



NATICK 180
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Remote Participation by Zoom

8:30 am August 2, 2023



MINUTES

Steering Committee Member or Designee	Organization	Sector Represented	Present	Absent
Dr. Catharina Armstrong, Chair	Newton Wellesley Hospital	Healthcare	✓	
Michael Boudreau, Vice Chair	Natick Health Department	Local Government	✓	
Matt Brand	Natick School Committee	Schools		✓
Donald Breda	Natick Board of Health	Local Government	✓	
Jessica Cliff	Natick Health Department	Local Government		✓
Art Ferguson	Natick Public Schools	Schools		✓
Chief Jason Ferschke	Natick Fire Department	Local Government	✓	
Johny Georges	Natick Fire Department	Local Government		✓
Adelaida Gibson	MetroWest Medical Center	Healthcare		✓
Christine Guthery	SPARK Kindness	Civic / Volunteer	✓	
Chief James Hicks	Natick Police Department	Law Enforcement	✓	
Lt. Chad Howard	Natick Police Department	Law Enforcement	✓	
Paul Joseph	Natick Selectboard	Local Government		✓
Sarallyn Keller	Natick Interfaith Leader Association / First Congregational Church	Religious / Fraternal	✓	
Lauren Lele	Newton Wellesley Hospital	Healthcare	✓	
Cheryle Lucenta	SOAR Natick	Other organization involved in reducing substance misuse		✓
Erin Miller	Natick Public Schools	Schools		✓

Katie Sugarman	Natick Health Department / Natick 180	Local Government	✓	
Staff				
Lizzy Chalfin	Natick Health Department / Natick 180	Local Government	✓	
Astrid Dretler	Natick Health Department / Natick 180	Local Government	✓	
Member(s) of the Public				



Link to Meeting PowerPoint: [SLIDES](#)

Citizens' Concerns: None.

Vote on **June 7, 2023 Steering Committee Meeting minutes**. A motion was made to approve the minutes "as is", seconded, and then approved by majority vote.

Natick 180 Updates and Announcements:

a) Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

- Friday, 8/25 at 4:30 - Purple Flag Installation at the First Congregational Church
- Saturday, 8/26 from 9AM to 1PM - Farmer's Market and Multicultural Day on the Town Common
- Sunday, 8/27 from 4 to 7 PM - Redhawk Fest at Natick High's Memorial Field
- Saturday, 9/9 from 10AM to 3PM - Natick Days in Natick Center

Natick 180 will have a booth at each of these events and is seeking volunteers to help out. Interested volunteers can fill out [this form](#).

b) Recovery Events and Activities

International Overdose Awareness Day

On Monday, August 28th at 5:30 PM Wayland is hosting a vigil in recognition of Opioid Overdose Awareness Day (August 31st). Natick 180 and other communities/organizations will have resource tables.

Recovery Month

Stay tuned for finalized information about Recovery Month events. The aim is for all of these Recovery Month activities to prioritize health and wellness. Messages will be centered around encouraging people to scale back substance use and drinking behaviors.

Current Ideas:

- 1) Local business involvement -Natick 180 will be encouraging businesses to celebrate Recovery Month in whatever way fits their business model (ie: restaurants can have a mocktail during the month; local gyms can offer a free class). Another idea for food venues is to name a food item on the menu in recognition of Recovery Month (ie: drink, smoothie, etc.) and then have the proceeds from purchases go to Natick 180, recovery efforts, etc.
- 2) A local Needham woman has created a "[Sober in the Suburbs](#)" group that includes a podcast, published book, and events/meetups. Natick 180 is currently working on planning an event with this group for Recovery Month.

- 3) Hosting a teen and young adult-focused panel that discusses substance use and how to prioritize health/wellness. We are planning to have this event sometime during the week of September 18th.

c) Planning for Fall events

Town Hall Meeting

This Town Hall would be an opportunity to educate the public about our local substance use trends and to present Natick 180's new Strategic Plan. This would also provide community members with an opportunity to get involved with and learn more about Natick 180. The group agreed to hold the event on **Wednesday, October 25th from 6:30 - 8:30 PM**. This would be good timing given that Prescription Drug Take Back Day is on October 28th and Halloween is on October 31st. During this event, we will showcase the trainings that Natick 180 offers including: QPR suicide prevention, adult and youth mental health first aid, and Narcan. We will also discuss bringing in a new program from the Mental Health Collaborative which focuses on improving individuals' mental health literacy. One of their trainings is geared specifically toward coaches. The coaches training teaches adults who work with youth to recognize and respond to signs and symptoms of mental health challenges. Natick 180 staff as well as Natick Athletics Assistant Director will be trained as trainers and then bring this curriculum to both school coaches as well as the Natick Parks and Rec programs.

Coalition Retreat

This is an opportunity for current coalition members as well as potential new members to come together. Typically, the retreat includes a topic for conversation/education. One idea is to discuss Natick 180's sustainability given that the DFC grant is wrapping up at the end of September. The plan is to hold a Natick 180 retreat on **Wednesday, November 8th at 5:30 PM**.

d) Finance Updates

- Natick 180 received a \$25,000 earmark in the state budget for the current fiscal year.
- The DFC grant that provides funding for Natick 180 is ending in September 2023. Natick 180 recently submitted an application requesting to be able to use carryover money from the grant after September 2023. It is anticipated that this request will be approved.
- Natick 180 applied for the STOP Act grant earlier this year. Unfortunately, we did not get the grant and we will receive more feedback on our grant submission sometime in August. The application specifically sought to provide funding to communities where over 50% of the grant resources would assist underrepresented and/or historically marginalized individuals. Due to Natick's demographics, Natick would not be able to meet this threshold. This may have contributed to why Natick was not awarded the grant.

