

PUBLIC SAFETY COORDINATING COUNCIL

MINUTES

TUESDAY,
November 26nd, 2019

11:30

JUSTICE BUILDING -
JURY ASSEMBLY ROOM

MEETING CALLED BY	Eric Guyer
ATTENDEES	Josh Aldrich, Lee Ayers, Dave Carter, Joe Charter, Scott Clausen, Rick Dyer, Doug Engle, Amber Freitas, Eric Guyer, Stu Hansen, Barbara Johnson, Danny Jordan, Ben Lytle, Judge Mejia, Robert Mountain, Jennifer Mylenek, Mark Orndoff, Tanya Phillips, Jim Shames, Nate Sickler, Rita Sullivan, John Watson

- Eric Guyer opened the meeting at 11:30
- Opening Remarks: Eric Guyer welcomed everyone to the October PSCC meeting.

Agenda Topics

MINUTE ADOPTION –OCTOBER

ERIC GUYER, CHAIR

DISCUSSION	
No suggested revisions were identified for the October minutes, Rick Dyer provided a motion to adopt, seconded by Barbara Johnson. A vote was requested, all were in favor, and none were opposed. The October minutes were officially adopted.	

NEW MEMBER APPLICATION -TRAVIS CHRISTIAN

ERIC GUYER, CHAIR

DISCUSSION	
Joe Charter provided a motion to recommend Travis Christian's membership to the board for approval, seconded by Nate Sickler. A vote was requested, all were in favor, and none were opposed. Travis Christian's new member application will move forward to the board.	

MADGE/HIDTA PRESENTATION

DISCUSSION	
<p><i>Sgt. Ben Lytle- Medford Police Department</i></p> <p>Mission statement of Madge:</p> <p>"The mission of MADGE is to reduce drug and gang related crime in the Jackson County area through cooperative efforts, enforcement and intelligence sharing by local, state and federal law enforcement agencies."</p> <p>Formed in 2009 under the HIDTA program, which expanded our capabilities and formed very strong partnerships and streamlined the ability to respond to the local drug threats.</p> <p>Administration of MADGE consists of the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Executive Officer • MADGE Advisory Board. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Each Participating Entity has one representative on the MADGE Advisory Board. ○ The Board convenes quarterly for purposes including but not limited to: (i) planning Team activities; (ii) setting long – and short-term goals; (iii) considering expansion opportunities and need for additional resources; and (iv) evaluating Team strategies and success. • Team Commander. The Team Commander reports to the Chief and is primarily responsible for administrative duties with respect to MADGE activities. • Operations Supervisor. The Operations Supervisor reports to the Team Commander and is primarily responsible for oversight of operations planning and execution. • MADGE Team. The MADGE Team consists of at least one representative from each signatory, designated as described below. <p>Current Participating Partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medford Police Department • Jackson County Sheriff's Office • Jackson County District Attorney's Office • Jackson County Community Corrections • Oregon State Police • Federal Bureau of Investigation • Homeland Security Investigations • U.S. Attorney's Office 	

These partnerships are mandated by HIDTA, and offer us the ability to take investigations to the next level in terms of reaching far outside of the Rogue Valley, and focusing on drug trafficking investigation.

Six members combined between MADGE and IMET are task force officers with the Department of Homeland Security investigation so they are cross designated as federal officers which allows us to present our cases to the US attorneys office and pursue the federal prosecution route when its appropriate for the cases we are working.

Oregon-Idaho High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area

The Oregon High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program was established by the [White House Office of National Drug Control Policy \(ONDCP\)](#) in June of 1999. In 2015 the program expanded into Idaho and was renamed the Oregon-Idaho HIDTA. The Oregon-Idaho HIDTA consists of 15 counties.

