



Meeting Minutes for October 28, 2025
10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
Blake Room at Somers Public Library

Members and Staff in Attendance: Tim Keeney, Michael Szafir, Lori Caron, Kevin Dowe, Bob Schmidt, Kim Littig, Katherin Mashiak, Margot Martello, Joanne Nichting, Maureen Parsell, Arianna Flagg, and Matthew Cox

Guests: Bonnie Smith and Kirsten Carew from B. Weyland Smith Consulting, LLC.

Matthew Cox called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes: Bob moved to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 23, Joanne seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion carried.

New Business: Matthew introduced Bonnie Smith and Kirsten Carew to the group assembled. Bonnie and Kirsten, who have presented at previous coalition meetings, reviewed key highlights of Youth Voices Count Survey results, noting trends, and led conversation about local conditions, drivers of substance use by youth, and next steps for the coalition.

Key highlights included marked decreases in self-reported youth substance use across all substances, but most prominently regarding alcohol and marijuana; increases in perceptions of parental and peer disapproval of substance use; and opportunities to provide information, education, and engagement of youth and parents in meaningful ways. For example, high school youth reported a reason they avoid substances is fear of getting in trouble with police. It was suggested that the coalition find additional ways to amplify messaging around the implications of substance use. Arianna reported that she is already developing materials to effectively convey the significant increases in potency of nicotine products and marijuana, and that other priority topics include social host laws and decreasing stigma.

Adjournment: With no further business or announcements, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Cox