

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.

Tuesday, October 11, 2016

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Members Present: Haley Thorson, Sarah Odegard, Kailee Dvorak, Bethany Satrom, Robin Landwehr, and Keith Westerfield.

Guests: Riley Forcelle (UND College of Nursing).

I. Welcome and Introductions

Haley welcomed everyone and they introduced themselves.

II. Measure 4 Update

Print materials are available for individuals who would like to support the Raise It for Health campaign. You can let Haley know if you are in need. A plethora of information is also still available on the www.raiseitforhealthnd.com website. Raise It for Health ND also has a Facebook page with promotional graphics that can be shared on social media.

The coalition's Measure 4 campaign is: YES 4 KIDS, YES 4 VETERANS, YES 4 HEALTH – YES ON 4. The tobacco tax will help reduce youth's initiation to tobacco (but also help adults want to quit); veterans will receive a majority of the new tax dollars to fund currently unfunded or underfunded programs; and the overall health of ND.

The tobacco industry's campaign against Measure 4 is: NO – 400% TAX INCREASE . They have purposefully omitted mention of tobacco to confuse the public. They have ads on tv and radio, and ND voters have received four different direct mailings so far. Their website is www.votenoont4nd.com. Basically, out-of-state interest is casting doubt and confusion through misleading advertising. Unfortunately, the Dakota Student newspaper, that is independently owned, also ran an editorial recently against Measure 4.

III. Upcoming Legislative Update

The ND Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control Policy (otherwise known as BreatheND) was established in 2008 to oversee the State-wide Comprehensive Tobacco Prevention and Control Plan. Youth smoking at that time was at 22.4%. In 2015, youth smoking is down almost to 11.7% . However, the funding for this program (voted into law by the people of ND) is now at risk. Since it has been seven years, the legislature can now overturn that measure with a simple majority vote (vs. the requirement of 2/3 majority in the 1st seven years.) There are legislators that have already proclaimed to have drafted bills to defund the program, and dismantle any of the important work happening in ND. The state-wide program has accomplished many good things, but there is still much work to be done.

The primary focus this legislative year will be to educate the policymakers on the benefits of/ need for maintaining the state's tobacco comprehensive program. The 65th Legislative Session starts January 3, 2017. Information on the assembly can be found at www.legis.nd.gov.

IV. Member Sharing

Haley has been invited by Gail Halverson at Valley Health to provide a presentation to staff regarding Measure 4. Sarah will be presenting to Altru's Professional Nurse Committee on the health benefits of increasing the price of tobacco products.

Bethany has been working with Polk and Norman Counties' department heads regarding tobacco-free grounds policies. They will be focusing on the following five questions to gauge support:

1. Have you thought about us going to tobacco-free grounds?
2. Could you suggest a strategy to assess your employee's opinions?
3. How often do you see or smell tobacco products on county grounds?
4. Have you ever received a complaint about second-hand smoke or tobacco use?
5. To what extent do you support or oppose a tobacco-free grounds policy on county grounds?

Haley shared that the City of Grand Forks' Employee Tobacco Use policy may be helpful for the county leaders to see as an example. She will send this on to Bethany for reference and offered to connect these officials with City of GF Human Resources for reference.

Robin shared that VCHC has hired a social worker that helps them with patients that have chronic health-related issues due to smoking.

V. Next Meeting – November 8, 2016

VI. Upcoming Events/Observances

- Tobacco Prevention Coordinators Meeting, October 24th & 25th, Bismarck
- American Public Health Association Annual Meeting, October 29th-November 2nd, Denver, CO
- 2016 Presidential Election, November 8th
- Great American Smoke-out, November 17th
- 65th ND Legislative Assembly – begins January 3rd, Bismarck