

May 9, 2020

To: Common Council Finance & Personnel Committee

From: Paul Mozina

Re: CC File 200008 – Resolution related to acceptance and funding of the 2020 High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area project awards.

There is a reason the Grant Award Summary for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) Project 2020 says: “Research & Evaluation: N/A”. Any serious inquiry into the ONDCP’s flagship HIDTA Program would show that it is an utter failure. In fact, year after year the Federal DOA calls out the ONDCP for its lack of any objective measurements for gauging the success of its HIDTA Program (see, GAO Highlights Preliminary Observations on the 2019 National Drug Control Strategy <https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/697306.pdf>).

The sleight of hand that MPD uses to avoid providing you with any research or evaluation of the HIDTA “Project” is the fact that it chooses to present the Federal HIDTA **Program** to you as a **Project** – and projects don’t require Results Measurement/Progress Reports, nope, that only applies to Programs.

So year after year the MPD cuts and pastes the previous year’s HITDA Grant application and presents it to the Common Council for a rubber stamp without ever being asked to explain whether or not it is working, and, more importantly, whether or not there are any “unintended consequences” aka, collateral damage, associated with the War on Drugs. There **are** unaccounted for costs associated with arbitrarily deciding what substances a human being may inoffensively put in their body and destroying their lives with criminal sanctions if they dare to consume the forbidden fruit.

The so-called “Founding Fathers” are rolling in their graves watching how their much vaunted constitution, which purports to establish a republican form of government guaranteeing life, liberty and the pursuit of *happiness* (a poor substitute for the real intention of the document, which was to protect the property of the ruling class), has been perverted by those addicted to power to deny us the inherent and inalienable right to be the masters of our own bodies.

The Controlled Substances Act was a politically motivated piece of legislation foisted upon us by the Nixon administration with the explicit intention of targeting the anti-war and black power/liberation movements. Since the Vietnam War, there hasn’t been much of an anti-war movement and the mass incarceration of people of color on drug-related offenses or violent/property crimes related to the acquisition of “controlled substances” has disproportionately decimated **and traumatized** the black community for the last 50 years.

And yet, with all the talk about institutional, systemic, racism, we turn a blind eye to the devastating effects that the War on Drugs has had on people of color?

If we are serious about defunding the MPD, we need a new approach to policing that does not include the criminalization of inoffensive consensual activity. “You can’t legislate morality” Alderwoman Coggs reminded me last year as we walked the hall outside room 301-b.

Is the War on Drugs winnable? Well, what does the research or evaluation of its “progress” reveal? Oh, excuse me, I forgot, the MPD doesn’t have to provide that information, and why should they be required to when the ONDCP does not even do this?

Year after year, the City of Milwaukee wields the drug war spear for the federal government, hiring law enforcement muscle (which it can ill afford) in a vain and arbitrary attempt to control what people chose to put in their bodies, and then passing their victims/targets on to the courts, jails and prisons funded by their municipal masters in county, state and federal bureaucracies.

And the sad part is that I think you all know this effort is futile. Just listen to the words of the Chair of your Finance and Personnel committee:

Human nature – the way it is – if you don’t have one addictive substance you’ll figure out another way, and, of course, someone will figure out a way to supply you with it.
Alderman Michael Murphy, July 21, 2017 CCHOC Task Force meeting.

Let’s take a look at some of the collateral damage, above and beyond the mass incarceration already alluded to, that followed the initiation of the drug war – reminiscent of Al Gore’s famous hockey stick graph.

From 2014-2016 the Milwaukee Homicide Review Commission, under the leadership of Mallory O’Brien, was doing excellent work analyzing homicides and non-fatal shootings (please note there is a lag in accurately reporting the previous year’s final numbers).

Drug-Related Homicides

13 (15.1%) in 2014

25 (17.2%) in 2015

15 (10.8%) in 2016

Drug-related shootings

60 (10.3%) in 2014

68 (10.7%) in 2015

36 (6.4) in 2016

Unfortunately, former MPD Chief Flynn cut off their access to MPD data and now, I for one, am anxiously waiting, not with schadenfreude – but with a sense of dread that the numbers have only gotten much worse – for the work of the newly reconstituted MHRC under the leadership of Constance Kostelac to report on 2017-2019. This is actually scheduled to happen at the Milwaukee Community Justice Council “Meeting of the Whole” on June 11, 2020.

