

Newton Health Advisory Council Meeting  
November 6, 2013

Attendees: Dori Zaleznik, Marva Serotkin, Aric Parnes, Brenda Mulligan, Indira Desai, Krisztina Bukur-Doczy. Other: Aimee Sullivan, Jo-Louise Allen  
Absent: Betty Cohen, Julia Feldman, Peter Buechler

The minutes of the meeting of January 23, 2013 were reviewed and approved.

Aimee Sullivan, a staff member of the HHS department and the leader of Newton's Junior Medical Reserve Corps., presented feedback from a group of Newton students to advance revised anti-smoking ordinances in Newton. They overwhelmingly approved of these additional measures and requested the Health Advisory Council reconsider an additional ordinance to increase the age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21 years of age. The Council voted on this additional measure, and it was approved by four votes (one abstention) with the caveat that smoking cessation programs be offered to those who fall within the age gap of 18-20 (previously able to buy tobacco legally). Another recommendation was to implement a library poll at Newton North to gather further data on tobacco use among youths in Newton. Aimee Sullivan will investigate this option.

Dori proposed we ask legal to begin to draft the new legislation, and engage with Alderman and identify sponsors. She will provide updates to the Council in December.

Jo-Louise Allen then shared some student feedback regarding preventive approaches based on the two recent teen suicides in Newton. While protocol was followed precisely in regard to crisis communications with school faculty, parents, and the student community, several students expressed the desire to be more involved in the preventive approaches being implemented in the city. They met with David Flesihman and plan to work with professionals to develop a mental health curriculum for the Newton High Schools. Dori mentioned she is also outreaching to the Needham Coalition for Suicide Prevention, formed after a number of teenage suicides took place in that community in 2009.

Dori closed the meeting by making Council Members aware of two vacancies on the board. Betty Cohen is leaving the state and must be replaced. Kirun Milansky has resigned and should also be replaced. Mechanism for consideration involves sending a short statement of interest and CV to Ana Gonzalez.

January meeting TBD.