

The Zoom meeting of the Alliance of Delray was called to order by Executive Vice President Lori Vinikoor at 10:00 am. She called on Sheriff Ric Bradshaw of the PBSO. Sheriff Bradshaw discussed the inherent problems of Sober Homes in residential neighborhoods and the first responders who deal with them. Captain Rob Sandt, also of the PBSO, warned of a rash of distraction thefts. The latest con is a pair of 'tree trimmers' showing up at the door. While one of the pair is distracting by showing a supposed problem with the tree(s), his partner in crime has entered the home and left with cash and/or jewelry. He urged his audience to stay alert. He was pleased to announce that many of the outstanding credit and debit card cases have been solved.

Fire Chief Anthony Tozzi introduced Emergency Medical Services Captain Chad Barton, who is the highest medical officer in our district.

State Senator Lori Berman warned the Alliance audience to be very cautious, since Palm Beach County is about to enter Phase 3 of the opening, in spite of Covid 19 concerns.

Dave Aronberg, State Attorney, spoke in depth about the Sober Homes Task Force. Much of the addiction in the Sober Homes is from opioids. The opioid problem is epidemic. Mr. Aronberg explained about where we are in the 'war' and where we are headed. He presented a model for recovery which is NOT working very well. First, the substance abuse patient goes to an in-patient facility to detox. After only a few days he/she is sent to outpatient care for another short term. Then the patient is sent to a Sober Home with the desired result being sobriety. But the Sober Homes are owned by individuals looking to make a profit. Sobriety is not profitable. Hence the needed support is not forthcoming, and the patient succumbs to his/her addiction again. The cycle continues, frequently with Fentanyl, a highly addictive and dangerous opioid. However, since Mr. Aronberg formed a dedicated Task Force to address this problem, recidivism has dropped 40%.

He then presented Alan Johnson, Chief Assistant State Attorney. Mr. Johnson emphasized the dangers of Fentanyl, and mixed with the problems of Covid 19 and the widespread unemployment there has been an attributable 38% increase in deaths in Delray Beach since 2019.

Maria Sachs, Former Florida State Senator, discussed human trafficking, which has become the #1 cash business in the past 25 years. It preys primarily on young women, but also includes young men. It is interesting to note that Sober Homes are a source for the predators. Suspected victims of trafficking can be given counselling, granted amnesty, and provided with help. Ms. Sachs provided a phone number (1-888-373-7880) if suspicious activity is suspected.

Sergeant George Searing introduced Deputies Baker and Ledford, all leaders of the CRASE education. This involves education of the Civilian Response to Active Shooter Event. A film was shown depicting active shooting events all over the country in the past several years. There are three primary responses to this: Avoid (run), Deny (Don't process what is happening), and Defend (fight back). Statistics show that fighting back produces the most positive results. The film also showed the increase in national gun violence in the past several years.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:55 am. The next meeting will be held on November 4, 2020.

Submitted by
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