



Opioid Epidemic Response Advisory Council (OERAC)

Meeting Minutes for December 5, 2025

Meeting Location: Hybrid meeting using WebEx and in-person at Elmer L. Andersen Building - 2nd Floor, Room C2370, 540 Cedar Street, St. Paul MN 55101.

Members present: (Names in italics are non-voting OERAC members)

Remote: Dr. Heather Bell, Dr. Ashwin George, Curtis Jackson, Brock Reed, Kristi Schoen, Dr. Antony Stately

In person: Joe Clubb, Sarah Grosshuesch, Rep. Dave Baker, Rep. Robert Bierman, Jack Martin, Dave Matteson, Dr. Charles Reznikoff, *Deepa McGriff, Jolene Rebertus, Teresa Steinmetz*

Members not present: Senator Zaynab Mohamed, Judge Nicole Starr, Abdirahman Warsame

State Staff Members Present: Laura Farlow, Stacy Sjogren, Alicia Baker, Michaela Seiber

Call to order

Facilitator Stacy Sjogren and Chair Joe Clubb began the meeting at 10:00 am, reviewed the OERAC mission, the meeting ground rules and gave a guest welcome. The meeting agenda was confirmed, and a roll call followed. Quorum was secured. See voting log for details.

Business items

Minutes approval: Dave Baker moved to approve the minutes from the October 24, 2025 meeting. Seconded by Dave Matteson. Motion passed with roll call vote. See voting log for details.

Public Comment

OERAC Chair, Joe Clubb, welcomed public comment at 10:20AM.

- Meyer Belkin, owner of two recovery residences, spoke about the importance of safe and stable housing for individuals in recovery. He discussed recent sober living restrictions that have resulted in available beds remaining unfilled and emphasized the need for timely solutions.

- Sheila Grabosky spoke as a person living with chronic pain. She discussed the work of the Opioid Task Force and emphasized the importance of chronic pain representation on the OERAC Council and within grant funding priorities.
- Margie Pierce, representing *Keep Coming Home*, provided an update on the treatment industry following the implementation of new policies. She noted significant impacts on business practices and discussed how closures of sober living homes are affecting the treatment system. She emphasized the need to prioritize access to sober housing over workforce-related considerations.
- Sheila Grabosky later spoke again during the meeting on the importance of research into kratom prior to regulation, particularly regarding impacts on individuals living with chronic pain.

Quarterly Financial Status Report

Kate Mayer, the Budget Director for the Behavioral Health Administration at DHS presented the OERAC Quarterly Financial Update. Noted an expected one-time increase in the settlement funds for Fiscal Year 26.

- Member comments: Bierman, Grosshuesch, Baker
- There are available payment forecasts on the Attorney General's website.

Legislative Recommendations Discussion

The council reviewed legislative recommendations submitted in both the current year (2025) and prior years.

Discussion of Recommendations Submitted in 2025

- *Recommendation #1: Establish a statutory timeframe for background check review and written notice of the outcome to the applicant (within 90 days).*
 - Member comments: Clubb, Baker, Rebertus, Grosshuesch, Matteson
 - Council expressed support for this recommendation.
 - Member commented on need to align with current work, including the background study task force report. Fiscal resources for this recommendation are noted.
- *Recommendation #2: Require a set-aside granted by the commissioner to be valid for the individual across all affiliated agencies and positions requiring a background study.*
 - Member comments: Baker, Bierman
 - Members discussed need for clearer background language, specifying that this applies to individuals changing positions into aligned roles serving the same population.
- *Recommendation #3: Create statutes for Recovery Residences (Sober Homes) that contain consistent standards for both physical living conditions and in house support.*
 - Member comments: Clubb, Grosshuesch
 - DHS staff shared that there is work in progress to create a recovery residence certification linked to funding. Funding anticipated to take effect July 1, 2027.
- *Recommendation #4: Support the current legislation for collaborative care*
 - Member comments: Reznikoff, Clubb, George, McGriff

- Dr. Reznikoff provided an overview of legislation and noted that it is supported by many different organizations.
 - Suggestion by Dr. George for incorporation of complex care billing code.
- *Recommendation #5: Designate kratom 7-oh a Schedule I drug*
 - Member comments: Reznikoff, Reed, George, Baker, Martin
 - Background information was provided on Kratom and 7-oh
 - Board of Pharmacy is currently reviewing this issue.
 - Members raised concern that scheduling could limit research opportunities.
 - Potential legislation may be introduced this year.
 - Council noted that some people do find Kratom helpful for harm reduction and recovery.
 - Council agreed that this recommendation should focus on safety and need for research rather than criminalization.
- *Recommendation #6: Support the current legislative language: Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, prior authorization or step therapy shall not be required or utilized for any class of drugs that is approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for the treatment of opioid use disorder*
 - Member comments: Reznikoff, Bierman, Baker, Grosshuesch, Rebertus, George
 - Members noted this language would include injectable medications.
 - A suggestion was made to consider including treatment for chronic pain.
- *Recommendation #7: Request to establish a safer use facility in South Minneapolis*
 - Member comments: Stately, Martin, Club, Baker, Bierman, Grosshuesch, McGriff, Rebertus, Reznikoff
 - Members discussed the lack of legal protections for safer use sites.
 - Discussion highlighted that such sites improve safety of the people who use drugs and also the greater community.
 - Jeremy Drucker spoke on safe recovery sites.
 - Discussion on supporting research into the health impacts of encampments.
 - Council emphasized the need to have background before including this recommendation.

