuse and Mental Health, Department of Children and Families

- Will release a draft of the plan on the DCF website
- Public will have opportunity to make comments – please use track changes
- There are several outstanding issues
 - 1. The number of sober houses in the state – drawing conclusions without the assistance from outside parties
 - 2. Based on public comment, it should possible for local police department reports from sober house calls to be collected – Commenter recommended asking the League of Cities and Association of Counties to pull these reports and give them to the Department.
- Thanked everyone in attendance

Meeting Concluded at 11:30 AM