



ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

Opioid Advisory Council Minutes

Friday, April 11, 2025

9:00-11:00 am

Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402

Mission: *To improve health, save lives, and reduce the impact caused by opioids and other substances in Anoka County by managing opioid settlement funding and supporting strategic partnerships.*

Vision: *All Anoka County residents and partners are supported, engaged, and prepared to overcome the opioid crisis and meet the challenges related to substance use in the community.*

Called to Order by Patti Constant, Senior Program Specialist – Opioids, at 9:02 am

Present: Lori Lachner, Patti Constant, Chris McCook, Katherine Cole, Susan Ferron, Joe Amerman, Nancy Norman, Peggy McNabb, Carrie Wood, Krista Johnson, Joshua VanHeuveln, Corey Kohan, Troy Friesen, Derek Schuldt, Lacey Towe, Tim Kizer, Musab Adam, Megan Schueller, Randi Prebil, Diana Hoffman, Jess VanKuyk, Samantha Guthman, Ryan George, Christina Lefkowich, Reysel Castillo

Absent: Molly Nee, Justin McNeal, Nicholas Warnke, Melissa Olsen, Quita Curtis, George Borrell

Guest: James Johnson, Jr., Dakota County Opioid Prevention Coordinator

1. Welcome, Introductions, Moment of Grounding, and Approvals

- Patti welcomed everyone to today's meeting of the Opioid Advisory Council.
- A moment of silence was observed to honor all the people that we have lost to deaths of despair (including suicide, drug overdose, & alcoholism), all of those currently struggling with behavioral health challenges (substance use disorders, mental illness), those who are bravely walking the recovery path, and all the families, friends, community members, and supports that are impacted. Thank you. It is important to remember.
- A reminder from Patti: Every single person in this room brings a unique piece of knowledge, information, and experience. Every perspective helps provide a piece of a bigger picture – no one is more important than another. The magic of the group is that we are all together.
- This is also a field FILLED with acronyms. We become comfortable in 'our little piece of the puzzle' and think everyone shares that knowledge. I invite and encourage each of you to question/ask when things are unclear. We do NOT, nor should we, all come with the same background information, so we need to feel comfortable questioning/asking.





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Please feel comfortable using AcroKnock... if you hear someone using an acronym or language that you are not familiar with, please knock three times – it's a gentle/friendly reminder to us all.

- Self-introductions were made, along with commentary on springtime appreciation.
- Motion to approve the March 14, 2025, Advisory Council meeting minutes by Samantha Guthman. Second by Joshua VanHeuveln. Motion carried.
- Motion to approve the April 11, 2025, Advisory Council meeting agenda by Susan Ferron. Second by Corey Kohan. Motion carried.

2. Assorted County and Community Updates / Patti Constant

- Patti called on members to share on upcoming events, opportunities, trends or issues you are seeing, etc. What should this group be aware of?
 - Lacey Towe, Midwest Medical Examiner's Office, reported that (across all counties served) six cases were processed each day for the week of March 17, of which only two or three were not overdoses.
 - Carrie Wood, Anoka County Jail / Sheriff's Office, reported:
 - The naloxone portal is being transitioned from MDH to DHS. If you have recently applied to get naloxone through the portal, you are in a holding pattern. We had prior access to the portal and are managing to work through some of the changes and allocation designations. DHS is allowing orders of just a one-month supply at this time. Patti encouraged qualified agencies to continue to apply for portal access.
 - Carrie is working on collecting expired naloxone from the jail supply and making it available to others who can use it.
- Patti's Updates:
 - Naloxone distribution boxes have been delivered to our library sites for set-up and stocking with intramuscular naloxone and fentanyl testing strips. May lead to training some county staff to carry, for leave behind, and more. May host some opioid events at the libraries later this summer as well.
 - We are close to finalizing contracts with the seven RFP funding recipients. Draft contracts are currently being reviewed. Hoping to have them signed next week. Looking forward to discussing the RFP awards at next month's Advisory Council meeting.
 - Patti shared an email received from Fulcrum Health indicating they have received opioid funding through DHS to deliver patient education and non-pharmacological treatment services via a mobile physical medicine clinic to underserved communities in Anoka, Hennepin, and Ramsey counties. Fulcrum will use its broad network of high-quality physical medicine professionals to reduce spine and joint pain by delivering evidence-based physical medicine that addresses the underlying causes of chronic musculo-skeletal pain and reduces the reliance on opioids. The grant initiative goals are to increase pain management awareness and education, provide opportunities for





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individuals to receive effective, non-opioid treatments such as chiropractic, acupuncture, massage or physical therapy for pain management, establish a community-based referral system, reduce opioid use, and improve health outcomes. Patti has had an initial meeting with Fulcrum and will be meeting in person next week to learn more.