Despite the emergence of fentanyl in the last few years, the HIDTA Grant Summary presented to you by the MPD simply trots out the same meaningless table year after year. What does this table tell you? Are we *winning* the war on drugs?

Data Summary

Table 1. displays drug arrests by the Milwaukee Police Department from January 1-December 31, 2015-2019

Table 1. Drug Charge Categories	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2015-2019 % Change	2018-2019 % Change
Cocaine	560	624	821	675	552	-1%	-18%
Heroin	198	217	269	244	183	-8%	-25%
Total Arrests*	690	722	918	789	610	-12%	-23%

I Feel the fentanyl issue is truly driving the epidemic we have right now and the stats definitely prove that. If you look at it, if you go through year to year, it's doubled, quadrupled, and I hate to say it, but if we could get back to the heroin status it would be success. But really that's kind of where it's at really when we're talking about fentanyl. Lieutenant Shaun Doyne, MPD Narcotics Division – HIDTA, December 1, 2017 CCHCO Task Force Meeting.

The war on drugs creates a marketplace where suppliers maximize their profits by selling synthetic opioids – for which it is impossible to prevent the importation, and perhaps more ominously, the local production. Here is the latest overdose data from the Milwaukee Medical Examiner, Dr. Brian Peterson.

Death type	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 est.
Total drug death	109	112	117	142	149	159	152	163	149	180	167	220	251	254	343	401	384	418	164	395
Narcotic death*	83	73	84	94	115	121	121	131	123	139	144	181	220	231	294	337	305	343	130	314
Heroin-related death	16	11	9	19	16	17	31	37	34	45	53	69	116	110	148	168	146	133	33	75
Fentanyl alone or in combination	3	5	7	7	6	4	9	11	6	16	5	11	16	30	97	188	188	244	112	270
Cocaine alone or in combination	52	59	50	64	76	65	43	43	38	57	39	51	58	63	85	142	165	181	85	205
Gabapentin/Pregabalin	0	3	2	3	0	2	4	3	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	15	44	22	53
Methamphetamine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	11	11	17	9	22
Homicide	131	124	97	152	125	127	87	87	106	100	108	123	103	161	168	140	120	130	69	167
Suicide	86	109	107	92	93	93	117	100	114	95	104	113	96	99	114	156	117	115	50	121
Motor Vehicle Accident	37	68	72	47	72	56	45	44	61	63	72	51	67	93	82	94	74	80	26	63
Infant death	43	43	47	46	51	55	35	36	30	34	22	34	24	24	32	45	38	30	13	32
Autopsies (Milwaukee County)	1289	1413	1243	1276	1015	1057	938	957	981	977	967	971	951	988	1073	1086	1050	1181	581	1399
Autopsies (referral, private)	1	0	0	0	0	0	13	93	76	179	314	323	367	360	347	466	686	604	244	588
Autopsies (total)	1290	1413	1243	1276	1015	1057	951	1050	1057	1156	1281	1294	1318	1348	1421	1558	1736	1786	825	1987

*Narcotic drug deaths are any in which opioids (morphine, heroin, etc.) or synthetic opioids (oxycodone, fentanyl, etc.) are involved

Updated 6/1/2020 - drug-related totals lag by a few weeks.

Milwaukee County Non-natural Deaths 2002-2020

When he presented this data to the Milwaukee County Intergovernmental Relations Committee back in February, 2020 he said regarding the opioid epidemic that there was: "No end in sight."

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And why are so many people overdosing? Because they are forced to buy the substances they desire on the street from people they barely know who have no idea regarding the purity of what they are selling. Suppliers are putting fentanyl in everything and consumers have no idea what a "safe" dose is. Both buyers and sellers are often heavily armed and there are no courts to adjudicate a drug deal gone bad. I won't even begin to introduce the role that illegal substances have played in geopolitics... but it is huge.

In conclusion, I realize you will probably approve this HIDTA Grant as the Alders before you have done and the Alders to follow will do as well. But I'm telling those of you who vote to support this the straight up truth: what you are doing is wrong and despite any appeal to qualified immunity, you are morally culpable for perpetuating a failed, politically motivated, racially biased, inhumane system that has usurped one of the most fundamental human rights: the right to decide what one inoffensively puts in their own body.

CC: Common Council