

From: Jim Wilusz Jim@tritownhealth.org
Sent: Sep 25, 2025 10:17:12.000000000 UTC
Subject: Re: Brainstorming
To: Maureen Buzby mbuzby@cityofmelrose.org

Thanks Maureen before I forget definitely check your audio on your computer cause it was pretty bad. I thought it was our issue but when Ken spoke, it was Crystal clear. This is the problem in Berkshire County. We haven't had CP mobilization efforts in about 20 years and no 84 chapters in a long time. there's not enough time for me to do it all with the limitations in our tobacco budget. Our Tritown boards are pretty aggressive but at the same time it's difficult to be the only ones doing this. I was thinking about possibly hosting a webinar educational session specifically on this topic to bring in subject matter experts and have it recorded and invite several boards of health and stakeholders to the meeting, but set it up in a way where we don't get destroyed by the tobacco retailers. Any thoughts on getting a subject matter panel together on this? Quite a few people. Sent from my iPhone

> On Sep 24, 2025, at 9:07 PM, Buzby, Maureen <mbuzby@cityofmelrose.org> wrote:

>

> Absolutely. We need to find some subject matter experts out west. □

> I'll definitely come but I have a flexible schedule. People who have kids in school or a regular-hours- fulltime job would be hard pressed to make that drive. Ken would probably drive out from Belchertown.

> I think I know a doc at UMass Amherst. I'll check.

> If it's hybrid we will have lots of folks available.

> Mark Gottlieb from NUPHAI (Mark Gottlieb will tell the Board that the Public Health Advocacy Institute will defend pro bono any municipality that gets sued for adopting NFG, just as they did Brookline. We are on firm legal ground but that doesn't keep people from suing, of course. NU will provide legal representation. That's huge for some communities.

> Kate Silbuagh, BU Law School professor (co-petition in Brookline)

> Anthony Ishak, MGH pharmacologist (co-petitioner in Brookline)

> Dr. Ross Merkin, MGH head and neck surgeon

> Dr. Zack Rich, Boston Medical oncologist

> Dr. Greg Sawicki, Children's Hospital Pediatric pulmonologist

> Dr. Jeanne MacDonald, MGH pediatrician

> Dr, Jonathon Winickoff, MGH pediatrician and well-known tobacco addiction specialist

> And more...

> Maybe Chirs Bostic from ASH if there is a virtual option. Global expert. He came to Boston to testify at the hearing at the State House in July.

>

> For the next meeting (good move by the way, to have a BOH meeting devoted to the topic) we want to focus on having experts present.

> For a public hearing if it comes to that, which I hope it will, we need local residents. Especially young people. Any 84 chapters out there?

>

> I'll be in Stoughton tomorrow night with Reilly Ellis. Stoughton is a long shot but there are folks in the Substance Use Prevention collaborative who want it. Don't know how conservative or liberal the BOH is.

>

> I presented to Tri-Town Council (Middleton/Topsfield/Boxford) this past Friday. Not the BOH but these folks can be the champions.

>

> North Reading is holding three listening sessions to allow them to gauge community awareness/support before moving to a public hearing.

>

> Rockport invited Joyce and me to present but Joyce was sick and it got tabled for

a future meeting.

>

> Anyway, a lot going on. Like you said, there is momentum. Nothing wrong with being first or an early adopter. Something to be proud of. Lee/Lennox/Stockbridge can lead the way out in your neck of the woods.

>

> When Stoneham voted (conservative, blue-collar town) they became the first BOH in the world to adopt NFG. (Brookline did it as a bylaw, not a BOH regulation.) Took courage but they did it! Afterwards, when they had a chance to reflect on what they did, they said, "We've never been first at anything." They are quite proud.

>

> And as Ken said, every day more and more kids pick up their first high-nicotine content product. So much more nicotine than cigarettes.

>

> One last thing, and we can cover this in the BOH next meeting, one of your board members wondered what our experience to date is. Only Brookline has had the policy long enough to even think about that. All other municipalities that adopted NFG have a 1/1/2025 or later effective date. My six communities that have NFG all have a 1/1/2004 cutoff date and a 1/1/2025 effective date so were early on.

> No stores in Brookline have closed because of NFG - and we don't expect that in other communities either. It's a slow rollout which gives retailers time to adjust. We don't have YRBS data yet. Too early.

> But we know that reducing access reduces use.

>

> Let me know what documents you think would be helpful. Anything you want us to answer or share before that next meeting is set up?

>

> And as I said, if NFG shows up on the agenda, retailers, distributors, trade association execs, smokers' rights groups will all show up. NECSEMA and NATO have services that provide info about BOH agendas. They have the money. They can do that. We are all volunteers. But we are committed!

>

> Hope your meeting didn't go too long.

>

> Talk soon,

> Maureen

>

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Jim Wilusz <Jim@tritownhealth.org>

> Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2025 8:22 PM

> To: Buzby, Maureen <mbuzby@cityofmelrose.org>

> Subject: Brainstorming

>

> I may reach out to you next couple weeks to think about ideas on who to bring to a meeting about this NFG.

> Sent from my iPhone

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