



**NATICK 180**  
**STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**  
 Remote Participation by Zoom  
 8:30 am      Aug. 5, 2025

**MINUTES**

Steering Committee Member or Designee	Organization	Sector Represented	Present	Absent
Dr. Catharina Armstrong, <b>Chair</b>	Newton Wellesley Hospital	Healthcare	✓	
Michael Boudreau, <b>Vice Chair</b>	Natick Health Department	Local Government	✓	
Shai Fuxman	Natick School Committee	Schools		✓
Donald Breda	Natick Board of Health	Local Government		✓
Jessica Cliff	Natick Health Department	Local Government		✓
Bruce Evans	Natick Selectboard	Local Government	✓	
Dr. Art Fergusson	Natick Public Schools	Schools	✓	
Chief Jason Ferschke	Natick Fire Department	Local Government	✓	
Chris Hampton	Natick Fire Department	Local Government	✓	
Johny Georges	Natick Fire Department	Local Government	✓	
Christine Guthery	SPARK Kindness	Civic / Volunteer		✓
Chief James Hicks	Natick Police Department	Law Enforcement	✓	
Lt. Chad Howard	Natick Police Department	Law Enforcement	✓	
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		✓
Wren Burzduk	Natick Parent/At Large Community Member	Parent	✓	
Neil Wallis	Metrowest Medical Center	Healthcare		✓
Staff				
Katie Sugarman	Natick Health Department / Natick 180	Local Government	✓	
Lizzy Chalfin	Natick Health Department / Natick 180	Local Government		✓
Astrid Dretler	Natick Health Department / Natick 180	Local Government	✓	
Member(s) of the Public				
Bea Duncan	SOAR Natick	Other organization involved in reducing substance misuse		✓
Rev. Cindy Worthington-Berry	First Congregational Church	Religious / Fraternal		✓



Link to Meeting PowerPoint: [SLIDES](#)

**Citizens' Concerns:**

None.

Vote on **July 2nd 2025 Steering Committee meeting minutes**. A vote was made to approve the meeting minutes. This vote was seconded and approved by everyone present in the meeting.

**Natick 180 Updates and Announcements:**

-Kudos to the NPD on a successful National Night Out event on 8/5/25. The event was the second annual, and attendance was really strong. Many town organizations were represented, and the support was wonderful.

-Wednesdays in Aug - "MassHealth Help" this is a collaboration between NPS & BOH to help families get enrolled in MassHealth insurance. This is a free clinic to help families with the application process and to share information.

**a. Upcoming events and request for volunteers:**

- Summer: Farmers' Markets (Saturdays), Natick Nights (8/7), Multicultural Day (8/23 from 9am - 1pm)

- Fall: Natick Days (9/6 from 10am - 3pm), Purple Flag Project (installation on 8/23 from 9-10 am at the FCC; Naloxone training will be offered),

**b. RIZE Mosaic Grant Updates:** Funding from the opioid settlement and the Mosaic matching grant which Natick 180 received from the state were used to send 9 students and 2 adults to the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) Mid-Year Conference in mid-July (20-24th) in Nashville, TN. The conference offered both youth and adult tracks on prevention, coalition building, and best practices in the field. The youth received leadership training and were able to connect with other youth across the country doing similar work. Pre and post surveys taken by the NATI students showed that student knowledge and skills increased. They learned how to do assessments, and evaluate and build capacity. One outcome is that the youth will put together a 'training of the trainers' to share knowledge with peers. They will also do a presentation to N180 at a meeting this later this fall.

**c. Timeline for proposed statewide regulations regarding licensing for social and on-site consumption of cannabis:**

The Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) is considering a few new license types that communities would be able to opt into; towns can select to opt into 1, 2 or all 3 of the license types. These include various forms of on-premise consumption including:

- 1) supplemental on-site consumption (cannabis use allowed on-premise at cannabis establishments)
- 2) hospitality on-site consumption (non-cannabis businesses allowed to offer on-site consumption during specific events; could allow for up to 3 permits per month)
- 3) marijuana event organizer (allows temporary consumption during specific events - such as at a wedding; there would be some training requirements).

The CCC met last week to review regulations. N180 is reviewing the current draft of regulations to see what changes/updates may have been made since the previous version. It is expected that on 8/15, the approved final draft will be released. Once posted, there will be a public comment period, then a public hearing. The public can submit written comments during this timeframe. The process is expected to last a couple of weeks. Then the CCC will vote to finalize the regulations once all comments are considered.