Votes on Recommendations Submitted in 2025

- Baker moved to remove Recommendation #7 *Request to establish a safer use facility in South Minneapolis*. Seconded by Schoen. Motion passed. See voting log for details.
- Clubb moved to remove Recommendation #3 *Create statutes for Recovery Residences (Sober Homes) that contain consistent standards for both physical living conditions and in house support*. Seconded by Grosshuesch. Motion passed. See voting log for details.
- Martin moved to remove Recommendation #5 *Designate kratom 7-oh a Schedule I drug*. Seconded by Grosshuesch. Motion failed. See voting log for details.
 - Members reiterated that criminalization does not reduce overdose deaths and may conflict with current legislation.
 - Council agreed kratom should remain in OERAC recommendations, with a focus on safety, education, and research rather than criminalization.
- Baker moved to have DHS staff modify the language of the five remaining recommendations submitted in 2025, as discussed by OERAC. Seconded by Reznikoff. Motion passed. See voting log for details.

Discussion of Recommendations Submitted in Previous Years

- Dave Baker suggested setting aside recommendations that request funding or appropriations. Council discusses importance of carrying relevant recommendations forward.
- Members discussed creating a prioritized list of recommendations, while other recommendations go into an appendix.
- *Recommendation #19: Recommending MOUD access prior to reentry, addressing a critical treatment gap for incarcerated individuals. Supporting the 1115 SUD re-entry demonstration waiver through application, implementation, and expansion. Recommending MOUD access to incarcerated individuals.*
 - Member comments: Bierman, Grosshuesch, Rebertus
 - State statute available for the demonstration and it is currently being piloted. Implementation and expansion could still be supported.
- *Recommendation #21: Authorizing Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to administer and dispense buprenorphine post-opioid overdose. Authorizing EMS to administer and dispense buprenorphine products after reversing an opioid overdose in the field. This standing order would allow EMS to dispense a three-day supply of buprenorphine without requiring a clinician visit.*
 - Member comments: Matteson, Grosshuesch
 - Members noted that legislation is not required, as this decision can be made by the Medical Director.

Votes on Recommendations Submitted in Previous Years

- Clubb moved for staff to update language, combine recommendations, remove duplications, and remove recommendations that have moved forward. Seconded by Grosshuesch. Motion passed. See voting log for details

Grantee Presentation: Twin Cities Recovery Project

Christopher Burks from Twin Cities Recovery Project gave a presentation on their OERAC grant contract for Peer Recovery Forensics Training.

Adjourn

OERAC Chair Joe Clubb adjourned the December 2025 meeting.

Next meeting: January 16th, 10AM – 3:30PM in St. Paul, MN.

Roll Call and Voting Log

December 5, 2025

P = in person R = remote participant A = absent Y = yes (approve)

Member	Attendance status	Minutes approval	Vote: Removal of #7	Vote: Removal of #3	Vote: Removal of #5	Vote: All remaining recs adjusted by staff to reflect Council conversation	Vote: Staff to update language, combine recommendations, remove duplications, and remove recommendations that have moved forward
Joe Clubb	P	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Sarah Grosshuesch	P	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
Rep. Dave Baker	P	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	-
Dr. Heather Bell	R	Y	-	-	N	-	-
Rep. Robert Bierman	P	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Dr. Ashwin George	R	Y	Y	Y	-		Y
Curtis Jackson	R	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Jack Martin	P	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dave Matteson	P	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Senator Zaynab Mohamed	A	--	-	-	-		-
Brock Reed	R	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Dr. Charlie Reznikoff	P	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Kristi Schoen	R	Y	Y	Y	N	y	Y
Judge Nicole Starr	A	--	-	-	-		
Dr. Antony Stately	R	---	-	-	-	--	--

Roll Call and Voting Log

December 5, 2025

Abdirahman Warsame	A	--	-	-	-	--	--
Deepa McGriff	P						
Jolene Rebertus	P						
Teresa Steinmetz	R						
Tally	voting members present= 16 absent= 3	Motion to approve: Baker Second: Matteson Motion Passed	Motion: Baker Second: Schoen Motion Passed	Motion: Clubb Second: Grosshuesch Motion Passed	Motion: Martin Second: Grosshuesch Motion Failed	Motion: Baker Second: Reznikoff Motion Passed	Motion: Clubb Second: Grosshuesch Motion Passed