3. Prioritization Debrief Discussion

In preparation for potentially moving forward with a second round of RFPs, Patti facilitated a discussion on the prioritization process, recapping our meeting-by-meeting steps with Wilder and the timeline and process used that led to prevention and naloxone for the first round of funding.

May We each identified our first, second, and third top priorities as to how we would like to see the funding used. Following meeting, Wilder sent nine core abatement strategies from Johns Hopkins to council members to prioritize and return in time for the June meeting.

June Melissa shared the prioritizing results. We broke into groups of three for discussion and came up with important strategy elements using a four-quadrant model ranging from high impact/best bet to low-hanging fruit. Melissa compiled our data and then sent individual polls for us to complete as a way to see what the group felt was most important.

July Melissa presented summary of our efforts identifying prevention and naloxone as priorities. We started with naloxone. Had a big discussion at this meeting about naloxone initiatives, efforts, what is most important. We have been doing a lot of work on naloxone.

In August and September we did the same exercise for prevention to identify what is most important. We are now about to release our first RFP funding focused on prevention.

Patti asked council members to share their thoughts as to:

- What were the strengths of that process? What worked?
- What were things that could have been improved?
- Next month able to share RFPs, but how do we want to address our next priorities?
- How do we tackle the next one? Similar process? Different?

Randi Prebil acknowledged the amount of time and work that went into the process outside of these meeting times. If we plan to re-do this same process, should we address the amount of time it took?

Carrie wood pointed out how we each had our different priorities. So many things to focus on. How do you determine what is the most important?





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Lacey Towe suggested revisiting those surveys as a way to identify additional priorities. Corey Kohan agreed with the suggestion to look at the original data. Process itself was effective. It got people talking. One area we may want to spend more time thinking about would be considering potential challenges and barriers, and then possible solutions.

Samantha Guthman noted a need to address potential funding impacts. What will that look like in six months?

Randi Prebil suggested it may be helpful to relook at the four-quadrant exercise prior to revisiting the surveys. Patti agreed. Doing this after we share our RFPs would be great.

Krista Johnson acknowledged the important and effective work on both naloxone and prevention. She further noted, however, the folks who have been harmed by big pharma, some up to twenty years ago, who are not seeing anything from the settlement funding.

Tim Kizer raised a discussion on the need to also having been trained in first aid and CPR to go along with administering naloxone. Patti noted Troy has reached out to CPR and first aid instructors to ensure they know about naloxone training. Working to cross-pollinate that training. While chest compressions are mentioned in the naloxone kit instructions, has there been training or just the written notation in the kit? Troy agreed. When handing out naloxone kits we encourage people to get the needed training. Troy refers people to the Steve Rummeler HOPE Network website for online training.

Carrie Wood reported working to bring in classes to the jail to educate people who are going through addiction. Education toward an understanding as to what is behind the addiction. Trying to get people on the right path to look at things differently. Not just treatment, but how it started. What led to the addiction.

As people cannot self-administer naloxone, Joshua VanHeuveln raised a discussion on ideas or ways for folks to let people know they have a naloxone kit in their pocket – a bracelet, for example.

There was discussion on doing a training with an actual naloxone kit. Breaking the kit down, with a step-by-step demonstration. That is where the connection is made. You need to show them what is in the kit and how to use it.

4. Member Presentation – Musab Adam, Access Healing Center

Musam Adam reported on his family background and upbringing that led to him and a business partner acquiring Access Healing Center in 2020, offering culturally specific inpatient and intensive outpatient addiction treatment, and providing a better system and a safe space for overcoming social, economic, cultural, and legal barriers so clients can maintain long-term recovery.

Access Healing Center recently received a DHS grant effective in July to work with parents who are also in addiction. Will work to acquire sober homes for them so their kids can stay with their





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parents. Exciting about that funding. Great community partners can change lives.

5. Member Presentation – Joe Amerman, Anoka County Cannabis

Joe Amerman, Senior Program Planner, Cannabis, Anoka County Public Health, presented a PowerPoint overview of the work being done to implement, license, and manage the new cannabis industry here in Anoka County.

