

Fall 2021 Warrant Article 7 Moderator's Committee  
Reasonable Restrictions for Marijuana Licensing in Brookline  
October 4, 2022 | 4:00 PM  
REMOTE - PARTICIPATION

Please click this URL to Register & Find the Information to Join as an Attendee via your Confirmation Email:

[Please see the meeting materials linked here.](#)

A recording of the meeting is available here:

**Attending:**

Voting Members: Ana Albuquerque, C. Scott Ananian, Lindsay Kephart, John Kleschinsky, Thomas Marton, Alok Somani (Chair).

Kate MacGillivray (Coordinator)

Public: Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert, Jonathan Lau

**Pre-Read:** 1- Moderator's Committee Presentation 10-4-22 (John Kleschinsky)

**Agenda**

1. Public comment
2. Chair remarks and introduction
3. Team of Two – community health
4. Committee Discussion
5. Any other business

**Meeting Notes (final)**

1. Public comment

Two questions from Jonathan Lau.

- Is scope of committee to create reasonable restrictions on licensing or is this group here to look for opportunities to expand access to cannabis industry? *The charge provided to the committee from the moderator is posted. In summary, reasonable restrictions based on balancing factors and considering best outcome for the community; and how to provide access to economic opportunity both through licensing and more broadly.*
- Now that the Governor has signed the law, will this committee be done by July 2023 when the regulations are complete? *We are targeting the end of February 2023 for our draft report.*

## 2. Chair remarks and introduction

Thank you for attending. First public comment. Then turn the meeting over to John to introduce content that will provide an overview of work done previously and to share the content and timeline for Health Resources in Action (“HRiA”) work. Followed by discussion on research questions the group thinks would be most helpful to have answered by HRiA’s literature review and what areas would we like to explore with PSB parents.

## 3. Team of Two – community health

This session introduces content for exploration that is data from prior work done within the Brookline Department of Public Health (BDPH), introduces the work that ACPH & BDPH are doing and will brainstorm questions with respect to a potential parent &/or student survey.

ACPH & BDH have contracted with Heath Resources in Action (“HRIA”) to conduct a study to support the work that Fall November 2021 Town Meeting when referring Warrant Article 9 to the ACPH.

Slide: Past Month Alcohol Use (high school students). Brookline looks like MA as a whole. Ran into methodological issues in 2021 when transitioning from paper to online survey.

Slide: Brookline High School Marijuana Use 2013-2021 and Brookline High School Ease of Access. Trend is that use is down in 2021, but there is a 45% decrease in answers in 2021 compared to 2017.

- Are the same questions asked each year? Brookline has tweaked some of the questions over time. John will share the executive summary with us later.
- Do we know anything about the population that didn’t respond? John will check and revert.

Slide: Risk of People Harming Themselves, Perception of Risk from Smoking 1-3x Week and Daily. The survey indicates that a higher percentage of high school students believe alcohol use is worse than marijuana. The BPHD preliminary conclusion is that education with respect to the

risks of marijuana may be lacking. Since legalization, the surveys indicate that there may be a decrease perception in risk. John will share a slide, not presented here, on this topic.

Slide: Pandemic Influence on Substance Abuse by High School Students. Survey indicates that high school students perceive availability of alcohol and marijuana decreased during the pandemic.

Slide: Cannabis Outlets within 5 miles of Brookline (density). Density is important in discussion of substance abuse and prevention because the alcohol and tobacco literature / studies confirm the correlation of use and density. So important to consider this topic. Can probably expect similar trends with respect to marijuana. Also, the cost per ounce, although high, with the reduction in tax, the price is starting to drop. Alcohol literature suggests that lower cost is also correlated to use.

Lindsay offered that density mapping is not widely done as yet. And because legalization is so new, there are not many communities in the US that have prevented opening of marijuana outlets near schools. Similar to tobacco and alcohol, location near schools correlates with use and initiation. And density in low-income areas is proven to create a disproportionate effect on those communities with respect to use and harm. An area of research is looking at where outlets are located, who is exposed and what the impact is.

Summary of BDPH Preliminary Analysis: data through 2019 indicates that legalization has not resulted in increase of youth use; but that the vulnerable populations are disproportionately impacted. In this case, those dealing with mental health issues and anxiety were more likely to initiate use and suffer adverse consequences. Survey data indicates that legalization has reduced the perception of harm which indicates the need for education with respect to the potential harmful effects of marijuana use. Additional data now exists, and we should review and incorporate that, keeping in mind the effect the pandemic had on data collection in 2020 and 2021.

ACPH / BDPH hired HRiA in July 2022. The literature review is underway. HRiA is also collecting secondary data and creating a master list of indicators, including from retailers. The steering committee is being formed and work expected to be complete by June 2023.

In addition, BDPH has budgeted \$200k to do a broad community health assessment, although not focused on students and substance abuse, will provide some related data. The next student health survey is scheduled for April 2023. John mentioned that the ACPH and BDPH are reaching out to BU and BC as well as considering a parent survey.

#### 4. Committee Discussion

The committee brainstormed questions that might be of interest to explore.

Although the committee won't address the number of licenses, we did ask whether there is a threshold for outlet density? Where are students getting marijuana? Are we source limited? For

those who have used, how many sources were accessed? What does youth use look like before and after pandemic? What does adult use look like?

Questions that the Committee would be interested in asking in a student / parent survey >

- Education – increase / decrease /
- Products – what might encourage initiation, trends, impact of celebrity endorsement, ease of use, detection avoidance, etc.
- What factors encourage students to initiate (literature may be able to answer this), to not initiate, to continue, to stop, etc.
- Follow up with students who have graduated (interested in 18-25 year age group)
- Understand impact and treatment options.

5. Any other business

n/a

#### **ACTIONS:**

John will share the executive summary of the data survey

John will help us understand what we know about the population of high school students that did not respond in 2021.

John will send full set of ACPH slides, and information we have about products,

John to send the slide showing past month use for all age groups (through 2019)

#### **DECISIONS:**

Next meeting 10/11 4pm to 5pm held remote. Ana to present information from existing medical research on this topic.