

**Tobacco Use Prevention & Control
Commission Meeting Minutes
January 31, 2025
Zoom Meeting
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Voting Members Present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Robert Nichols – Chair • Dr. Teresa Aoki • Mattie Kompsie • Abbie Harmison • Lorene Mein, ARNP - Vice Chair 	Non-Voting Members Present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Susie Sher, ODCP • Senator Herman Quirmbach • Emilie Stewart
Voting Members Not Present: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sellah Ambundo • Bridget Saffold 	Non-voting Members Not Present <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative Anne Osmundson • Courtney Sweet • Melissa Walker, Dept of Education • Senator Julian Garrett • Representative Adam Zabner
Behavioral Health Staff: Tabetha Gerdner, Patti Manna, Jill Wright Guests: Jessica Ekman, Kristina Hamilton, Erin Heiden	

- I. Introductions & Welcome** **Dr. Robert Nichols**
 The meeting was called to order at 10:01 am by Dr. Robert Nichols.
- II. Approval of Meeting Minutes** **Dr. Robert Nichols**
 The November 22, 2024, minutes were distributed to the Commission members. Lorene Mein motioned to approve the minutes; Teresa Aoki seconded the motion.
- Dr. Robert Nichols facilitated a discussion noting that the minutes reflected a discussion of the recommendation for a Tobacco Ad Hoc Committee to be included in the Council on Health and Human Services (HHS Council). The next meeting of the HHS Council is February 28th, 2025, 10am-2pm via Zoom. Lorene Mein has been in contact with the HHS Council representative, Rebecca Peterson, and has submitted a suggested member list for the Ad Hoc Committee. It has been requested that the Tobacco Commission submit a mission statement and short term goals for the Ad Hoc Committee.
- There was discussion on the suggestion of developing a Tobacco Coalition. Tabetha Gerdner is in discussion with HHS leadership regarding this and will make further decisions after the Feb 28th, 2025, HHS Council meeting. Dr. Nichols emphasized that there should be

youth representation and Senator Quirmbach emphasized that there should be public input. The motion to approve the minutes carried and the minutes were approved.

III. Legislative Report/Update **Legislators**

Senator Quirmbach has not seen any bills relating to tobacco to share with the Commission.

IV. Tobacco Use Prevention Program Update **Tabetha Gerdner**

Tabetha Gerdner gave an update from HHS which included the following:

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS) has announced the selection of Iowa Primary Care Association (Iowa PCA) to serve in a statewide capacity as the Administrative Service Organization (ASO) for the state's redesigned Behavioral Health System. Conversations with Iowa PCA about how to continue tobacco prevention efforts will be ongoing.

Tabetha Gerdner has been in conversation at the federal level regarding the prevalence of smart vapes that are being sold illegally in Iowa. These products combine multiple additive properties, and Iowa HHS is reviewing strategies to address the concern.

Updated 2023 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data has been disseminated. A question on the survey addressed the prevalence of individuals switching from combustible products to vaping products to quit combustible products, more information to come as the data is analyzed. Other areas of data that are being closely monitored are cancer rates among individuals with dual use of tobacco and alcohol, and the number of adults with disabilities and Medicaid members with elevated rates of smoking compared to the general population.

Tabetha Gerdner has met with the Department of Revenue regarding the vapor registry, the scheduled launch is on hold pending litigation.

There was a discussion on e-cigarette marketing. An example of marketing material being distributed to an individual under the age of 21 was shared with the Commission, along with examples of the prevalence of these materials being observed on school grounds. The Commission suggested submitting a complaint to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Center for Tobacco Products, which restricts the way tobacco manufacturers, retailers, and distributors can advertise and regulated tobacco products, especially marketing efforts designed to appeal to youth. A link was provided.

V. Iowa Tobacco Prevention Alliance (ITPA) Update **Kristina Hamilton**

Kristina Hamilton, American Lung Association, has been educating HHS members and advocating for the introduction of a bill to add an excise tax on e-cigarettes, and also to increase the cigarette tax. Also shared was that the American Lung Association has released the Lung Association's 2025 "State of Tobacco Control" report.

VI. Iowa Students for Tobacco Education Prevention (ISTEP) **ISTEP Youth**

Emilie Stewart reported on updates for ISTEP. There are 60 ISTEP chapters registered with 11 of those being new. After the ISTEP Summit, there were 10 youth that submitted applications to be on the council, and all were invited to attend training. Six individuals completed the training so there are now 15 members.

VII. Other Attendee Reports

A. Attorney General's Office

Lynzey Kenworthy

Lynzey Kenworthy was not available.

B. Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP)

Susie Sher

The ODCP has been working with the Department of Revenue to manage funds generated by a new Iowa law. Senate File 345, in effect as of January 1, 2025, regulates and taxes the sale of devices in Iowa, including glass and metal smoking pipes. Questions regarding the revenue from the tax, which goes to specialty courts and diversion programs, are being addressed.

C. Department of Education

Melissa Walker

Not in attendance.

D. Alcoholic Beverages Division (ABD)

Jessica Ekman

The ABD Tobacco compliance check program is up and running but there is not data to share publicly at this time.

VIII. Next TUPC Commission Meeting Agenda Topics

Dr. Robert Nichols

Dr. Nichols opened a discussion on future meetings. He noted that the terms for both himself, and the Vice-Chair will end on April 30th, 2025. There was discussion on the future meetings schedule, with an initial recommendation to vote on an interim chair. After further discussion, it was decided to continue with the previously approved schedule and hold the last meeting in March 2025.

There was discussion on preparation February 28th, 2025, HHS Council meeting. There was a suggestion to delegate the Chair and Vice-Chair to develop the mission and short term goals of the Ad Hoc Committee. Dr. Robert Nichols motioned to approve the suggestion; Teresa Aoki seconded the motion. The motion carried. Dr. Nichols stated he can be available to present at the HHS Council meeting.

IX. Public Comment

There was an opportunity for public comment.

Lorene Mein shared that there is a new tobacco treatment product, Pivot, which encourages behavioral changes by tracking tobacco use and replacing habits with new, healthier behaviors.

X. Adjournment

Robert Nichols motioned to adjourn: Teresa Aoki seconded the motion, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 am.