



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Music Commission

Recommendation Number: 20180507-005b: Exploring Options to Address Opioid Use in the Music Community

WHEREAS, the City Council approved the Austin Music and Creative Ecosystem Omnibus Resolution No. 20160303-019 on March 3, 2016 that culminated in a June 2016 staff report of analysis and recommendations supported with multiple forms of input; and

WHEREAS, the staff report identified priority recommendations in response to the Omnibus resolution. This includes: affordable space; agent of change; cultural tourism; entertainment license; incentives, tools, and loans; land use regulations; music genre development; permitting and licensing; professional development; revenue development; and health and wellness; and

WHEREAS, multiple stakeholders have come forward over time in identifying various issues and the SIMS Foundation, a key stakeholder in the development of the Omnibus resolution is seeking immediate support to address opioid abuse in the Austin Music Community; and

WHEREAS, mortality statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics, indicate that 1,398 Travis County residents died from drug overdose from 2006-2016, an average of 127 each year and of those deaths, 590 were due to a drug overdose from opioids, and other synthetic narcotics; and

WHEREAS, addiction impacts millions of people, including creative artists and one of the disturbing trends is the dramatic increase in opiate and opioid abuse where musicians can be at particular risk where research shows that musicians have five times the chances of abusing drugs and alcohol than other people in other careers; and

WHEREAS, the number of Austin musicians and music industry professionals seeking treatment for opioids and other substance use through SIMS Foundation, an Austin nonprofit focused on treating musicians and music industry professionals with mental health/substance abuse, has doubled in 2017 from the previous year and has already suffered the tragic loss of three Austin musicians from accidental opioid overdose this year; and

WHEREAS, based on SIMS claims data, 42% of clients seeking substance use treatment are abusing opioids and SIMS Foundation is sounding the alarm that the national opioid epidemic has rapidly seeped into Austin and the need is growing and the time for a community-based response is now; and

WHEREAS, SIMS has looked nationally for best practices models conducted through city governments for addressing substance use treatment for opioids and before opioids deaths reach epic proportions in the City of Austin, a public emergency must be addressed with a swift and

coordinated response that includes immediate access to assessment and referral to care, medication therapy, rescue naloxone, sober housing, and clean needle exchange.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN: The City Council directs the City Manager to explore options to address opioid use in the music community as a carve out of a larger city-wide response to the opioid crisis through collaborations/partnerships with SIMS on all possible solutions and to support and deploy the SIMS Foundation treatment model to the musician and music industry cohort seeking treatment. This pilot program will inform the City of Austin in developing innovative approaches to the national opioid epidemic and provide the City with information, policies, programs, and data to drive this issue forward. The City Manager is directed to consider and bring forth the items addressed in this Resolution initially as it relates to the immediate SIMS opioid crisis in 60 days to the City Council. This plan of action should also include any necessary resources required.

Date of Approval: May 7, 2018

Record of the vote: (Unanimous on a 7-0 vote, with Commissioners Land, McQueen, and Reynolds not in attendance)

Attest: Kevin McCue

(Staff or board member can sign)