

Substance Misuse Prevention Oversight and Advisory Council (SMPC)

July 2026 Meeting Minutes

Date: July 27, 2026 Time: 1-2:50 PM	Mtg. Facilitator: Dr. Rick Hildebrant Mtg. Recorder: Heather Michaud Where: Microsoft Teams
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	Name	Organization and Role
X	Rick Hildebrant	Department of Health, Chair
X	Amy Brewer	Northwestern Medical Center, Vice Chair
	Mourning Fox	Department of Public Safety, Executive Committee Member
X	Monica Hutt	Agency of Administration, Executive Committee Member
X	Courtney O'Brien	Representing Courtney O'Brien, Agency of Education, Executive Committee Member
X	Kimberley Diamond	Big Brother Big Sister, Member
X	Kheya Ganguly	Department of Mental Health, Member
X	Maryann Morris	The Collaborative, Member
X	Janet Potter	Hartford Middle and High School, Member
	John Searles, Ph.D.	Department of Health (Retired), Member
X	Olivia Terranova	Vermont Judiciary, Member

Others Present: Beth Keister, Beth Shrader, Katie Stetler, Rhonda Williams

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Agenda Item	Lead	Minutes
Welcome and Introductions	Dr. Hildebrant	Dr. Hildebrant called the meeting to order and round robin introductions took place.
Review May 2026 Minutes	Dr. Hildebrant	Janet Potter moved, seconded by Kimberley Diamond, to accept the May Minutes as presented. The motion passed unanimously.
Member Updates – Prevention Work, Legislative Mandates or Successes	Dr. Hildebrant	- Amy Brewer reported the passage of S.198, a large tobacco control bill, that took effect for the most part on July 1, 2026. Major components of S.198 include: - Strengthened fines for retailers who sell tobacco or vaping products to minors. - A ban on tobacco and vaping products designed to resemble toys or school supplies. - Creation of a wholesale tobacco substitute license to track and strengthen enforcement. - Elimination of financial penalties for minors' possession, use or purchase of tobacco or vaping products, replacing punishment with referrals to support and treatment services. - Dr. Hildebrant requested clarification on provisions related to confiscation of tobacco products. Rhonda Williams clarified that schools may still confiscate tobacco and vaping products for youth under the age of 21, but the focus has shifted from penalization to connection with available treatment resources. - Maryann Morris noted the challenges schools face in implementing the new vape disposal law which is just beginning to take effect. She noted current inconsistencies in how confiscated vapes are stored and the lack of hazardous waste facilities in certain counties, thereby forcing schools to develop other partnerships for collection and disposal. - Janet Potter reported that until last year confiscated vaping devices from her district were sent to Rolf Parker who had a grant to study them. The grant supporting that work has or is ending however, leaving schools without a mechanism in place for next year for disposal and testing. Janet also reported that all vaping devices from the Hartford District that were confiscated and tested were found to contain lead. - Going forward, Rolf Parker may continue certain research activities through a different source of funding. The Health Department will continue to coordinate with tobacco prevention partners on vaping product collection and disposal efforts. It will also continue research collaboration efforts with partners including Dr. Villanti at Rutgers to support further testing and use findings from product testing to develop public health messaging.
Membership Outreach Status	Dr. Hildebrant	The discussion focused on ongoing efforts to fill identified gaps in membership as outlined in statute. Recruitment is active, responsibilities have been divided among the Executive Planning Committee, and progress is being tracked through a shared spreadsheet. Courtney O'Brien

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		offered a recruitment email template that council members can use to assist with outreach efforts. Council members were encouraged to recommend qualified candidates to ensure a broad diversity of perspectives and experiences.
Preparing for the Annual Report	Dr. Hildebrant	- The discussion focused on planning for the upcoming annual report to the legislature, noting the report required this year is the more comprehensive biennial version rather than the shorter annual report. - Monica Hutt noted that the next agenda item covering council structure, responsibilities and governance will feed the content of that report. She suggested that this year's report should mirror the council's organizational structure and standing agenda items. She said the report should do more than provide recommendations and should also highlight accomplishments, reflect current operations, as well as explain how the council's evolving structure supports its work. - Dr. Hildebrant reviewed statutory duties of the council and noted that some duties appear outdated or inconsistent with current practice. He suggested that this year's report acknowledge those discrepancies and support updates to better align statutory duties with the work the council is actually doing. - Report timeline was discussed, with emphasis on the need for early drafting of the report because it needs to be completed, reviewed and approved by the council, and submitted to the Department of Health for final review before submission to the legislature.
Discussion of Council Duties and Activities	Dr. Hildebrant	Katie Stetler shared this working document for discussion and invited feedback on current practices, gaps, future improvements and potential legislative recommendations. Discussion ensued in regard to behavioral addictions (gambling, technology, digital), strengthening substance misuse prevention for older adults, improving prevention education, the changing prevention landscape, strategic planning, strengthening relationships with prevention organizations, effectiveness and goal measurement methods, and balancing broader prevention efforts with statutory authority.
Public Comment	Dr. Hildebrant	None.
Next Steps	Dr. Hildebrant	- Katie Stetler will synthesize ideas from today's discussion and begin drafting strategic concepts that align with legislative requirements and council goals. - The Executive Planning Committee will propose a structured annual meeting plan that includes presentations, review time, and discussion for the coming year. - Agenda item for future meetings for continued work in this area.

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Adjourn	Dr. Hildebrant	• The meeting adjourned at 2:33 p.m.

Minutes approved on September 28, 2026