Faces 4 Change (F4C) Drug Free Community Coalition Meeting Minutes

October 21, 2026

Attendees

Sandra Quigg – Youth Serving Organizations
Jonny Morris – Substance Abuse Organizations
Debbie Kipps-Vaughn - University
Katherine Medina – State Government
Kevin Fowler – Law Enforcement
P. Thandi Hicks Harper – F4C/YPCI
Billo Harper – F4C/YPCI
Luke Morgan – F4C/YPCI
Victoria Riddle – F4C/YPCI
T. Starr Hicks-Wilson – Youth Serving Organization
Amelia Morrison – Substance Abuse Organizations
Deanna Reed – Local Government
Justin Garrido – Volunteer Organizations
Alyssea Johnson – Healthcare Professionals

Summary

The meeting served as a kickoff for the Faces for Change Harrisonburg DFC Map Cara Coalition, marking its first gathering in about a year. Sergeant Kevin Fowler provided an update on the upcoming National DEA Drug Take Back event at Martin's, and Dr. Harper provided information about new grant funding for YPCI. She also noted uncertainty regarding the CARA grant for methamphetamine prevention. Mayor Reed spoke about the importance of youth-focused substance use prevention, the need for honest conversations and strong relationships, and the city's continued support for the organization. The conversation ended with a brief mention of the Hip Hop to Prevent curriculum and a call for continued collaboration among the coalition members.

Dr. Harper called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

The coalition's monthly meeting commenced with all attendees joining remotely via Zoom. Dr. Harper initiated introductions to foster collaboration among members. Luke introduced the Faces 4 Change team, reviewed the meeting agenda, asked attendees to list their sector affiliation in the chat, and encouraged attendees to speak up throughout the meeting.

The meeting focused on updates and future plans for the Drug-Free Communities (DFC) coalition in Harrisonburg. First, Luke invited Sergeant Kevin Fowler from the Harrisonburg Police Department to speak briefly about the upcoming Drug Take Back Day event. Sergeant Kevin Fowler provided an update on the October 24, 2026, National DEA Drug Take Back event at Martin's, highlighting its purpose in preventing overdoses and environmental contamination.

The CSB and F4C stated they would be in attendance, and all meeting attendees were encouraged to stop by DTBD.

Following the announcement about Drug Take Back Day, Dr. Harper announced several grants that were recently awarded to YPCI, including the DFC grant focused on marijuana and prescription drug misuse, a new STOP grant for alcohol prevention, a small grant from the Harrisonburg Civic and Community Organization, and a stipend from Communities Talk. She also noted uncertainty regarding the CARA grant for methamphetamine prevention.

Luke introduced the night's special speaker, Harrisonburg Mayor Deanna Reed, who spoke about the City government's commitment to youth substance use prevention and youth development. Mayor Reed explained that the city is working on zoning regulations for cannabis dispensaries, similar to how they handled vape shops, though this is a new issue for them. The team discussed the growing number of vape shops in the city and their concerns about youth access, with Mayor Reed noting that the city attorney is reviewing special permits and ordinances for dispensaries. Jonny mentioned that Harrison Rockingham Community Services Board has a prevention team that collaborates with local organizations on youth substance use education and mental health programs.

Amelia asked Mayor Reed about successful youth programming approaches, to which Mayor Reed recommended meeting youth where they are by consistently showing up in schools and neighborhoods, emphasizing the importance of relationship-building. Dr. Harper emphasized the need to listen to young people and provide opportunities for them to take the lead, while also noting that their organization already works with schools through Ms. Spillman's Mental Health Day and Drug Awareness programs. Mayor Reed encouraged all attendees to come speak to City Council about youth substance use prevention being a priority.

Following Mayor Reed, Dr. Harper discussed the Hip-Hop to Prevent: Remix curriculum, an evidence-based program that has been updated to include fentanyl and methamphetamines, with plans for a soft launch in New Jersey and a potential major launch in Harrisonburg at the beginning of the year. Mayor Reed suggested connecting with school principals to gain access to schools and offered to introduce F4C/YPCI to Secretary of Education Jeffrey Smith to discuss implementing the program in Virginia's school system. The group also discussed existing drug education in schools, with Jonny recommending working with physical education teachers, and Kevin mentioned his role supervising the DARE program and new drug education resources available.

Participants briefly discussed sustainability concerns due to uncertainty around a $75,000 CARA grant, with participants discussing the need for coalition involvement agreements to maintain federal compliance. Luke explained that these agreements require minimal commitment and are needed to demonstrate community support to the federal government. Coalition members will receive more information about these agreements in the coming months.

Victoria encouraged attendees to follow the organization on social media and announced that a meeting video would be posted on their website.

Dr. Harper adjourned the meeting at 7:02pm.