4. TOWN DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

a. Natick Police Department

Current Statistics:

- Year To Date overdose totals: 22 in 2023; 17 in 2022 (this includes opioid and non-opioid involved incidents)
- Year to Date overdose death totals: 2 in 2023; 4 in 2022.
- June 2023: Two total overdoses; July 2023: Two total overdoses

Several residents from Natick have overdosed outside of Natick and these cases are reported back to the Police Department. Post overdose support is being provided by the JDP clinician and Natick Police.

52% of reported overdoses are for opiates and 17% of overdoses are for prescription pills. The increased prescription pills numbers are likely due to recent attempted suicides using medication.

58% of the time (2021-2023) Narcan was not used. It should be noted that when narcan is not used, it is often due to people being awake and alert or the response being for a cannabis related incident.

Newton-Wellesley Hospital has test strips for xylazine which they received from the DA's office. A

question was raised about how effective the xylazine test strips are (there is a concern about false negatives). The test strips used by Newton-Wellesley Hospital are shown to be effective by all the lab studies, but there is room for human error when using the test strips. The Natick Police and Natick 180 can also order xylazine test strips from the DA's office for distribution. Since xylazine overdoses do not manifest the same as other overdoses, Narcan is typically not effective and the presentation of a xylazine overdose is different. Dr. Armstrong from Newton-Wellesley Hospital would be interested in hosting an event to teach people how to use the test strips, as well as Narcan.

Natick 180 has fentanyl test strips from the MA DPH. Natick 180 staff would like to be trained to train others in how to use the test strips, and also plans to add these to Narcan kits with instructions/YouTube video on how to use the test strips.

The Natick Police Department is in the beginning stages of planning a National Night Out. This is a national annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships. The event would take place the first Tuesday in August 2024.

b. Natick Fire Department

Present, no additional information to add.

c. Natick Public Schools

Tabled, not present.

Dr. Bella Wong started as the Interim Superintendent in July 2023. Natick 180 will be reaching out to her to make a connection. Natick 180 staff are meeting with the new Natick High School Principal Josepha Blocker on August 10th.

d. Health Department

The Health Department is in the initial planning stages for their October immunization clinics.

One of the department's health agents is leaving at the end of the week, so the health department will be hiring to fill this position.

e. Select Board - Tabled, not present.

The first meeting for alcohol retailers in town is scheduled for September 27th. This is a new alcohol policy requirement that was made by the Select Board in March 2023. More information is to come, but this would be the first annual meeting of this kind in Natick.

f. Health Sector

i. Newton Wellesley Hospital

This hospital is working to expand its hours and services for addiction care. The plan is to be more available on nights and weekends.

Upcoming Events:

- Newton Wellesley Hospital will have the Purple Flags displayed sometime during the month of September. District Attorney Marian Ryan will speak in conjunction with the Purple Flag Project.
- Prescription Drug Take Back will be hosted at the hospital sometime in the fall, the date is still to be determined.
- There is a hybrid community event scheduled for September 20th from 6:30 - 8:00 PM. This event will focus on the importance of exercise and mental health for those who have addiction. The speakers will be Lisa Lewis who is a psychotherapist and health/wellness trainer and Mike Ferullo who is the founder of Boston Bulldogs.
- In January, the hospital is hosting a panel event on mindfulness and meditation. One of the panelists will be Christopher Willard, a clinical psychologist who teaches at Harvard Medical School.

ii. MetroWest Medical Center

Tabled, not present.

COMMUNITY REPORTS:

SOAR Natick - Not present.

SOAR Natick is working on preparing for the Purple Flag Installation which will be in Natick, Newton, and Boston between late August and October.

SOAR Natick was also acknowledged for assisting a local person in recovery this summer. Their financial assistance is always very helpful and appreciated for those in recovery because financial constraints can pose a major barrier.

SPARK Kindness

Upcoming events:

- August 23rd - "Why Will No One Hang Out With Me? Social Skills Strategies for Kids" with author Caroline McGuire (Natick 180 is a spotlight partner)
- August 27th - Redhawk Fest (primarily led by NPD and the schools with assistance from SPARK)
- October 3rd at 7:00 PM - "How to prevent and respond to cyberbullying" with Sameer Hinduja (October is Bullying Prevention Month)
- October 18th at 7:00 PM at Natick High School - Raising Connected, Capable and Compassionate Adolescents "The Emotional Lives of Teenagers" book with author Lisa Damour (Natick 180 will be a partner on this event because a lot of what she talks about is communication with teens, mental health, and substance use). Registration is coming soon. Part of the benefit of having this event in person is that it gives caregivers an opportunity to come together and normalize these struggles that all people experience.

Interfaith Leaders Association (ILA)

The ILA has not met over the summer months. The biggest focus right now is the Purple Flag Project with SOAR Natick.

International Harmony Week is being planned for sometime in February. This will be an opportunity to engage individuals from varying levels of faith.

Recovery community

Natick 180 is still working to identify a representative from the recovery community to serve on the Steering Committee. Updates on this will be provided once an interested individual is identified.

Action Team Upcoming Meetings:

- Education and Awareness - August 21st, 10:00-11:30 AM
- Access To Services - August 8th and 23rd, 1:00-2:30 PM (meeting twice to plan for Recovery Month)
- Policy Action Team - no meeting currently planned (Natick 180 will be working with Deputy Chief Lauzon to plan for bi-annual alcohol retailer trainings)

Set the next meeting date/time and adjourn

- The next Steering Committee meeting will be Wednesday, September 6th from 8:30-10:00 AM.

Agenda items will be addressed in an order determined by the meeting facilitator.