

**Tobacco Use Prevention & Control  
Commission Meeting Minutes  
March 28, 2025  
Zoom Meeting  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

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

- I. Introductions & Welcome** **Dr. Robert Nichols**  
The meeting was called to order at 10:02 am by Dr. Robert Nichols.
- II. Approval of Meeting Minutes** **Dr. Robert Nichols**  
The January 31, 2025, minutes were distributed to the Commission members. Teresa Aoki motioned to approve the minutes; Abigail Harmison seconded the motion. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.
- III. Health and Human Services (HHS) Council Updates** **Dr. Robert Nichols**  
Dr. Nichols attended the February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Health and Human Services (HHS) Council meeting. The Tobacco Commission ad hoc committee was not on the agenda for this meeting. Dr. Nichols Provided a clarification that the Tobacco Commission will need to provide a mission statement and goals prior to being listed on the agenda. Dr. Nichols was able to share the Tobacco Commission goals set in September 2024 during the public comment session of the meeting. Dr. Nichols is in contact with Chairperson Peterson and will request to be on the May 28, 2025, HHS Council meeting agenda.

#### **IV. Legislative Report/Update**

**Legislators**

Senator Quirmbach provided updates on three bills in the senate.

Senate File (SF) 604, relating to the measurement of units sold for purposes of cigarette and tobacco regulation and taxation, has passed out the Ways and Means committee.

SF 612, relating to the cigarette and tobacco product regulations including vapor products by requiring electronic filing of returns and other related matters, has been introduced and placed on the Ways and Means committee calendar.

SF 475, relating to imposing a tax on certain products containing nicotine or non-nicotine substances, creating the Iowa cancer research fund, and including effective date provisions, passed out of HHS committee and is headed towards the full Ways and Means committee. They are considering an amendment to define products in a way that will encompass the variety of ways the products could be described.

It was noted that House Study Bill (HSB) 321, which amends various sections of the Iowa Code to regulate and tax both traditional tobacco products and heated tobacco products, also has a tax implication.

#### **V. Tobacco Use Prevention Program Update**

**Tabetha Gerdner**

Tabetha Gerdner shared that the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced the selection of Iowa Primary Care Association (Iowa PCA) to serve in a statewide capacity as the sole Administrative Service Organization (ASO) for the state's redesigned Behavioral Health System. HHS is working on onboarding Iowa PCA for guidance and vision to ensure continuity of care. Contracts are being reviewed, and community partnerships will not see a lot of changes. Planning for Fiscal Year 2027 has begun to ensure the prevention system is intact.

Tabetha Gerdner encouraged everyone to attend the HHS Townhalls that are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month at 4pm. Recordings of the meetings will be made available.

Tabetha Gerdner is working with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) project officer to keep up to date with any changes that may occur at the federal level. No updates or changes to the expected contract extension are available at this time.

Tabetha Gerdner shared that presentations on smart vapes that are being purchased illegally have been found in schools. HHS is working on targeted messaging towards schools and parents.

#### **VI. Iowa Tobacco Prevention Alliance (ITPA) Update**

**Kristina Hamilton**

Kristina Hamilton, American Lung Association, has been working with Senator Klimesh to amend SF 475 to ensure taxes are imposed on certain products containing nicotine or non-nicotine substances.

ITPA is opposed to SF 1212/HSB 321, which amends various sections of the Iowa Code to regulate and tax both traditional tobacco products and heated tobacco products. ITPA believes these products should be taxed at the same rate as cigarettes.

House File (HF) 781, which would close the casino loophole does not look like it will pass out of senate committee.

**VII. Iowa Students for Tobacco Education Prevention (ISTEP) ISTEP Youth**  
Emilie Stewart reported on updates for ISTEP. ISTEP now has 60 chapters, of which 11 are new. ISTEP held a successful spring council retreat, welcomed new council members, and planned for next year. ISTEP is developing Art Against Addiction kits.

**VIII. Other Attendee Reports**

**A. Attorney General's Office Lynzey Kenworthy**

Lynzey Kenworthy shared the Attorney General's Office is evaluating the impact of the Master Settlement Agreement. The Department of Revenue has had a voluntary stay of the roll out of the vapor directory pending federal legislation. The 2025 Tobacco Policy and Responsible Retailing Conference will be held April 22-23, 2025.

**B. Office of Drug Control Policy (ODCP) Susie Sher**

Not in attendance.

**C. Department of Education Melissa Walker**

Melissa Walker has been forwarding the ISTEP Summit information to school nurses and working with schools on vape disposal processes.

**D. Alcoholic Beverages Division (ABD) Jessica Ekman**

The Alcoholic Beverages Division has completed approximately 2800 underage tobacco compliance checks, which is about an 88% compliance rate.

**IX. Final Commission Meeting Reminder Dr. Robert Nichols**

Dr. Nichols reminded Commissioners that this is the last Tobacco Commission meeting. Dr. Nichols thanked the Commission for their work and expressed gratitude for allowing him to serve on the Commission.

**X. Public Comment**

There was an opportunity for public comment.

Senator Quirnbach expressed gratitude for all the work that the current and past Commission members have done to further the goals of the Commission.

Dr. Aoki expressed gratitude and appreciation for the Commission and their work, especially the work that is being done by the youth leaders.

Kristina Hamilton thanked the leaders and youth leaders for the progress made and looks forward to staying connected.

Lorene Mein expressed appreciation for the work that has been done by the Commission.

**XI. Adjournment**

Robert Nichols motioned to adjourn: Teresa Aoki seconded the motion, and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Meeting minutes were not reviewed by Commission members as there were no further meetings.