- How'd We Get Here? A timeline from the 2018 Farm Bill legalizing hemp at the federal level to the April 14, 2025, Minnesota Office of Cannabis Management's formal adoption of rules for business, allowing for legal retail sales.
- Difference between low and high potency THC products and impact.
- Roles and Responsibilities of the State, Counties, and Cities
- Minnesota's Licensing Process
- Short-Term Goals for Anoka County
 - Establish county ordinances regulating cannabis businesses.
 - Prepare for retail sales.
 - Develop an internal process for Anoka County
- Long-Term Goals
 - Ensuring Public Safety
 - Prevent youth access and promote responsible sales practices.
 - Address public concerns related to consumption, impaired driving, and responsible use.
 - Monitor public complaints and environmental impacts.
 - Supporting Anoka County Cities
 - Serve as a resource for cities as they develop their own regulations.
 - Act as advocate for cities connecting to the state.
 - Address any potential state and local law conflicts.
 - There will be legal challenges to existing state laws, and state laws will change.
 - We will continue working with the County Attorney's Office to ensure county law stays updated to reflect that.
- Other Work
 - Cannabis Expungement Board
 - School Curriculum
 - Track Proposed Amendments to Chapter 342

Thank you to Musab and Joe for today's member presentations.

6. Closing

- As always, reach out to Patti with questions, thoughts, and ideas.
- Next Meeting -- Friday, May 9, 2025, 9-11:00 am, Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402. We will go through those RFPs, figure out how they fit into our bigger picture, and where do we go from here?

Adjourn 11:06 am



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Patti Constant
Senior Program Specialist

Randi Prebil
Health Promotion and Planning Manager
PHES

Peggy McNabb
Administrative Services Supervisor

Approved: 5-9-2025





Anoka County Cannabis Update

Joe Amerman

Senior Program Planner - Cannabis

Respectful. Innovative. Fiscally Responsible.

How'd We Get Here?

- › The 2018 Farm Bill legalizes Hemp at the federal level.
- › July 1, 2022 - Minnesota allows hemp derived THC edibles. These were immediately available as 'low-potency' products for adult-use.
- › August 1, 2023 – Minnesota Legislation passed bill (HF 100) legalizing adult-use cannabis.
- › Mid-February, 2025 – Anoka County adopts Ordinance 2025-01, regulating cannabis businesses in the County.
- › February 18, 2025 to March 12, 2025 – State opens licensing application, receives 3,500 'high-potency' applications.
- › April 14, 2025 – The Office of Cannabis Management formally adopts rules for business, allowing for legal retail sales.



Difference between low and high potency

	Low-Potency THC	High-Potency THC
Source:	Derived from hemp, which is the non-flowering portions of the female and male	Derived from the flower of the cannabis plant
Where sold?:	Liquor stores, bars, convenience stores, etc	Licensed dispensaries (starting in 2025)
THC Limit:	5mg serving / 50mg package	No cap on flower potency (typically ranges from
Psychoactive:	Delta 8	Delta 9

› Takeaways

- Low-potency ≠ weak.
- The psychoactive in low-potency products has the same effect as high-potency.
- The use of 'low-potency' has created the incorrect impression that it is in some way safer.



State and County Responsibility

› State of Minnesota

- Responsible for administering 'high-potency' licenses through the Office of Cannabis Management.
- Establish business rules, product testing, and compliance standards.
- Regulate 'low-potency' registrations.