The breakdown of the HIDTA team:

Team Commander -Lieutenant Kerry Curtis

- **MADGE**
 - MPD Sergeant Reimer
 - 1 MPD Detective
 - 1 JCSO Detective
 - 1 OSP Detective
 - 1 MPD K-9 Officer
 - 1 Community Corrections Officer
 - 1 MPD Temporary Investigator (2 years)
 - 1 MPD Analyst
 - 1 Deputy District Attorney

- **IMET**
 - MPD Sergeant Lytle
 - 1 MPD Detective
 - 3 JCSO Detectives
 - 1 JCSO Analyst
 - 1 Deputy District Attorney

- 1 MPD part-time Records Specialist
- 1 JCSO part-time Analyst

IMET- 2019 State of Oregon Criminal Justice Commission Grant

Funding Jackson County Sheriff's Office & Medford Police Department
Administered by Jackson County Sheriff's Office

"The Illegal Marijuana Market Enforcement Grant was established to assist local law enforcement agencies in addressing unlawful marijuana cultivation or distribution operations. This grant opportunity prioritizes illegal marijuana market investigation and prosecution actions that target: (1) rural areas of Oregon; (2) large-scale cultivation or distribution operations; (3) organized crime in the illegal marijuana market; and (4) operations that divert marijuana outside Oregon."

MADGE

YTD	2017	2018	2019 YTD
Cases	478	568	484
Arrests	185	254	206
Search Warrants	97	92	102
Buys	113	116	63
Meth	8007	17233	23,172
Heroin	5081	4212	9036
Cocaine	506	253	3851

You can see that as time passes we are just getting busier, year to date 2019 has been a stellar year. There are some interesting things within that have caused this. The methamphetamine has increased, those are grams. We've seized about 51 pounds of meth this year as the MADGE team combined. It is more prolific, but less expensive than it has been.

When I was a new cop and commercial meth was a new thing in the late, 90s, it would run \$18,000 to \$20,000 a pound, now we are seeing methamphetamine in the Rogue valley from the Central valley in California at about 1,800 a pound. It is a flooded market. Because of the drop-in meth prices, the trade for black market illegal marijuana has become a significant threat to the Rogue valley. People are bringing large quantities of methamphetamine to the Rogue valley and trading it for the readily available black-market marijuana. The lack of disparity in price has made that a sort of common practice right now.

IMET

	Illegal MJ Cases	MJ Seized in Pounds	Illegal BHO Labs	BHO Lab Seizures	Number of MJ plants
2016	53	574.87	3	67.90 grams BHO	0
2017	27	7151.60	4	96.41 grams BHO 6.30# dabs	544 plants
2018	59	2690.48	7	26,602.91 grams BHO 285.31 product .60 grams oil	1153 plants
2019 YTD	89	44,500	4	99,223.33 grams BHO	19,000 plants

2016-17 and part of 2018 are not necessarily IMET stats they are the marijuana related stats, they are MADGE investigations leading up until the time that we got the grant.

The other number regarding the Butane Hunting Oil, that converts to 32 ounces or so of the distilled material. Those seizures are predominately from illegal labs that were located in Jackson County around Medford

Questions/Discussion

Eric asked- is that large number, one or two large seizures or is that number spread through?

Lytte replied that it is probably a half dozen larger seizures, and what we are looking for is the lab. If we are able to shut the lab down that has a pretty significant attack on that.

A lot of that hot hemp, or marijuana that was grown locally that didn't test within ODA standards, and that is over the prescribed THC content 3%, is being purchased by these labs and the end result is the distillate liquids that are then being converted into vape pens and other products that is also extremely valuable.

During one of our investigations into one of the labs, we had to make purchases into the lab, we were buying one-liter mason jars of distillate for \$15,000. One of the labs that was a result of one of these investigations was making 30 liters a week for export into California, so they are making a lot of money fast.

This is a small valley, working in partnerships and deconflicting early so we are not interfering with each other's investigations and as many of us working under the same roof with a common goal really maximizes our available funding and gives Jackson County citizens the best bang for their buck in terms of what we are able to accomplish.

At the end of the HIDTA reporting year the work that MADGE and IMET are producing in terms of quantity and successful prosecutions are very comparable to people in the Portland metro area which says that we are saturated.

