

City Council – Action Request Form

Date: February 27, 2018
To: The City Manager
From: Angela I. Carmon, City Attorney

Council Action Requested:

Adoption of a Resolution of the Mayor and Winston-Salem City Council Declaring the Opioid Crisis a Public Nuisance and Authorizing the Filing of A Civil Action to Abate Said Nuisance.

Strategic Focus Area: Safe and Secure Community
Strategic Objective: Improve Public Safety Service Quality
Strategic Plan Action Item: No
Key Work Item: No



Summary of Information:

The attached resolution, which is recommended for your approval, declares the opioid crisis in Winston-Salem, Forsyth County a public nuisance. According to the information released by the North Carolina Governor’s Office regarding the opioid crisis by county, the number of opioid related deaths in Forsyth County increased from 13 in 2005 to 53 in 2015. A copy of said information is attached hereto. Thus far in 2018, staff has had to administer at least 32 doses of Naloxone to 31 patients. There have been at least 6 opioid related deaths this year. There is no indication that the number of overdoses and opioid related deaths will decrease in the near future. The City has and continues to dedicate police and fire personnel and other resources to fighting this crisis. It is imperative that the City consider and utilize all available options to address this crisis/public nuisance including the filing of a civil action.

Following the adoption of the attached resolution, Council should, by a separate motion and vote, select the firm it wishes to pursue the opioid litigation on behalf of the City. The firms under consideration are: (1) Janet Ward Black and Weitz & Luxenburg (Ellen Relkin) and (2) Garry Whitaker & McHugh Fuller Law Group with a consortium of about 6 other law firms.

Committee Action:

Committee	_____	Action	_____
For	_____	Against	_____
Remarks:	_____		