

VERMONT TOBACCO EVALUATION AND REVIEW BOARD

BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, April 1, 2015

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Department of Liquor Control

Minutes

Members Attending: Amy Brewer, Scott Connolly, Barbara Cimaglio, Mike Hogan, Matt Shear, Darlene Peterson, Dawn Fuller-Ball, Bob Uerz, Helen Wagner, Alexi Potter
Guests Attending: Rebecca Ryan (on phone), Rhonda Williams

Meeting started 3:01pm

Welcome new members

Bob Uerz – AOE Secretary's designee
Matthew Shear – Person under 30
Senator Anthony Pollina

March Meeting Minutes

CDC budget for VDH down by \$51,000 (correct March minutes to reflect this correction).
Mike moved to approve the March 4, 2015 minutes. Alexi second. All voted in favor. Minutes approved.

Public Comment

none

Announcements

VDH provided update on the Down and Dirty Campaign. This is a prevention campaign aimed at rural youth, which is the highest prevalence youth population for tobacco use. VDH will enhance evaluation measures with the help of new evaluation contractor, JSI, in addition to CDC which is very interested in the campaign and an alignment of this work with CDC's indicators under new five-year cooperative agreement.

VDH will be adding more data to 2014 cessation data slide deck (presented at March meeting) based on requests from the cessation committee around population of text users and gender differences.

Action: Rhonda will provide Kate with the updated slide deck when it becomes available and Kate will add the updated slide deck to the VTERB website.

Helen shared that yesterday the National Association of Attorneys General Center for Tobacco and Public Health released their MSA receipts projections/estimates. The data that the independent auditor has provided to the states is not complete. The receipts may be less than current projection. Current projection for Vermont is roughly \$22mil for MSA and roughly \$11.8 for the SCF, which is similar to earlier projections. Payments will be disbursed on the 15th and 17th of April 2015.

Media spring campaign – VOTE

The media committee recommended for Board approval the two CDC Tips ads: Terrie and Rose, as well as the Counter Balance spring media campaign. Rhonda handed out description of Quit Tips including target audience, goals, buy, proposed budget and the estimated reach of the Quit Tips ads media buy. (See supplemental materials section on VTERB website). Spring media buy will feature three ads for the spring campaign: Amanda (Board previously approved), Terrie and Rose. VDH is working with their maternal and child health division and WIC program to promote pregnancy cessation services every April. To help support that effort decision was made to re-run Amanda. Other two ads address cancer with their messages.

Terrie's message of "don't smoke but if you do smoke quit" has more resonance than Rose's message of "be careful what you wish for." Does Rose's ad drive cessation? Given that CDC tested the ads and considering that they complement each other, one with a cessation message and the other addressing another physical impact from smoking behavior, VDH thinks this will be a successful run. Board members felt that the "don't wait and keep trying to quit" message comes through clearly.

VOTE: Helen moved to approve Quit Tips ads, Alexi seconded. All voted in favor. Tips ads for spring campaign is approved.

The media committee recommends Board approval of the CounterBalance campaign spring media buy. Rhonda handed out the initiative background sheet. CounterBalance is intended to educate Vermont parents about the impact point of sale tobacco advertising has on children's perceptions of tobacco and likelihood that they will eventually use tobacco. This second buy is similar in budget to the initial buy.

VOTE: Alexi moved to approve the spring CounterBalance media campaign, Scott seconded. All voted in favor. CounterBalance spring media campaign is approved.

Legislative Updates

The House Ways and Means committee discussed including a tobacco tax in the revenue package in the range of 25 cents to 75 cents. They are also considering the sugar-sweetened beverage tax. Early in the session there was talk about an electronic cigarette excise tax. It appeared to have died, but this week there was renewed committee interest in attaching that to health care bill, along with adding H.171 and/or H.233 to that bill.

Proposed Legislative Changes Discussion

Amy reminded board members about the proposed legislative language and budget changes that impact VTERB in FY16. Board chair, evaluation chair, and Board administrator testified before the House Human Services committee. The goal of testimony was to assert that Board independence and evaluation services are critical to the overall success of the Tobacco Control Program (TCP). Independence seems to have been secured, but not the budget for Board operations and evaluation. The Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Vermont is working diligently to advocate for restored funding. They are looking at other funding options such as the special RJ Reynolds settlement (\$1mil currently allocated to the general fund), and/or additional cigarette taxes. Tobacco Trust Fund is nearly zeroed out, unfortunately.

Kate and Amy met with Senator Pollina to welcome him to the Board and to explain the current funding situation. Ted Marcy and Brian Flynn (former VTERB chairpersons) are

meeting with Senators Kitchell and Snelling on April 8. Kate and Amy are also requesting a meeting with Senator Lyons.