Eric asked- And that's by volume not even per capita?

Ben replied- Yes that's by volume. I think right now there is hesitation for the state. We definitely have the highest marijuana seizures cases in numbers, that was pretty imminent in the grant application process.

The Heroin and Meth cases socially are very easy for people to say, okay there was a high-volume Heroin dealer he should probably go to prison because he's hurting people, and same thing with Methamphetamine. The Marijuana thing is an obstacle because of the varying opinions about where it socially fits into each person's life and values.

We are focusing on large growth trafficking organizations where this is a commodity, just like the Meth or Heroin, the same behavior and the same crime associated with this exists. Its tedious they are large, long-term investigations.

We have one ongoing investigation, that we have executed 6 federal search warrants for, with a 2015 case number. Under that case we've been to South Carolina, Georgia, Illinois, with massive seizure, but the nucleus of that case is in the Rogue valley. In addition to the import and export, there is massive money laundering and other facets that are very harmful. I try to emphasize

the fact that we are focusing on the large-scale drug trafficking organizations, take the Marijuana out of it and take it as a drug trafficking organization.

The number of crimes related to Marijuana are very prolific right now. Robberies, violent sex crimes, transient labor force comes to the valley during harvest time and crimes are committed.

We do focus on the large scale, far reaching investigations and that is our primary focus by definition of our agreement with HIDTA and also for long term effectiveness. We split our time focusing on how to resolve a problem for a neighborhood in need, and foster the long term multiyear multi state investigations and be successful with both.

What we are trying to do right now is compile historical information showing crimes related to marijuana before legalization and the phases of that legalization, to present day and ultimately evaluate the effects of those. When that project is done, I believe we will be very surprised at the number and severity of violent crimes that has come to the valley as a result of that.

Scott Clausen commented that Ben Lytle hit on something that has not been seen before and that is trafficking of humans for labor. Ben replied that that is absolutely true, during the last harvest season, we have identified a problem locally of labor trafficking. There are groups of people that are being brought to the Rogue valley, their passports are being held in exchange for hard work. Through partnerships with Department of Homeland Security investigation, it is something that we are starting to look into. I think when its all said and done we are going to be very surprised by that.

Sherriff Nate Sickler added that Jackson County does lead the state in both hemp and licensed marijuana grows. Probably in unlicensed grows as well, that is mainly what you guys deal with.

Ben added that the amount of surveillance and undercover tactics that goes into investigating an extensive Heroin ring is sort of shocking. Being able to drive down any rural road and find a full-blown Marijuana operation, and call the ODA, OLCC and OMMP, and they say they've never heard of them, is pretty brazen. One of the main tactics this year was having an exterior border of hemp plants, with an interior of Marijuana. ODA has recently come up with a nice thing to curtail that, with a set hemp growing season that does not coincide with Marijuana harvest.

Jennifer Mylenek asked, what does the prosecution look like for these folks? Ben replied that it really is dependent on their criminal history and the types of crimes that they've been previously convicted of. Partnership and ability to pursue federal prosecution has been really beneficial, because it is such a tangled web, having them proffer as part of their negotiation with the federal prosecution and using that information to untangle the web has been very beneficial. Two weeks ago, there was a case in the newspaper of a long-term case of a gentleman who received 3 years in prison on a strictly marijuana case. It was a large scale multi state multi-million-dollar money laundering type of operation, I cannot give a specific number.

Jennifer added that there's a lot of arrests and a lot of good work in that regard. Not that it should not be done, but where is it leading to ultimately in terms of stemming? Ben replied that people say, 'You're not going to solve the problem', but making people a little nervous does help. Having people consider going through the motions, and questioning whether they should plant now or wait, helps. There is also an educational piece, we have run into people who legitimately were out of compliance and time is given for them to fix it, if it is not part of a larger organization.

Jennifer commented that there are a larger number of kids coming into care, and she has seen kids become affected by this on a one on one basis due to Marijuana and edibles being in the home. They have seen kids come into care from big drug busts from grows.

