



Marion County Tobacco Free Partnership (TFP)

Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 25, 2013

10 attendees, 2 excused

(1 new attendee: a community member who saw the meeting ad in the Ocala Star Banner)

Meeting started: 3:35pm

Welcome, Brief Introductions

1/28/2013 TFP meeting minutes approved unanimously by members present

TFP Discussion

- Senate Bill 258, FL Clean Indoor Air Act proposed amendment, was discussed. Quit Doc Director of Public Affairs, TJ Harrington, explained that this amendment will pass the FL Senate but will find resistance in the House. Two years ago, the Legislature amended this Act to allow school districts to prohibit smoking on their properties, but a “preemption” clause restricts municipalities and counties from such actions. Representatives Baxley and Perry co-sponsored last year’s amendment and have been approached to do so again this year. This year’s bill has Senators Hays and Dean, both who represent parts of Marion, listed as co-sponsors.
- Marion County has had a tobacco product placement ordinance on its books since 2001 that says no self-service tobacco will be sold in the county, all tobacco products should be behind the counter. Officer Donna Blair of the Marion County Sheriff’s Office suggested contacting Code Enforcement if any self-service tobacco is found. Sheriff’s Office should monitor this, and encourages citizens to report any such tobacco being sold, especially if outside city limits to help strengthen enforcement. Office Blair will follow up with her superiors as this ordinance has

not been enforced according to the results of Store Alert surveys conducted by the TFP.

- Members present requested a copy of the tobacco product placement ordinance—Tobacco Prevention Specialist (TPS) will send those in attendance a copy.
- Regarding K2/Spice and candy flavored tobacco and its restriction in order to protect minors, elected officials for the County have expressed some interest in passing stronger laws than the municipalities have considered. Mr. Harrington is following these issues closely.
- The TPS presented to the Marion Co. School District’s Guidance Counselors, Asst. Principals of Discipline and Deans in February regarding comprehensive tobacco policies. They agreed to add language to the Student Code of Conduct that offers cessation counseling to students caught possessing tobacco on school property and said that they would look into strengthening the District’s tobacco policies.
- The TPS shared a tobacco industry “youth tobacco prevention” brochure found at a gas station/convenience store less than half a mile from Ft. King Middle School. Such industry documents need to be noted so that we can prevent them from saturating our communities, as they are produced by tobacco companies that have ulterior motives of youth addiction. Milo Ayen asked if we have TFP brochures available to the community to counteract such tobacco company tactics. There is a “Strange Candy” brochure regarding the issue of candy flavored tobacco used by the tobacco industry to target youth as new customers, available to anyone interested in having multiple copies for distribution.
- TPS also shared that tobacco companies have been working behind the scenes in Florida to assume ownership of mental health/substance abuse clinics. They now are addicting FL youth to their tobacco products while also assuming control of youth addiction counseling services. A double whammy of which citizens need to be made aware.
- Discussion was had about graphic warning labels as youth deterrents on tobacco products. Mr. Harrington shared that a Federal Appeals Court found that these graphic labels violated tobacco companies’ 1st Amendment rights of free speech. The Public Health community is still pursuing this issue and the FDA may pursue an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court on the matter in the future.
- The issue of smoking in cars with youth present was also brought up by the members. TPS explained that there are some states that have passed laws outlawing this behavior, beginning with the state of Maine. All agreed that this would be a

very difficult thing to do in the state of Florida, but that it is a serious issue that needs attention and is worth discussing at a local level.

Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) Update

- The Marion County SWAT Coordinator reported that recruitment activities are ongoing, and we currently have 3 school based SWAT clubs and one community based SWAT club. A few other locations have expressed interest and we are pursuing those leads.
- Vanguard High School participated in Through with Chew Week by hosting a SmokeScreeners presentation for all 9th graders. These students learned how to become movie critics using the lens of tobacco use and product placement in the movies and rating the movies on a scale of zero to four “butts”. The presentation was facilitated by Abigail Hummel, a freshman UF Biology major and TFP volunteer who has an interest in youth tobacco prevention.
- A copy of Quit Doc Research and Education’s Annual “Phlegmy Awards”, based on the Academy Awards but with a tobacco content angle, was given to the members. “The Hobbit” was the worst tobacco use offender for 2012 and the entire list along with past winners can be found at <http://smokescreeners.org/default.aspx> . Milo Ayen suggested that a local award be introduced, the “Golden Lung” Award, for teachers or citizens who go above and beyond to combat “Big Tobacco” in our communities.

- The next TFP meeting will be March 25, 2013, 3:30-5:00pm @ UW Bonnie Heath Community Room (1401 NE 2nd St., Ocala).

Meeting adjourned at 4:50pm

The Tobacco Free Partnership of Marion County meets on the 1st Monday of each month at the United Way’s Bonnie Heath Community Room (1401 NE 2nd St., Ocala) from 3:30-5:00pm and is open to the public.