N180 has met w/ the Chief of Police, the Town Administrator and a Selectboard member to discuss what the town's response might be if any/all of these license types are accepted. At the next Selectboard meeting on 8/20, N180 staff will give an overview of the impending regulations and timeline and other considerations. The Selectboard will determine how to move forward as a group and will work with the Town Administrator in the best interest of Natick (considered both from a business as well as public health & safety standpoint). Demand for this type of licensing is present, but it is not clear what Natick-based businesses' viewpoints are. The overarching goal is to protect Natick as well as business interests. The Chair of the CCC has met with Natick representatives and knows the town is doing a thoughtful review on the regulations. There are a few select towns that are driving this forward. The N180 Steering Committee has the opportunity to help develop a position statement and can collaborate with our Selectboard. The CCC appears to be open to considering comments and will integrate them after discussion and consideration. The final regs will be voted on in September. N180 will continue to review the latest draft and will develop an overview to share with the Steering Committee and Selectboard, as well as community members.

**d. National Recovery Month 2025 (Sept.):** N180 will be co-sponsoring a recovery celebration

with partner organization Anchored in Recovery of Framingham (9/12); we will help to promote Anchored's calendar of events. Anchored provides support and resources for those in recovery. N180 will also work w/ SOAR and Framingham Force during Recovery Month. There will be a banner hung over Natick's Main Street the week of 9/15. Will also partner with the library to promote the 'You Can Save a Life' campaign (9/30).

## **TOWN DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

### **a. Natick Police Department-**

#### Substance Use Instances from Past Month:

Since July 2nd - 20 'Section 12' incidents

4 OUIs

No protective custodies

On July 29th in Natick, a non-Natick individual in their 60's overdosed on Fentanyl; Narcan was used by a bystander; the individual was conscious and was then transported to hospital.

#### Substance Use Data

Year to Date:

2025 - 10 overdoses / 1 overdose deaths

2024 - 19 overdoses / 0 overdose deaths

(Down by 9, which is a positive trend)

Drug type:

22% of overdoses so far in 2025 were due to an opiate; 34% rx drugs; 11% narcotics; 11% stimulants; 11% psilocybin; and 11% cannabis. The trend of prescription drug usage continues to increase.

Narcan Used:

22% of the time (one of those times having been administered by a bystander). N180 will be offering Narcan training at the Purple Flag installation. Fall tends to be a time when overdoses are on the rise.

Demographics:

90% are from Natick

90% are male / 10% are female

Age range - 3 people are 17 years old; there was one person each of the following ages: 16, 20, 21, 27, 34, 42 and 59. The young people most likely are related to the Section 12s.

\*According to CIMS, Natick residents do experience behavioral health events in other towns: July 5th - behavioral incident in Waltham, July 4th - at risk referral in Ashland, April 30th - overdose in Marlboro.

CIMS (Critical Incident Management System) was renewed for Middlesex County for this upcoming fiscal year. Half the cost was paid for by the Middlesex District Attorney's Office; Middlesex Chiefs also pay dues that are used for this service. Other towns may not see the value for this type of sharing of information so its use may be in jeopardy. Natick uses it widely and believes in its importance. CIMS is used as a system to help residents and police of a particular town do follow ups following a behavioral event, overdose, or at-risk referral. Information is shared with police, clinicians, and other organizations such as N180 and SADOD. It is good as a notification and tracking tool. Earmark monies have been used in the past to

keep Natick's subscription. It is possible that opioid settlement funds could be used for it in the future. All towns need to participate in order to make the system work.

**b. Natick Fire Department -**

Thank you for the at-risk data that is shared w/ N180

**c. Natick Public Schools -**

- Regarding security: NPS have been working on its 'critical response' over the summer. There is a Critical Response Group looking at critical infrastructure mapping and evaluating current mapping technology to see what upgrades are needed and what gaps exist. NPS is working closely with NPD.
- 'Lions for Safer Schools' is a part of the Lion Club's Lion Quest program. They offer recommendations regarding safety & security for schools. This includes cybersecurity, property perimeter upgrades, risk assessment, and technology such as alarms. This will be on the agenda of an upcoming meeting this week w/ NPS, SROs (NPD) and School Department members, and they will see whether there are any recommendations to implement.
- There was discussion regarding a possible uptick in bullying incidents over the summer. NPS will be looking at reporting protocols (anonymous) to make sure it is working properly and that parents/caregivers can reach the school appropriately. NPD is in constant communication w/ NPS over the summer.
- iDecide diversion program model - N180 working with NPS and NPD to review the curriculum and materials. A new brochure is being developed. This diversion program is offered to those students who have an infraction within the schools; students can self-refer; NPD can also refer young people to the program. Natick Service Council delivers the curriculum.