Ben commented that there was a case of a large industrial complex on East Antelope road hiding a 6,000 plus plant indoor grow. A wealthy gentleman from Southern California decided to come up to invest in a wealthy Marijuana operation, he may have really wanted to capitalize on some opportunities, he showed up, got a building, had a workforce, and planted the plants. The OLCC was backlogged and it was taking much longer than he thought to get licensed, so he went ahead and flowered the plants and waited for his license to come. 18 months passed and he had a full-on illegal operation of about 2-3 million dollars in profit. That particular warehouse was around \$30,000 a month for the power bill, and there was untold damage to the landlord's property due to all the modifications. That is something that is seen, people start of and arrive here with all the best intentions, but don't go through the process.

Jennifer commented, "Intent versus impact."

Danny Jordan commented that the county has issued dozens of citations. People are being housed illegally so OSHA is involved, and people are being trafficked. Do you have the authority to shut this down for those things? Through all of the crimes, and code enforcement, the hemp just keeps growing. Ben said, we have to prioritize with what location we have the most access to. A big piece is to assess what can legally be done today to make an impact. Some of that is just an opportunity that exists.

Jordan asked, but you can't shut it down?

Ben said the turnaround is not conducive to what it came down to this year. Methods are being established, and the Oregon state police lab is catching up and is going to have a scientific test very soon.

Danny asked, when you get all of that stuff, is there some threshold where you can shut down a grow, take the plants, fence it off, lock it up? Ben replied, once it has been established that there is probable cause, a search warrant is received, and they determine there is Marijuana, the evidence is taken and destroyed or taken to the dump.

Danny asked what if it is a legal hemp grow, but there are illegal activities going on around it; workers are trafficked, people are being housed illegally etc., are you able to shut down grows or are people being cited for this? Ben said at this point it is a code enforcement effort or Medford police officers and Sheriff's deputies replying to neighbor complaints, and dealing with whatever is there right now. It is not a long-term fix, and it is tremendously frustrating.

Sherriff Nate Sickler commented that the market was so saturated for so long the risk versus reward was pretty good. The industry banked on no one coming around to do any enforcement, there was really no avenue to pursue these cases before IMET. The sediment is changing in the valley, now there are checks and balances with this IMET team. People are thinking that perhaps it won't be as lucrative to throw up a grow and not worry about consequences. With the word the team is doing this year, perhaps next year there will be a reduction in illegal grows.

Ben added that the regulation of the seeds is another important consideration. Hemp seeds, depending on where you get them are between \$1-1.75. It creates a big problem, because the seeds that cost \$1 come out of a fifty-gallon drum in someone's barn, not the ODA certified \$1.75 certified hemp seeds. There was a guy who had a fifty-gallon drum of hemp seeds in his barn, take a scoop in exchange for \$10,000.

Now he takes all of his investment money, he puts it in the ground and now it is Marijuana or hot hemp. Now the expectation is that he tills it under and starts it fresh, or finds somebody to buy it. The Marijuana thing is ever evolving but we don't want to take away the threat of Heroin and Methamphetamine in the valley and how absolutely scary that is and the amount of effort that goes into that. Problems fluctuate, but Marijuana in the recent past has taken the lion share of the conversation because it is so prevalent.

Dave Carter asked, from the numbers of arrests that have been reported over the last few years, what proportion of those do you think are going federal and which ones are staying on the state level? On the MADGE ARRESTS.
Ben replied, 10% federal.

Judge Mejia commented, when the cases are prosecuted and go to trial, in circuit court it is very hard to get a conviction, you almost have to have the whole thing on video. People do measure 11 crimes that just walk. The perception is that people do not want to convict on this stuff. Ben agreed with this, and discussed the ripple effect. Everything from neighborhood blight to armed robbery and homicide and everything in between, can be tied to this black-market large-scale drug trafficking organization that exists in this valley. People have a hard time putting that together because they have family in the industry, and can't imagine how it goes from one model to the violent crime piece of it.

