

Minutes



The Grand Forks Tobacco Free Coalition is a group of citizens working together to create and promote a healthier, tobacco-free community through education, legislation, and enforcement of policies.

Grand Forks Tobacco-Free Coalition Meeting

Tuesday, March 14, 2017

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: Haley Thorson, Sarah Odegard, Kailee Dvorak, Denae Grove, Bethany Satrom, Leanne Kilzer, Theresa Knox, and Keith Westerfield.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Haley opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

II. Legislative Updates

The 2017 Legislative Assembly is in session. Governor Burgum's executive budget completely eliminated the Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control Policy (CTPCP), dismantled the funding and law that created the agency. Proposed funding for tobacco prevention has been moved to ND Dept. of Health and is significantly reduced from \$4 million a year to \$1.5 million a year. However, the Legislature was provided a lot of education and testimony and they restored \$6.5 million (\$5.5 million for tobacco prevention, and \$1 million for state aid.

Grand Forks Legislative priority is to maintain the program in its current state with BreatheND funded to the levels recommended by CDC.

The Tobacco Prevention and Control Trust Fund is proposed to provide one time funding to other programs including behavioral health, MA expansion, and opioid prevention and treatment. While these are important programs, these are tobacco settlement dollars that should be used for tobacco prevention. We will continue to educate lawmakers on the importance of a Comprehensive Tobacco Prevention Program.

Senate Bill 2024, concerning BreatheND should be heard by the Full House Appropriations Committee today, then it would go to the Full House Floor for a vote today or tomorrow. Leadership from the House indicates that BreatheND will be eliminated. No one in the legislature disagrees about the program's success; however, their main concerns are budgets and feel the program could be administered by the Dept. of Health.

Senate Bill 2004 (Dept. of Health Budget) is also being heard this week. With what is currently being proposed with the NDDoH, GF Public Health would be operating at 80 percent of our current budget. We have three tobacco program coordinators, but may have to scale back on other including media, which is an important part of the comprehensive program. Not only does this affect the budget at the local level, but also state and national level since the CDC's budget is at risk due to repeal of the Prevention and Public Health Fund.

Something to keep on our radar is how medical marijuana in ND may affect local public health. If this eventually led to the legalization of recreational use, then that could potentially fall under tobacco prevention. The general public would be able to utilize a legal product, but it would come with health consequences. There would need to be education about safe use, and keeping youth from using it.

Haley discussed other bills at legislature that they are monitoring such as: SB2088 concerning licensed addiction counselors being able to provide tobacco cessation. HB1012 concerning a significant portion of the CTPCP funding will be going to the Dept. Human Services for programs like Medicaid Expansion, and behavioral health and the AG Budget, HB1003.

Representative Al Carlson proposed an idea of a state casino to generate revenue (House Concurrent Resolution 3030) which mentions that it would allow smoking in the casino. It is no surprise that tobacco industry is working through the legislature to increase where their products can be legally used and we will work to educate on the importance of removing the exemption of the ND smoke-free law to allow smoking in these potential casinos.

III. Member Sharing

Haley, Sarah, and Kailee are going to the National Conference on Tobacco or Health next week. Kick Butts Day is next week.

Denae let members know that historically military bases have been tax-free for tobacco products. The Department of Defense passed an ordinance that all local applicable taxes will now be paid for tobacco products on military installations.

Bethany shared some of what was going on in the Minnesota Legislature regarding tobacco legislation. They have proposed capping the current tobacco tax on products, and also capping maximum amount can be charged for premium cigars. Polk County Public Health will be spending Local Public Health Day at the Capitol next week, educating and thanking legislators.

Haley announced that on February 4th, the GF Park District officially removed the exemption from the Ulland softball field, so now GF has a Comprehensive Tobacco-Free Parks Policy (under BreatheND standards), including smoke-free golf courses.

Sarah let members know about a series of five webinars put on by American Lung Association, starting today through June 6th. It will be specific to implementing tobacco cessation into behavioral health and addiction counseling.

IV. Next Meeting – April 11, 2017

V. Upcoming Events/Observances

- 65th ND Legislative Assembly, began January 3, 2017, Bismarck
- Kick Butts Day, March 15, 2017 www.kickbuttsday.org
- Legislative Forum – GF City Council Chambers, March 18, 2017 (GF City Hall)
- National Conference on Tobacco or Health, March 22-24, 2017, Austin, TX
- Tobacco Prevention Coordinators Meeting, April 19-20, 2017, Bismarck