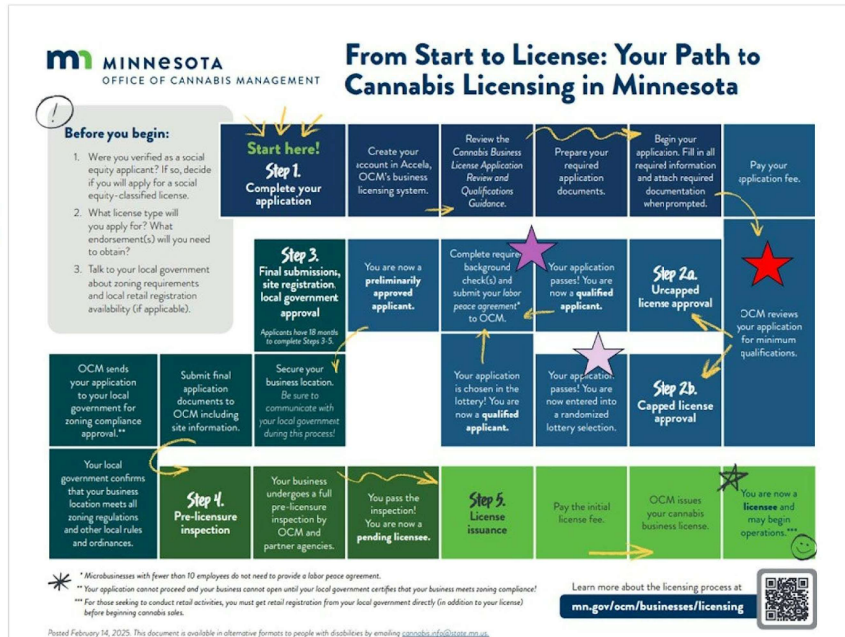
› County or City Role

- Business registration.
- Public health and safety.
- Zoning decisions in counties that have that responsibility.



State Licensing Process

- (1) Social Equity Apps submitted in 2024 that were teed up for lottery in capped license
- (2) Social Equity Apps that failed in 2024 that completed cure process in capped license



- Apps Submitted in 2025
- (1) Social Equity Apps submitted in 2024 that were teed up for lottery in uncapped license
- (2) Social Equity Apps that failed in 2024 that completed cure process in uncapped license



Short-term Goals

- **Establish County Ordinances Regulating Cannabis Businesses.**
 - Set population-based caps for “high potency” retail business.
 - 1 retail registration per 12,500 residents.
 - Buffers from schools, parks, etc.
 - 1,000 ft. from schools.
 - 500 ft. from daycares, youth facilities, parks, and treatment centers.
 - 500 ft. from Government Center.
 - Operational Hours:
 - Retail sales allowed 10:00am – 9:00pm, daily.
 - State law does not allow for more restrictive hours.
- **Preparing for Retail Sales**
 - Retail sales anticipated to begin in the second quarter of 2025 (April–May).
- **Internal Processes for Anoka County**
 - Develop procedures for handling registrations, compliance, and enforcement.
 - Anoka County currently has over 240 businesses registered to sell low-potency cannabis products.
 - Must allow at least 30 high-potency retailers, along with manufacturers, cultivators, and other license types.



Long-Term Goals

› **Public Health and Safety**

- Prevent youth access and promote responsible sales practices.
- Address public concerns related to consumption, impaired driving, and responsible use.
- Monitor public complaints and environmental impacts.

› **Supporting Anoka County Cities**

- Serve as a resource for cities as they develop their own regulations.
- Act as advocate for cities connecting to the state.

› **Address any potential state and local law conflicts.**

- There will be legal challenges to existing state laws, and state laws will change.
- We will continue working with the County Attorney's office to ensure County law stays updated to reflect that.



Other Work

› **Cannabis Expungement Board**

- Minnesota statutes allow for qualifying felony convictions to be expunged.
- Mandated to continue its work until all eligible cases have been addressed.

› **School Curriculum**

- MN Statutes require school districts to implement cannabis curriculum starting in 2026-27.
- Commissioner of Education is required to produce a model curriculum by June 1, 2025.

› **Track Proposed Amendments to Chapter 342**

- 33 proposed amendments in the 2025 legislative session.



How is this funded?

› Cannabis and Substance Use Prevention Grant

- In 2024, Anoka County received \$248,597.00
- Funds educational materials, trainings, and community engagement with the goal of promoting safe use and prevention strategies.

› Cannabis Tax Structure

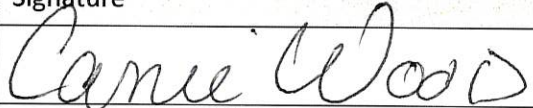

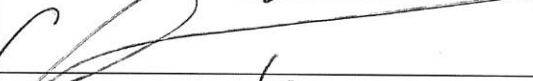
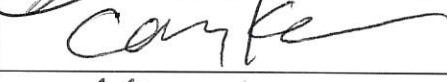








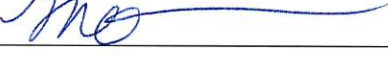

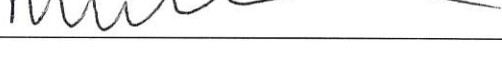
- Beginning in 2025, allocated in 2026, a 10% tax on all cannabis proceeds will be collected to fund future program management.
 - › Distribution:
 - 80% of tax proceeds to the state
 - 10% of tax proceeds split among Minnesota Counties
 - 10% of tax proceeds split among Minnesota Cities.

What's next?