Joe Charter asked in regards to the discussion around the planting of hemp, is it a matter of intent, or a matter of societal norms? Judge Mejia commented he did not know, he was thinking of a case where a woman was selling medical marijuana. One time the guy got away with it, the other time the guy got convicted.

Danny Jordan commented that this problem is overwhelming, but he is impressed to see all of the progress that has been made on this. It is just scratching the surface, but congratulations to you for the significant progress that has been made. Ben emphasized they may not find the cure, but they will continue to try to make an impact.

Need More Information?

MADGE Tip Line: (541) 618-1847

- **IMET Sergeant Ben Lytle**
- **(541) 774-2220**
- **ben.lytle@cityofmedford.org**

- **MADGE Sergeant Josh Reimer**
- **(541) 774-2284**
- **joshua.reimer@cityofmedford.org**

Heroin & Fentanyl Overdose Surveillance & Alerting System - Tanya Phillips, MPH, Health Promotion Manger

Jackson County Public Health

- Jackson County Public Health began working on a Heroin and Fentanyl Surveillance and Alerting System in 2018.
 - Spring of 2018 cluster 10 fatalities reported by Medford Police Department
- Different agencies held a piece of critical data
- Public Health had the expertise to lead and facilitate the process
- Convened first responders and agencies that had initial contact with persons who experienced a fatal or non-fatal overdose
 - Hospitals systems
 - Law Enforcement (MADGE, MPD, and Sheriff Department)

- Medical Examiner
- EMS
- MAT provider
- Jackson County Mental Health
- Jackson County Public Health

Surveillance

- Data
 - Jackson County Medical Examiner's Office (direct report)
 - Mercy Flights (direct report)
 - Emergency Department through ESSENCE
 - Law Enforcement through ODMAP

Emergency Department Data

- ESSENCE
 - Syndromic Surveillance System: Electronic Surveillance System for the Early Notification of Community-Based Epidemics
 - Developed queries based on
 - Diagnostic Codes
 - Triage Notes
 - Daily and Weekly Heroin Counts
 - Daily and Weekly Opioid Counts
 - Daily and Weekly Opioid Health Related Counts

Law Enforcement Data

- ODMAP
 - Syndromic Surveillance Systems with GIS capabilities
 - Support public safety and public health efforts to mobilize and respond to increases and/or spikes in overdoses
 - First responders enter response information into ODMAP
 - Public Health analyzes data
- Medford Police Department and Central Point Police Department utilize this tool

Hard to develop a threshold that is statistically significant due to the lower numbers of hospitalizations, responses and fatalities. For example, in 2018 we had 22 fatalities (confirmed and presumptive) and we have had 4 confirmed cases this year and three are currently suspect cases.)

The purpose of the yellow alert is to issue a warning, so that we can prevent from having to issue a red alert, which is where we would see fatalities associated with the other data points. So, the yellow alert is in place to prevent fatalities.

- Thresholds are becoming clearer as we continue this process.
- EMS mean for 2019 2.8 with a standard deviation of 1.7. Higher than 2018, but overall very similar
- Emergency Department are becoming clearer, but differ compared to 2018. Our mean in 2019 is 2.3 with a standard deviation of 1.9
 - Reasons for the increase an actual increase in non-fatal overdoses
 - Better detection of heroin overdose cases in ESSENCE due to better and more consistent coding associated with heroin overdose visits
- Issued 4 yellow alerts since beginning this process. Our last alert was the longest in place, lasting 4 weeks. Issued on 6/24 and lasted through 7/20

Alert and Notification

- Step 1
 - Share situational awareness with core task force and come to an agreement about the alert being recommended by Jackson County Public Health
- Develop communication
 - Flash Report
 - Press release
 - Talking points
 - Alert hospital PIOs
- Step 2 Alert Partners
 - All law enforcement agencies
 - Hospital systems
 - EMS agencies other first responders
 - FQHCs
 - Treatment providers
 - Jackson County Public Health and Mental Health
 - California partners
 - Neighboring counties
 - OHA
 - Multnomah County
- Flash Report