Other discussion highlights:

- Board must prepare to ask for less funding, if that is the only option. Compromise is very important given the economic climate; it is unlikely we will get 100% restored funding.
- The Board must consider its values and prioritize what is most important in terms of its function. What are the ways in which compromises can be made and not critically damage overall success; what are the non-negotiables?
- Most programs do not have on-going evaluation built-in or is focused only on outcomes. Is it essential to the on-going success of the TCP? Do we have the resources in-state? Are there synergies that can be found elsewhere? The key would be to try to be creative about it and balance the needs of the program with the fiscal reality. As an example Dartmouth is a CDC partner to help tobacco control programs improve efforts and may perform some evaluation needs. VDH is in queue for this partnership if they are able to find a match. This may be something VTERB might consider if able to provide that match.
- On-going evaluation is very important and necessary for making changes and improvement along the way, versus waiting for outcomes to shift and then making program changes at a later date. Having on-going evaluation is more cost-effective and there is concern that moving to only outcomes-based evaluation would hurt the TCP in the long run. Just going to outcomes-based evaluation might hurt the TCP overall.
- When TCP started there wasn't the framework for tobacco control and prevention that now exists, and in the early years the TCP needed more robust evaluation efforts to guide the work. A lot of process evaluation may not now be as needed, and this may be one way VTERB could shift.
- If the TCP wanted to conduct new activities, or invest in something that didn't have an evidence base, we would want to enhance evaluation in that area, and that whichever program was doing this new work could invest some of the funds for evaluation. VTERB is doing this very thing with Point of Sale.
- Down and Dirty is another element that could use evaluation. VDH is thinking of how to leverage resources from all three states currently implementing Down and Dirty for joint evaluation activities.
- Caution: If you give up a whole line item, it may be for good.
- The Governor's office has asked agencies to use interns. Can VTERB use interns to conduct evaluation? This may be doable, but tricky in terms of supervision and funding restrictions. But there are likely people out there who might want the experience.
- Per site visit conversation with RTI should we look at how Vermont spends MSA dollars in education? Is there wiggle room in the education budget? AOE took a cut two years ago and AOE provides funding support to 52 SD/SUs. If we provide less and less, schools are left asking whether they can they do the work? VDH and AOE are committed to working together to look for synergies around prevention work. Schools are in their second year of funding in this grant cycle and that FY17 is the time to look at changes.
- There is money in different agencies/departments. Board has authority over VDH budget, but not other budgets. Any funding offered for Board operations and evaluation must be voluntary.
- Keeping Board administrator is the number one priority. Having an administrator is critical to the independence and function of Board operations. There are elements of the administrator position that many may not appreciate. The administrator helps the Board as an independent entity, providing organization, leadership and communication.

Without it, the board's effectiveness is threatened as well as the future of tobacco control in terms of having an independent external body of experts guide the work of TCP.

- Useful to look at other boards and how they are staffed. It is not the norm for boards to have full-time staff. Need to be able to articulate why position is still needed, the function, scope and extent of the position. Performance indicators provide description of the work.
- Looking at health systems work and how tobacco fits into it. Could VTERB be working with the Blueprint and Green Mountain Care Board? Is there an opportunity to broaden the administrator role to bridge these gaps? Can VTERB still have independence with funding coming from another stream?
- Priorities:
 1. Maintain administrative personnel position
 2. Compress the evaluation so that it is paired down
 3. Extend administrator role into areas we are currently contracting out

VDH Draft Budget Discussion

Draft VDH budget was shared. Rhonda presented draft budget line items. Conversation took place around reduction in funding for community coalitions, whether to reduce coalitions by one or to find reductions in another way. CAI budget is reduced; however, it is still important to maintain some level of training and professional development. CAI has been successful in building Vermont's skilled workforce. When the school and community sub-committee met in March, they discussed these options at length and determined that a full board discussion needed to take place around where to find the cuts.

VDH is working on an exercise of capturing of what funding in this and previous fiscal year for cessation and prevention programming generates in terms of data and how to better articulate what activities community coalitions are conducting. VDH also wants to improve communications and disseminating data around point of sale and earned media. When Rhonda has this information, she will send to Kate for dissemination to Board.

Committee Chair Reports

School and Community Programs committee met twice in March. Looking for creative ways to avoid changes to infrastructure. In-house training for a year? Eliminate a coalition (although this would create more gaps in coverage)? VDH and AOE finding some compressed synergies? No decisions for recommendation was made at this time.

Other Business/Information

Two individuals representing low income community are interest in the seat on the Board. One is a professional working in mental health and substance abuse. The other is a member of the low income community who is a volunteer for a non-profit community based organization. Amy asked the Board to consider both options. Person who can speak with the voice of "consumer" is preferred by the Board. Question was raised whether a current smoker poses a conflict of interest (such as whether they would see media information differently because they might actually be the target audience)? No conclusion drawn by the Board at this time.

Darlene shared that she will be leaving the Board in June. This will create an opening on the Board for the Person under 30 position. Do we want a rural teen?

Meeting adjourned at 4:57pm

May Meeting: Wednesday, May 6, 2015, 3:00pm