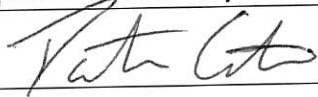

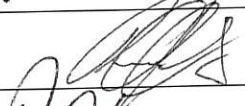
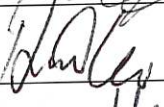



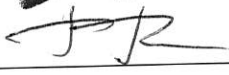

› Key Dates

- April 7, 2025 – Rules adopted by state,
 - › Anoka County adopts cannabis ordinance.
- Microbusinesses can immediately receive licenses.
 - › License application window opens.
- May or June – Capped licenses go through lottery.
 - › Includes manufacturers, cultivators, and larger retail operations.
- April 2025 (Start of Q2)
 - › Rules go into effect.
 - › Cannabis businesses with approved licenses and registrations may begin operations.

Anoka County Opioid Advisory Council Meeting Sign-In / April 11, 2025

Name	Signature	Representing
Carrie Wood		Operations Lieutenant, Anoka County Jail / Sheriff's Office
Chris McCook		Associate Health Education Specialist / Anoka County Public Health & AmeriCorps
Christina Lefkowich		Director of Treatment Service, Riverplace Counseling Center
Corey Kohan		Senior Manager, Rum River Campus Anoka County Community Corrections
Derek Schuldt		Narcotics and Violent Crime Lieutenant, Anoka County Sheriff's Office
Diana Hoffman		Senior Social Worker, Anoka County Social Services and Behavioral Health
Dorian Harvey		Community Member
George Borrell		Director, Anoka County Social Services and Behavioral Health
Jess VanKuyk		Senior Manager, Anoka County Children and Family Services
Joshua VanHeuveln		Chemical Health Professional, Anoka-Hennepin Schools
Joe Amerman		Cannabis Planner / Anoka County Public Health
Justin McNeal		Executive Director, Begin Anew Recovery
Katherine Cole		Supervisor, Anoka County Public Health Budget and Technology
Krista Johnson		Owner/Operator, Meraki Recovery Housing
Lacey Towe		Forensic Technician, Midwest Medical Examiner's Office
Lori Lachner		Community Member
Megan Schueller		Supervisor, Anoka County Behavioral Health and Substance Use Disorder
Melissa Olsen		Treatment Director Specialized Treatment Services, Inc.
Molly Nee		Senior Communications Specialist, Anoka County
Musab Adam		Director of Community Relations, Access Healing Center
Nancy Norman		Anoka County Attorney's Office
Nicholas Warnke		Community Member
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Anoka County Opioid Advisory Council Meeting Sign-In / April 11, 2025

Patti Constant		Opioid Prevention Specialist, Anoka County Public Health
Quita Curtis		Street Outreach Caseworker Salvation Army -- Anoka
Randi Prebil		Health Promotion and Planning Manager, Anoka County Public Health
Reysel Castillo		Community Health Coordinator, Neighborhood Health Source
Ryan George		Public Safety Director, City of Fridley
Samantha Guthman		Mental Health and Addiction Dir. Allina Health
Susan Ferron		Physician, NW Alliance Riverway Pain Clinic
Tim Kizer		Captain, St. Francis Fire Department
Troy Friesen		Associate Health Education Specialist / Anoka County Public Health & AmeriCorps
Jame Schmidt		Duluth City Opioid Prevention Coord.

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ANOKA COUNTY OPIOID SOLUTIONS INITIATIVE

Opioid Advisory Council

Agenda

Friday, April 11, 2025

9:00-11:00 am

Blaine Human Service Center, Room 2402

Mission: To improve health, save lives, and reduce the impact caused by opioids and other substances in Anoka County by managing opioid settlement funding and supporting strategic partnerships.

Vision: All Anoka County residents and partners are supported, engaged, and prepared to overcome the opioid crisis and meet the challenges related to substance use in the community.

Call to Order

1. **Welcome, Moment of Grounding, Introductions, and Approvals (9 to 9:10)**

- 3-14-2025 Meeting Minutes
- 4-11-2025 Meeting Agenda

2. **County and Community Updates (9:10 to 9:30)**

3. **Prioritization Debrief Discussion**

- How did the prioritization process go?
 - Strengths
 - Weaknesses
- How do we tackle the next one within the context of how it went and where we want to go?

4. **Member Presentation – Musab Adam, Access Healing Center**

5. **Member Presentation – Joe Amerman, Anoka County Cannabis**

6. **Closing** Next meeting: Friday, May 9, 2025