- Situational awareness
- Risk communication
- Actions
- Step 3: Notification of the public and at-risk populations
 - Directly through Syringe Exchange Program
 - Press release
 - Press conference
 - Post alert to website
 - Social Media

During yellow alerts Public Health does increase access to naloxone for clients of syringe exchange and we also provide fentanyl test strips

Another step in the process if we were to issue a red alert is to bring partners together, provide situational awareness and beginning planning on what actions community partners could take in order to reduce and stop the cluster or spike of fatal and non-fatal overdoses.

Surveillance Reports

- Provide monthly reports
 - Emergency visits for heroin overdoses
 - EMS naloxone administration
 - Law enforcement response naloxone administration
 - # of alerts issued or in place
 - # of illicit opioid fatal overdoses (year to date)
- For overdose fatalities created case definitions
 - Meet Communicable Disease Investigation Standards
 - Suspect case
 - Presumptive case
 - Confirmed case
 - Suspect case: Any fatality that is reported to Jackson County Public Health by Jackson County Medical Examiner's office, Law Enforcement agencies, or other data source as a possible accidental illicit opioid overdose, based on decedent history and/or evidence from the scene without a confirmed toxicology report
 - For heroin and fentanyl/synthetic opioid, separate definition for presumptive and confirmed case

Lessons Learned

- Process needs to be flexible
- Still fine tuning the process
- It is ALL about the partnerships
 - Improved partnerships
 - Bring different perspectives
 - Provide different set of expertise
- Improved communication among partners and all law enforcement agencies
- Improved understanding of the problem and what may be the cause

"It is about getting everyone to the table, and constant monitoring and sharing of information." Lt. Budreau

Need More Information?

- **Tanya Phillips, MPH**
- **phillitf@jacksoncounty.org**
- **541-770-7708**

Questions/Discussion

Eric stressed the importance of this presentation and the inclusion of Tanya's' presentation. It is a comprehensive approach in this county it's not just about enforcement, it's not just about treatment, but innovative public health initiatives, that is happening with the public health department.

Scott Clausen commented it works because of the partnership and the exchange of the information, love the data and the alerts but also the fact that they receive a lot of naloxone for our officers that they can take out onto the streets. It is truly saving lives and is appreciated.

Judge Mejia asked what is the definition of an overdose?

Tanya replied that she will get that definition from the medical examiner.

Judge Mejia asked how do you make sure that people are not counted if you're getting reports from Mercy Flights, the Emergency room and the medical examiner?

Tanya replied that they have a fatal and non-fatal overdose. With nonfatal overdose they are getting information from law enforcement and EMS and then they look into the hospital system.

The determination is around the hospitalization, and supporting data comes from LE and EMS. What we inform the public is that we have had an increase in hospitalization, typically we do not tell the community that EMS is giving out more naloxone. The other issue with EMS is sometimes they will give naloxone and it is not necessarily related to heroin and fentanyl which is a gap in the system and why we look to ESSENCE for the non-fatal overdoses. For the fatal overdoses, there is a death and it is confirmed once a toxicology has reported and Dr. Olsen confirms that it is an overdose related to heroin or fentanyl and the Medical Examiner's office gives us that information continuously so we receive raw data to look at notes.

Jim commented in terms of opioids they are very specific drugs with a very specific action, and we have a drug that can reverse it. If Naloxone is given and the individual improves we can be pretty certain that is an overdose, there is a lot of drug combining that can happen. If somebody is down and they are unsure why, one might think diabetes, heart attack, or overdose. Naloxone can be given as they are figuring out how to resuscitate them, but that doesn't mean that it was an overdose.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/OTHER BUSINESS

ERIC GUYER, CHAIR

DISCUSSION	
-------------------	--

Next Scheduled PSCC Meeting: January 28, 2019

Meeting Adjourned: 12:52 pm