

Opioid Restitution Fund Task Force

February 18, 2026 - 11:00 am

Virtual

Minutes

Attendees: [Alex Menges Rumgay](#), [Anthony Becki Clark -MDH-](#) [David Jones james.pyles@cumberlandmd.gov](#) [Jason M. Bennett](#) [James F. Elliott](#) [James Zapf](#) [T. Lee Beeman, Jr.](#) [Melissa Clark](#) [Roger Bennett](#) [Tanya Gomer](#) [Craig Robertson](#) [Gena Spear](#) [Courtney Thomas-Winterberg](#) [-DHS- Allegany County](#) [Renee Kniseley](#)

Attachments [ORFTF Winter Meeting \(Virtual\) FY 26 - Opioid Settlement Expenditures ORF Payments 2026-02-16 225239.png](#)

Summary

Tanya Gomer led a discussion on reviewing current expenditures, noting most are on track, and established a timeline for new project submissions which must be finalized before the commissioners' budget talks in April; they also outlined the process for reallocating or rolling over unexpended funds, requiring a write-up for reallocation but just a simple note for rollovers. Melissa Clark, Alex Menges, and James F. Elliott agreed with Tanya Gomer that new project submissions should remain restricted to the task force to minimize conflict, although the final document must be legally posted by Kati, and Melissa Clark and Tanya Gomer confirmed the annual funding goal remains around \$175,000 for the upcoming FY27. Becki Clark -MDH- raised concerns about unexpended funds for a peer specialist position and will connect with Melissa Clark regarding a training grant that could address workforce needs, while Anthony Rumgay expressed gratitude for the recent radio funding and plans to meet with his group to determine future funding pursuits, and Tanya Gomer concluded by sharing that the sheriff's office is continuing SORT training and emphasized the importance of de-escalation.

Details

- **Review of Current Expenditures and Timeline:** Tanya Gomer initiated the meeting to review current expenditures and establish a timeline for submitting new projects, which must be finalized for the commissioners' budget talks during their second meeting in April. They noted that most expenditures are currently on track for the year, with a few adjustments needed, including correctly categorizing some items and processing a recent bill for radios submitted by Anthony. The committee needs to evaluate whether each agency will expend all of their current funds.

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- **Reallocating and Rolling Over Funds:** The group discussed the process for reallocating unexpended funds, prompted by Alex Menges's agency considering the reallocation of funds due to personnel changes, specifically an intentional retirement and the end of the play program. Tanya Gomer suggested that if funds are not going to be expended, the agency should provide a write-up detailing the project, its cost, and its link to Exhibit E, which will then be sent out in a survey for the task force committee members to vote on. If funds are simply being carried over as a continuation of an existing project, the agency only needs to send a note stating that they wish to roll over the funds, avoiding the need to rewrite the full project details.
- **Project Submission Scope and Public Posting:** A discussion was held regarding the scope of new project submissions, specifically whether they should be open to the public or restricted to task force membership. Melissa Clark, Alex Menges, and James F. Elliott agreed that submissions should remain restricted to the task force, arguing that keeping it to a core group minimizes potential arguments over projects and funds. Tanya Gomer confirmed that even though the committee agreed to keep submissions internal, the document must be legally posted on the county page by Katie.
- **Annual Funding Amount:** Melissa Clark inquired about the annual funding amount for the upcoming fiscal year (FY27), to which Tanya Gomer confirmed that the goal is to keep the allocation around \$175,000 per year to ensure the funds can be sustained for 30 years. Melissa Clark also asked if they should submit documentation regarding carry-over funds, and Tanya Gomer confirmed that a simple note stating the desire for a continuation rollover for existing projects is sufficient.
- **Challenges with Peer Specialist Hiring and Training Grant:** Becki Clark -MDH- raised a concern regarding unexpended funds for a part-time peer specialist position focused on mental health, which they failed to fill after three postings due to applicants not meeting qualifications or withdrawing their applications. Melissa Clark informed the committee that they received a grant specifically for peer training, covering various certifications including substance use, family, and judicial peers, and offered to collaborate closely to train individuals to address workforce needs. Becki Clark -MDH- expressed interest in connecting with Melissa Clark outside the meeting to discuss how this training could benefit existing and future peer hires.
- **School System Radio Funding and Future Plans:** Anthony Rumgay expressed gratitude for the recent funding received for radios, which helped replace equipment lost in a flood at Western Port Elementary and improved communication for incidents like overdose cases. Anthony plans to meet with their group in the next couple of weeks to determine what the school system will pursue next in terms of funding opportunities. Melissa Clark mentioned an idea for a project Dan Lasher approached them about, but the initial estimated cost far exceeded the

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entire county allocation, so Melissa Clark is pursuing funding from a different source for that initiative.

- **Concluding Items and Future Communications:** Tanya Gomer noted that the sheriff's office is continuing with additional training for their SORT members and increasing utilization of the Bearcat for high-threat situations, emphasizing the importance of de-escalation. Tanya Gomer will update the shared document to solicit for new projects and will send it to the group for review before officially posting it, along with meeting minutes from the current discussion. Tanya Gomer also confirmed they are currently working on the CRRF documentation.

Next steps

Anthony Rumgay will get together with his group in the next couple of weeks to see what they can go after next for funding for the school system.

Tanya Gomer will update the shared document to solicit for new projects and send it to the group by the end of the week for review.

Tanya Gomer will get the meeting minutes from today and send them to the group.

Melissa Clark and Becki Clark -MDH- will work together to get someone trained for the peer specialist position using the received grant and connect outside of the meeting to discuss the community health worker training.