**d. Health Department -**

- The Board will be discussing several different nicotine regulations in the coming weeks/months. These include revising the town's tobacco regulations to meet suggested MA standards (i.e. only allowing nicotine pouches in adult retail stores, adopting smell tests for nicotine products where anything that is determined to smell like a flavor is banned, not allowing flavored wrapping papers, etc.). The Board is not looking at integrating a 'Nicotine Free Generation' into town regulations at this time. Regulations would be voted on in Oct after a public hearing and comment period.

**e. Select Board -**

- The Board is currently working to support Natick's efforts related to potential revisions to the Cannabis Control Commission's (CCC) regulations.
- Kudos to Katie on her presentation in July re N180's priorities, funding opportunities and usage of funds, including those related to opioid funding.

**COMMUNITY REPORTS:**

**Health Sector**

**i. Newton Wellesley Hospital -**

Upcoming events: for Recovery Month in September:

- NWH will have the purple flag installation on Sept. 7th, The display will be up through the 20th. A ceremony will be held on 9/17 from 12-1pm in the auditorium. This will include guest speakers.
- Laura McKowan, an author of several books (*Push Off from Here & We Are the Luckiest*)

- on sobriety, will be doing a reading & book signing on 10/8 from 6-8 pm.
- There will be a film screening of Recovery City and a panel presentation and Narcan training (9/24 from 6-8 pm)

## ii. MetroWest Medical Center -

- Not present, tabled.

## SOAR Natick

- Reminder that grant funds are available for individuals in recovery. Applications are available through the SOAR website.
- The number of overdose deaths appears to be down in 2024, which may be due to Narcan being more widely available. MA state data is late in being released so the final number of deaths in 2024 is still determined.
- The Morse Institute Library and then NHS will display the Opioid Art Project. This display contains 10 pieces of artwork developed by people in recovery as well as family members who have lost a loved one. The display includes a voice-over to accompany the artwork. It has been displayed at a number of locations around Metrowest over the years, and is very moving.
- The Natick flag installation needs volunteers! The date is Saturday, August 23rd at 9am; there will be a Narcan training following the installation. There was a request for Louie the Town comfort support dog to be present at the event.

## SPARK Kindness

- Upcoming programs include: *Screenagers* film screening geared to parents/caregivers of younger students on 9/10 at WMS from 6pm. This will include a panel discussion afterwards regarding how to support young people in navigating the digital world in a healthy way. Other programs will cover the topics of bullying prevention, belonging, mental health, humanization and digital wellness. See website for more information.
- At an Antbullying Coalition meeting last week, there was a demonstration of a platform available to educators using AI to develop curriculum and responses to challenges that occur between students in classrooms / schools. It also offers support to administrators and others who work with youth to be able to communicate and respond.
- SPARK will soon be unveiling an updated website with many curated resources on bullying prevention & intervention.

## Interfaith Leaders Association (ILA)

Tabled, not present.

## Recovery Community

Please have individuals reach out if in need of support.

## Finance Updates

Since last month, Natick 180's Town Prevention & Outreach Fund is at \$23,418. The biggest withdrawal has been from the RIZE fund to cover costs of attendance at the CADCA conference.

Other Natick 180 Ledgers:

- Pharma Grant - \$1,911
- Donations - \$5,845
- 84 Fund - \$3,192
- Opioid Abatement Fund - \$237,126

- RIZE Fund - \$15,377

RIZE Mosaic Funds: This is a matching grant that supports a few different initiatives including adult advisor positions for the youth groups at NHS, Wilson, and Kennedy and funding for transportation needs amongst those who are entering recovery from substance use.

**Action Team Upcoming Meetings:**

Access to Services Action Team - 8/14 or 8/18 (tbd)

Awareness & Education Action Team - 8/26 from 10am - 11:30 am

**Set the next meeting date/time and adjourn**

- Steering Committee - Sept. 3, 2025 from 8:30-10:00 AM

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