**Minutes of TNP MJ Committee**

**8/4/22**

**Present:** Ginger Katz, Nicole Hampton, Devan Markiewicz, Diamond Sead, Rebecca Oliveira, Margaret Watt

1. Made introductions / welcomed Devan. Several people are on vacation.
2. Shared announcements
   1. Ginger got an amendment to her state grant and has extra funding to bring in speakers
   2. Update on task force to make peer support services reimbursable
      1. Task force was passed prior legislative session but is now dead because legislators did not extend the report date in the most recent session
      2. Nicole will check in on this topic at the upcoming insurance hearing
   3. Nicole & Diamond didn’t get TNP’s marijuana and vaping postcards, though Margaret did. Postcards were sent to MS and HS households in Norwalk.
   4. Next week, Rebecca and Margaret are training teens from Norwalk and Westport to deliver the *Johnny’s Ambassadors* teen marijuana prevention curriculum to their peers. We will train the interested adults later.
   5. Courage to Speak is holding a prevention event at Eco-Evolution Aug 20th 7pm
   6. Nicole is working on an op-ed about cannabis
3. Presented and agreed on holding legislative forum again this fall with Westport
4. Discussed topics for legislative forum:
   1. Margaret previously circulated a draft legislative priorities document for comment. These are based on our priorities from last year and a presentation that Ginger, Nicole, Giovanna, Melissa and Margaret gave to the state Commission. This year will be a long legislative session so more opportunity for policy work.
   2. Importance of health warnings to counteract lack of awareness about the risks.
   3. Consequences for underage possession are virtually nonexistent in the state law and not aligned with tobacco. (See comparison chart at end of document. Fines are much higher for alcohol and there is an impact on driving; not so for marijuana.)
   4. Blood test for amount of THC?
5. Agreed on general areas for TNP marijuana agenda for the fall:
   1. Hold legislative forum
   2. Continued ordinance work with Norwalk, also P&Z
   3. Signage efforts
   4. Johnny’s Ambassadors marijuana prevention curriculum
   5. Freshman Forum and behavioral health resource fair at both high schools in beginning of November
   6. Margaret & Tory are providing professional development to high school health teachers in August, November, and February. Ginger is providing professional development to middle school health teachers.
6. Discussed substance use in schools:
   1. Parents are talking about an overdose that may have occurred at NHS this past Tuesday (!)
   2. Multiple examples of kids using substances in Norwalk middle schools were cited, with very low consequences (e.g., “journal about it”) Parents are unaware of these issues in the schools
   3. Consequences in schools: State law just says schools can’t treat marijuana offenses differently from how they treat other ATOD offenses. Law enforcement leaves a lot of this to the schools even though when kids are vaping or using drugs they are breaking the law.
   4. Recommendations:
      1. Need to strengthen school-police efforts at schools and awareness of issues.
      2. Better data sharing from police / schools.
      3. Ensure SROs attend TNP meetings if NPD is fully staffed again.
      4. Restrict access in MS and HS – kids can move around more freely than in the past
      5. Can fire dept send someone to coalition meetings?
      6. We will be having monthly meetings in the HS buildings of our teens with police chief, SROs, administrators, maybe YSB
      7. Have the police chief speak at freshman forum?
7. Discussed a couple of questions regarding proposed ordinance:
   1. City (Mayor) will designate the public consumption space in Norwalk. City has to designate a space *in areas it controls*. Public consumption piece doesn’t have to align with tobacco.
   2. New state bill says towns can have as many cannabis retailers as they want, but Norwalk is sticking with only 3 as per the original law which stated a ratio of 1 business per 25K pop.
8. Discussed questions from Rebecca for her capstone on marijuana prevention in Norwalk
9. Next Steps
   1. Margaret & Diamond to coordinate Norwalk/Westport workplans
   2. Nicole is drafting op-ed
   3. Margaret will provide language to Ginger to possibly use some of her grant money to fund online sharing / advertising of clips of CTS presentations
   4. Ginger will send Eco-Evolution flyer to Rebecca to post through TNP
   5. TNP can provide materials for Eco-Evolution event
   6. Margaret & Nicole will work on summary of the latest news related to marijuana
   7. Nicole will send link to new health curriculum

