

**TNP MJ/Vaping Committee**  
**Minutes of May 5th 2022**

**Present:** Anamilena Moreno (Norwalk ACTS), Aniella Fignon (Norwalk Health Dept), Diamond Sead (Human Services Council / School-Based Health Centers & parent), Diana Revolus (Common Council & parent), Ginger Katz (Courage To Speak Foundation), Jeff Santo (RIPPLE), Nicole Hampton (woman in recovery & parent), Nina Chanana (TNP project evaluator), Rebecca Oliveira (TNP coordinator), Margaret Watt (Positive Directions & parent)

1. Updates from City/State

- a. New MJ bill was passed with recommendations from a few of us preventionists in it: Now the industry won't be allowed to advertise within 1500' from houses of worship/ schools; no gifting (High Bazaar); won't be able to have digital ads during daylight hours; no advertising for out-of-state vendors.
- b. Billboard on Westport Ave right by Bright Beginnings preschool is still there & out of compliance. Need to file complaints with AG's office and with Lamar. Outfront Media and Barrett have been good about the billboards but Lamar has not been a good faith actor.
  - i. Jeff: is landowner responsible? Aniella: Might be shared responsibility, could depend on good faith/bad faith and how lawsuit written.
  - ii. As mentioned last month, this raises the issue of who in our city is responsible for identifying compliance issues, as well as for enforcement

**ACTIONS:**

- iii. Margaret will forward photos; please fill out complaint
- iv. Aniella will draft a template in support of taking down the billboard
- v. Look at DCP's responsibility for filing complaints - can we complain there as well as AG? (Nina asking Melissa; Aniella to investigate as well?)
- c. Health Dept update: Aniella presented recommendations at last BOH meeting (April 26) & shared her powerpoint and youtube link to presentation. Presented her slides.
  - i. Nicole: Will cops be testing THC levels in blood?
    - 1. Discussion about lack of consequences vs mandatory blood draw vs optional JRB referral. Equity issue when services are optional - who will get referred. The 3% municipal tax can be used for JRB if Norwalk decides. Diversionary program vs mandatory educational program. Importance of accountability.
  - ii. Aniella: Need to think about metrics to have baseline / future measurements related to consumption
    - 1. TNP did community survey & youth survey in 2020 and will do youth surveys every 2 years while funded by CDC - will collect minimum of 4 core measures (past 30 day use; perception of harm; perception of peer disapproval; perception of parental disapproval)

2. Adult consumption will be complicated by home-grow. Maybe can measure sales but will also need some type of self report (survey? Focus groups?). Look at emergency calls or reports.

**ACTION:** Margaret will share Aniella's links to committee.

## 2. Roles & responsibilities of stakeholder groups in the coalition

- a. Based on the state of CT structure, prevention efforts are coordinated through the local prevention coalition. The city participates in the coalition in several ways: law enforcement, schools, and other municipal government are required stakeholders. Therefore, this subcommittee is where the City's efforts should be coordinated. We need P&Z at this table, and should be partnering on issues like funding of awareness efforts.
- b. Margaret proposes having Aniella chair or co-chair the committee in acknowledgement of the City role in zoning, enforcement, public health. Group agrees.

**ACTION:** Margaret will talk to Health Dept

- c. Nicole: need for public forum. Discussion about visibility of the new law, of Norwalk's efforts.

### **ACTIONS:**

- i. Get update from Josh
- ii. Invitation to P&Z to join subcommittee - signed by committee members
- iii. Margaret will share agenda for P&Z meeting next week

## 3. Public health education during moratorium (Postcards / other awareness)

- a. We need to be spreading the word about the health impacts on youth now since youth and adult perception of harm is so low. DCP's responsibility is to raise awareness about the law applying only to 21yo+. Meanwhile there is no health ed campaign (eventually DPH and ADPC will make health recommendations - year 2 or 3). DPH does have a billboard on 95N near SoNo Collection stating that people should keep cannabis away from kids and pets. The law does not require warning labels on packages even though alcohol and tobacco products have to warn about pregnant women, driving, etc. At this point in the year, we only have enough funding between the CDC grant at Positive Directions and HSC's grant funding for maybe 4 postcards direct to households - or alternative might be a bus shelter ad but would only be for a month. Not enough for a billboard. Health Dept doesn't have funding for MJ awareness / billboards
- b. The 5 short ads shown at the end of coalition meeting can go out on our social media.
- c. State has shown itself unwilling to commit any state funding to any kind of substance use prevention; all prevention funding uses federal dollars. State is counting on using MJ sales revenue to support prevention campaigns starting in year 3 of retail sales, which is backwards because by then it will have been normalized. (In other legal states, teen addiction to MJ increases 25%.)

- d. Can we spread the word through PTAs? They are almost nonexistent at this point. We need everyone in coalition to recruit / engage / spread info through their networks.
- e. **LEGISLATIVE SUGGESTION**: Jeff suggests requiring all MJ ads in the state to have a QR code on them and 5% of ad revenue go to prevention. This could fit in well with our legislative ask next year revisiting a public health campaign as well as consequences for underage consumption.