

SustiNet Health Partnership

Tobacco & Smoking Cessation Task Force

Co-Chairs

Jeanette DeJesus
Andrew Salner

Board of Directors Liaisons

Nancy Wyman
Kevin Lembo



Phone:

866.466.4446

Facsimile

860.297.3992

E-Mail

SustiNet@CT.Gov

Post Office Box 1543
Hartford, CT 06144-1543
www.ct.gov/SustiNet

Tobacco Cessation Task Force Regular Meeting

November 5, 2009

Meeting Minutes

Task Force Attendees: *Jeanette DeJesus, Co-chair; Andrew Salner, Co-chair; David Gregorio; Barbara Koren; Rep. David Scribner; Frank Scifo*

Office of the Healthcare Advocate: *Vicki Veltri*

Office of the Comptroller: *David Krause*

Absent: *Appointment of Senator Looney, vacant*

Andy Salner welcomed the board members. He described the agenda and the packet. He expressed that the board has some exciting work to do to contribute to the SustiNet effort. He described the agenda and the packet. Included in the packet was: a listing of the SustiNet partnership Board of Directors, to whom this task force reports; the actual legislation that establishes the SustiNet board as well as the tobacco taskforce is included; the work plan that delineates the taskforce's charge; a list of all the members on the taskforce; a brochure from the Universal Healthcare Foundation, and; a paper written by the Yankee Institute regarding tobacco issue. Andy reminded the taskforce members that each of them was appointed by the Governor or one of the legislative leaders. One additional member is to be appointed by Senator Looney, hopefully before the next meeting.

Members introduced themselves and described what they do, and why they have an interest in tobacco issues and this task force.

Andy Salner stated that the SustiNet board is hoping to complete a report regarding reducing tobacco abuse by children and adults in CT by July. Andy stated that there are several other groups currently working on this project that will provide assistance, and they may participate in the meetings. The Public Health Institute is working on a White Paper that will be completed in January that will prove helpful in formulating ideas and plans for this taskforce from the science, economic and advocacy standpoints. He also stated that he

Members

David Gregorio • Barbara Koren • David Scribner • Frank Scifo

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and Jeanette have been invited to sit as ex officio members of the SustiNet Board of Directors in order to keep them informed of this task force's progress.

Vicki Veltri explained that there are five advisory committees that have been created by the Board of Directors: Preventive Healthcare, Medical Home, HIT, Health Equity and Provider Advisory. There are three task forces that have been created: Tobacco and Smoking Cessation, Obesity and Healthcare Workforce Task Force.

Andy Salner reported that Senator Williams said that this taskforce's effort will ultimately benefit residents of the state, by having recommendations that the legislature might be interested in related to smoking cessation and smoking control in general. Andy stated that his is an opportunity to take a look at evidence, hear from experts, and come up with something that could inform the SustiNet process and to help advise the Public Health Committee and the legislature in general about things we might do to reduce the burden of tobacco on the state and improve the health and welfare of our residents.

Rep. David Scribner said that we will need to be mindful of legislative timeframes during this process. This year the session begins the first week of February and will be a short session, concluding the first week of May. Rep. Scribner stated that there are substantial funds that have been received as part of the tobacco settlement, and the legislature is committed to using them for prevention and control of the use of tobacco. There is evidence showing that preventive measures work for youth.

Andy Slaner said that CT receives \$ 420 million per year from the tobacco settlement and taxes, and these funds are dedicated to prevention and cessation. He reported that CT is still not reaching the CDC recommendations for using these funds. He expects the taskforce to come up with many recommendations for how to spend these funds.

An unidentified speaker stated that there are many very good programs that are already being utilized, and we can help to augment and fortify what is in place. If something already exists, it is easier to develop it further. Some of the programs have good track programs already.

Andy Salner said that we need to discuss what our meeting schedule will be and what our planning needs will be. He expressed the need to meet at least monthly. Andy suggested that the taskforce needed to decide whether we need to form subgroups, and decide how to engage outside constituencies to contribute to the taskforce's work.

Jeannette DeJesus would like to suggest that the taskforce set up a process for having conference calls right from the beginning. She also asked if taskforce members are not able to attend, should members send folks to represent them.

Rep. Scribner said that he believes that the legislation for this effort goes by specific appointment, and doesn't make the provision to have an alternate. He fully supports the

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suggestion for conference calls. He stated that the taskforce would need to convene periodically but telecommunications will allow the taskforce to do our work in between meetings, and will prove helpful to any subgroups that may be formed. This will help in keeping on track for timelines.

An unidentified speaker asked whether because this is a public meeting that is going to be recorded, can the taskforce use conference calls?

Vicki Veltri said that the taskforce can use conference calls, as long as the calls are available to the public. The Office of the Healthcare Advocate (OHA) can set up the calls. OHA will need the names the members who need to be part of the meeting, and there can be a listen only portion for the public. OHA needs to know in advance of the calls, so that we can post it in time for the public to know that the meeting will be by conference call.

An unidentified speaker stated that there seem to be two options: One would be to have the meeting at the LOB, but theoretically to have only a couple of members there and everyone else participating by conference call, in which case the public could be here. Another option would be to have certain meetings where members aren't present in the LOB at all, just on the phone.

