



Mayor's Task Force on Youth Alcohol & Drug Use

Tuesday, March 10, 2009 – 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Northfield Community Resource Center

Members Present: Curt Benson, Kathy Cooper, Jon Denison, Sharon Henry, Joan Janusz, Mary Nelson Susan Sanderson, Kris Vohs

Members Absent: Pat Allen, Ken Engstrom, Patty Gallivan

Guests: Ahmed Ali, Tom Graupmann, Judi Malecha, Kris Matson, Callie Nelson, Zach Pruitt, Chris Winterfeldt

Members were welcomed to the meeting. Motion by Kris V. to approve the February 2009 minutes, seconded by Joan. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Tom Graupmann – Northfield High School Activities Director

Tom mentioned that he had been in contact with Patti McDonald from Lakeville, following her visit to the Mayor's Task Force last fall. Tom is exploring partnering with several other school districts in the region to bring the Pure Performance initiative to Northfield. By partnering with these other districts, the costs could be shared.

Tom envisions two main components to the project:

- 1) A "Signing Night" where athletes publicly sign a pledge that they will not use. Each athlete's pledge will also be signed by their sport's captains, their coach, and their parents/guardians. It is possible that there would be a separate pledge for coaches and parents, too.
- 2) Education about the effects of alcohol on athletes – In addition to incorporating it into the Fall Activities Night, Tom envisions offering trainings to coaches, athletes, and larger groups (parents, community, etc.) on this topic and the science behind it.

Task Force members voiced their strong support for Tom's work in this area and offered ongoing assistance. Tom anticipated help would be needed in launching Pure Performance and in raising awareness about the effort (possibly through guest columns in the newspaper, KYMN radio spots, etc.).

Tom also shared information about how he responds to reports of youth in athletics/activities using drugs or alcohol. He stressed that his office is able to act when they have facts. They investigate rumors, but cannot set consequences based on rumors or on students telling on other students. He said they can use Facebook pictures as "evidence." Most of their reports come from the Police Department, who are required to inform the schools of underage consumption and substance use citations.

Tom would like to do more captains training to really emphasize the role that captains play in setting norms for the teams.

Tom shared the number of chemical violations that his office has had each year since he started (in a follow-up email, he provided additional breakdowns by substances, which appear below):

School Year	Number of Chemical Eligibility Issues – athletics and activities	Breakdown by substance
2001-02	62	Not available
2002-03	35	Alcohol=21; Marijuana=6; Tobacco=8
2003-04	10	Alcohol=5; Marijuana=1; Tobacco=4
2004-05	11	Alcohol=7; Marijuana=2; Tobacco=2
2005-06	41	Alcohol=24; Marijuana=6; Tobacco=9; Other=2
2006-07	28	Alcohol=12; Marijuana=6; Tobacco=10
2007-08	12	Alcohol=8; Marijuana= 3; Other=1
2008-09 – to-date	26	Alcohol=21; Marijuana=6; Tobacco=9; Other=1

“Other” is another type of drug. No additional delineation of “other” is possible due to data privacy issues.

2009 Budget – Revisions based on action plans

Zach shared a summary document outlining the funding requested for each of the Task Force’s action items. See handout. The Task Force members agreed to further review this over the course of the next month and then vote on the revised budget at the April 2009 meeting.

Presentation to the City Council

It was suggested that the Task Force aim to present twice per year to the City Council. Kris V. thought that the April 20 meeting might be a good time for the group to present; he offered to bring it up with Mayor Rossing and City staff to try and get it on the agenda. Sharon and Mary offered to present for the Task Force.

Membership

Mayor Rossing asked the Task Force to submit a list of its members for the upcoming year so that they could be re-approved by the City Council. Kris Matson, Judi Malecha, and Ken Malecha are interested in joining the Task Force as official members.

Guest Columns in the *Northfield News*

Joan shared information on a recent meeting with the *Northfield News*. The *News* remains committed to running monthly columns from the Task Force. Joan passed out a schedule to solicit Task Force members to write columns. The Task Force will also ask others in the community to author columns on given subjects under the Task Force’s logo.

Kris Matson offered to write a column on Suboxone and the Northfield Hospital’s program to help those with opioid dependence.

Kris Matson also shared that she recently read an article from Portage, Michigan, about heroin issues facing that community. It was suggested that contact could be made with individuals there to see how they are handling the issue.

Adult Responsibility Committee

The Adult Responsibility Committee requested approval to mail the prom flyer again this year. The Task Force unanimously approved this, with the suggestion that it be aimed primarily at parents.

Court Monitoring

The court monitoring program continues. Reports from the Rice County Attorney's Office indicate that the monitors' presence and the Victim Impact Statements are having impacts on how the judges are handling these cases. Additional research is needed into whether the group can wear identifying buttons, as this may not be allowed.

Mock Crash

Kathy reported that the Mock Crash is scheduled for May 13 at 1:00 p.m., with May 15 as the rain back-up. It will last for approximately one hour and will take place on the east side of the Northfield High School. The crash is for the high school's juniors and seniors. A postcard will again be mailed to parents, inviting them to attend (or at least sparking conversations at home about the crash and the importance of not drinking and driving). Scott Richardson from Northfield Hospital is working with the committee on the publicity efforts.

Heroin on the Cannon: Legal Troubles

A follow-up to the event at the Main Street Moravian Church is scheduled for Sunday, April 19, from 3:00-6:30 (with dinner following). The event will cover the legal aspects of heroin and opiate use in Northfield. Panelists include (among others) Judge William Johnson, Rice County Attorney Paul Beaumaster, Northfield Police Chief Mark Taylor, Northfield Public Schools Superintendent Chris Richardson, and parents of youth who have had legal troubles relating to drug use. The event will be held again at the Main Street Moravian Church on Division Street.

Agenda for April Task Force meeting

Northfield Police Chief Mark Taylor and Rice County Sheriff Richard Cook will be joining the Task Force at its April meeting. In addition, the Task Force suggested the following items be included in the April agenda if time allows:

- Membership and Communications strategy
- 2009 Budget Revisions
- Review of In-service on City Boards and Commissions
- Alcohol Training

Motion by Kathy C. to adjourn, seconded by Sharon. All approved.

Respectfully submitted by Zach Pruitt