

# Minutes



Tuesday, July 12, 2016  
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

**Members Present:** Haley Thorson, Sarah Odegard, Anne Bodensteiner, Bethany Brandvold, Denae Grove, Betty Housey, Leann Kilzer, Kelly Doda (UND Nursing Student) and Keith Westerfield.

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Haley welcomed everyone and had attendees introduce themselves.

## **II. Tobacco Tax Update (Good News!)**

A recap the Tobacco Tax initiative for today's guests... Raise It for Health North Dakota, a coalition started couple years ago by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, the American Lung Association and Tobacco Free North Dakota, hoped to gather grassroots support for increasing tobacco tax by action of the ND State Legislature. The Legislature has been asked to raise the tobacco tax every year since the tax was last raised to 44 cents in 1993 without success. After the last failed increase attempt in 2015 to get the legislature to raise tobacco tax, Raise It For Health ND reorganized and assisted other interested parties in drafting a citizen-initiated measure to get an increase in tobacco taxes on the ballot in November 2016.

RIFHND coalition members delivered over **22,000 signatures** to the Secretary of State's Office last week! This number is significant because all of the signatures were collected by volunteers. Once signatures are verified, ballot language will be drafted. At that time, messaging can be formulated to educate people on what the measure means and what the health benefits are for increasing the tobacco tax. Science shows that increasing the price reduces use by all, but is more impactful to people like youth and individuals with lower income.

If the measure is placed on the ballot and passes, it would be effective January 2017, and could potentially raise 200 million dollars in *new* revenue the first two years. The measure indicates that new revenue will fund veteran's programs, behavioral health programs and chronic disease programs.

More information will be available in the coming weeks.

## **III. Tobacco-Free Parks Update**

Molly Soeby, the TF Parks Champion on the Park District Board, is interested in closing the smokeless tobacco exemption provided to Ulland Softball field, and the Lincoln and Kings Walk golf courses in the district policy passed in May 2015. With the tobacco free trend occurring in Major League Parks, Commissioner Soeby decided to raise awareness to the other board members. They were provided information and it was decided to wait until ball season was over to revisit the issue, but it will be placed on the agenda for discussion at the October board meeting.

## **IV. Member Sharing**

Haley, Sarah, and Kailee will be going to Fargo next week for a quarterly Tobacco Prevention meeting. They have received notice of their next grant award and are brainstorming for new tobacco prevention activity ideas, and reaching out to partners in the community to see what their needs are. A recent NDDoH news release shows a three-fold return on investments that the state spends on ND Quits program, from the health care costs that the state incurs due to smoking-related diseases.

Denae commented on some enforcement challenges as the GFAFB, but mentioned self/peer enforcement seems to be increasing.

Bethany said they did their first Point of Sale assessment yesterday in Crookston, in preparation for going in to other businesses. They will also be incorporating youth help which will require training. Bethany and Kelly also met with the Crookston City Council in June to appraise them of the assessments and the goal of the project.

Betty said that she and Robin went to the Tobacco Cessation Conference in Fargo and are hoping to build on some classes and groups. Robin is a one-on-one counselor who provides tobacco cessation and a huge asset to those who refer for cessation services.

Anne commented that at UND, Shan, a graduate student GSA, is working on things for the fall semester. Anne also informed the group that her last day at UND will be August 1st. There are a lot of leadership and structural changes happening at UND. New data from the National College Health Assessment is available, showing student tobacco usage down. Questions regarding e-cigs were added to the assessment for the first time this past year. Tobacco prevention information will be given out to students during orientation. Haley thanked Anne for all her work while at UND; updating policies, her work regarding e-cigs, and tobacco prevention overall on campus.

#### **V. Next Meeting – August 9, 2016**

#### **VI. Upcoming Events/Observances**

- Quarterly Tobacco Prevention Sites Meeting, Fargo – July 20, 2016
- November Election, November 8, 2016