Vicki stated that the members can do the telephone only, but it can also be done as suggested by the speaker. For conference calls, only use certain rooms in the LOB can be used.

Frank Scifo said that he thinks that conference calls are great, because more time can be spent on meetings. He also said that the members would miss a little bit of body language, but that's clearly outweighed by the fact that it helps the taskforce become more efficient.

An unidentified speaker said that we need to try to reach a consensus on a meeting day and time.

An unidentified speaker said that late afternoon or early evening is good, 4 or 5:00 on a day between Monday through Thursday.

Vicki Veltri suggested the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00 pm.

Andy Salner said that our next meeting will be on December 16, 2009. He can work with Jeanette and Vicki on figuring out the meeting dates from now until July.

Vicki said that the new website for SustiNet, www.ct.gov/sustinet has a calendar. If everyone is agreeable to the third Wednesday of each month, the meetings will be posted there.

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Andy Salner asked Vicki if formal minutes are being taken for these meetings, or if someone from the taskforce should be doing that. Vicki said that a staff person will be doing that. The meetings are recorded, and the minutes will be typed up and sent to the whole task force as a draft, in advance of the next meeting. This will allow everyone to review it, make comments, and approve it.

An unidentified speaker said that there may be some issues that will involve more time than others, and that maybe when this is the case, the taskforce can hold a “mini retreat” allowing more time to be spent with presentations, etc.

Jeannette DeJesus said that her understanding was that planning meetings do not all have to be public, so that if there was a need for a retreat and more time was needed, then it could be held off site and not recorded. She asked for comments from counsel. Vicki said that it depends, that the meetings should be open to the public if it's the full task force. The draft documents shown may not be subject to this law. Frank Scifo asked if there is such a thing as executive session on a committee like this. Vicki responded that it is highly unlikely that this would go into executive session. Vicki said it's best to presume that everything that's done is potentially disclosable.

Andy Salner said that some time should be set aside at meetings for any member of the public present to address the task force with questions or comments. An unidentified speaker felt that this time should be strictly limited in order to keep the length of the meetings reasonable. Also invited guests would be allowed time to speak. An unidentified speaker said that when guests are invited, more time should be allotted.

Andy Salner said that the taskforce should have a plan for how to get started with this. He felt that members should present data at the next meeting. Statistics, healthcare costs and progress thus far should all be considered. The Yankee Institute White Paper provides some of that, but there are other documents that the taskforce could look at to show members the scope of the problem. Then members could look at the issues one by one, and determine what direction to go in. He said that he and Jeanette would work on pulling together data for the next meeting.

David Gregorio said that the taskforce ought to be very aggressive in seeking out well established data sources. An unidentified speaker said that the chairs can lead the members in identifying what the targeted goals are and what the timeline is. An unidentified speaker said that the document entitled “SustiNet Tobacco Task Force” helps to define what is anticipated and points out goals. The same speaker stated that members may need to study this individually and then collectively come up with a more specific definition of our goals. Andy Salner said that the workplan clarifies some of the goal statement. He asked that everyone familiarize themselves with the workplan before the next meeting. Vicki said that all goals must be within the framework of the SustiNet plan. She also said that any data can be posted on the task force's website, so that all members will have access to it. An unidentified speaker said that all members should familiarize themselves with the language

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that is used in the plan, so that the taskforce stay within the boundaries of what we are here to do.

Barbara Koren said that there are issues to do with bootlegging and illegal sales that are not included in reports, and that she can provide data on these issues. Retail stores may not be selling to minors, but there are sellers working out of their cars who will sell to anyone. Andy Salner said that we would be interested in all data.

An unidentified speaker said that on the workplan that one of the taskforce's results is the development of a comprehensive plan. This can be either very broad or very detailed. He feels that something more detailed would be better. An unidentified speaker said that there may be planning documents from other organizations that the members can endorse. At the next meeting the members can look at some of the categories of the problem, and begin to prioritize. An unidentified speaker said that inviting stakeholders to our meetings can help to enhance an already created effort.

Andy Salner said that on the agenda for the next meeting, there will be data provided. The taskforce will begin to categorize some of the issue groupings and begin to prioritize them. Members will discuss data, and ask persons associated with the data if they'd like to present it. DPH has experts in tobacco control, so perhaps they would be willing to attend. An unidentified speaker said that all data received should be sent to a central location, so that members aren't duplicating the same data. An unidentified speaker asked that if there is something pertinent that is going to be posted in a central location, he'd appreciate receiving an email notifying him of this, due to time constraints. One speaker said that if anyone finds "Priority Data," they could notify everyone by email to check out the website. Vicki Veltri said that people can sign up for e-alerts, notifying them when there is something new that has been posted to the website. She also asked that people e-mail any pertinent information to her, and that she will be sure that it's posted onto the SustiNet website. She also asked that all of these types of e-mails be sent by just one person, so that they can be easily identified. Andy Salner volunteered to be the person who will vet the data and send it to Vicki.

Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting December 16, 2009 4:00 pm, LOB Room 1C